

BONE OF HIS BONE

BY

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FOREWORD

One thing for the missionary is inevitable. If he is to go forward in the face of the seemingly insuperable obstacles which beset him, ushering in a new day for enslaved souls, if, I repeat, he is to do the thing which God expects of him, and the Church expects of him, and the heart-rending need of these to whom He has come as an ambassador of light, requires of him, then he must himself appropriate in an ever-deeper and fuller way the power of Christ. He must himself be bound to that unconquerable Christ who all down the centuries has through His disciples achieved the impossible. He must get beyond a mere intellectual knowledge of the historical Christ, and so entwine the tendrils of his spiritual nature in the Eternal Christ that he imbibes a divine life.

The job he is attempting to do requires of him superhuman force. The merely human, however noble and strong and cultivated, proves as insufficient and as inadequate as a handful of glowing coals would be for the dissipation of an Arctic blizzard. He must transcend the purely natural, and immerse himself in the supernatural. He must experience the power of the indwelling Christ, and, dispossessed of his own life, become in an ever-fuller measure possessed of a Divine life.

Only "rivers of living water" flowing from his innermost being - the promise which the Saviour has made to His own - can make possible the renewal of life in the state in which he finds it.

It may be that temperamentally he is not predisposed to forge his way into these lonely uplands of the faith. He may even have a deep aversion to the mystical elements of Christianity. Still the force of circumstances like a mighty tide will most certainly sweep him from the moorings of a merely intellectual grasp of the Christian verities, out into the deeps of a vital experience of redeeming grace. For, unless Christ becomes more real to him than any other reality, even of the physical universe, and unless he learns to draw upon Christ and to sink his being into Him and thus emerge from the deep well of the Uncreated Good, charged with that power which had fallen upon the apostles, he is from the very nature of the circumstances in which he is involved, doomed to defeat. The force of evil which he would overcome will be as destructive of his purpose, and as disdainfully subversive of his message as some mighty Gibraltar which stands out in invincible might against the waves of the sea.

The following chapters are simply an outline of the position to which, as a missionary of the Cross, I was led. I wish to share with Christians of all lands and all sects, those blessed experiences of the indwelling Christ, those immeasurable treasures which, in the deeper participation in Christ, have become mine. I wish to make the common property of the Church, those ineffable experiences which are the fruitage of a oneness with Christ - that Christ without whom the missionary, because of the peculiar situation in which he finds himself, more than any one else, realises that he can do nothing.

I can not send forth these messages however, without acknowledging the great debt of gratitude which I owe the late Mrs. Penn-Lewis, whose writings on the deeper aspects of the Cross, and whose insistence on the believer's identification with Christ in death and in resurrection, have meant so much to the Church in these recent years. God

greatly used the writings of Mrs. Penn-Lewis to bring me to the victorious position in Christ which the following messages seek to clarify.

With the hope and prayer that my kind readers may be given grace to realise in their own experience this deeper oneness with Christ, so that their joy may be that joy which is “unspeakable and full of glory,” and their peace that “peace which passeth all understanding,” and their life that “abundant life” which is eternal and which flows from the throne of God, I place these messages upon the altar of my Lord that He might use them for the edification of “the saints” and for the glory of His name.

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CHAPTER 1

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: A PARTICIPATION, NOT AN IMITATION

One can not make a study of the New Testament without experiencing something of the nature of a shock, in view of the glaring difference between the Christian life as we are wont to live it, and the ideal of the Master. The disheartening incongruities, and the grievous contradictions are so painfully evident, that even those who have only a superficial knowledge of the Saviour's Word - yea, one dare say, even those who have never looked into the pages of the New Testament - are shocked. What little faith they may have, is shaken.

When one holds up before the picture of the Christian life as set forth by the Apostles, that which today goes under the name, one staggers. The emaciated body of a dying friend - not to say his corpse - could not stand in more violent contrast with him who in the days of health and vigour walked at our side.

It is not my object to pick to pieces the modern Christian. I have no quarrel with the Church. I am not pretending to play the role of an iconoclast. I have been for ten years a missionary of the Cross, and have no thought of deserting the ranks. My only purpose in calling attention to our failure as Christians, is to point the way to the victorious life in Christ for those who are conscious of their spiritual poverty, and "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

It is for the Christian who finds himself at the brink of despair, because of the gruesome picture he present when all the while he longs to faithfully reflect the Master's image, that I feel that I have a message. It is for the on whose thirst for the water of life, far from being quenched, consumes him, and leaves him sick with yearnings, that I faint would unfold the secret of the abundant life - the life of which Jesus spoke when He said that "rivers of living water" would flow from the innermost being of those who believed. It is to the one who is weary of hollow mockeries, sick of shams, who has become the victim of a secret self-loathing - one who feels that as Christian he should be free from the power of sin, and who, in spite of all his struggles is crushed by a sense of failure - that I long to bring the message of the Cross. It is to those who pant for power - that power which is from on High - those who long to have their life and service ministry, and preaching, charged with the Spirit of the living God that I feel that I have a word which will not fail to usher in a new day.

But we must briefly summarise the requisites of the Christian life before we enter upon a statement of my thesis. We are to walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6) We are to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). We are to forgive as Jesus forgave - even as He who in the Shan and anguish of the Cross looked down upon those wt blasphemed Him, while they murdered Him, and forgave (Colossians 3:13). We are to be aggressively kind towards those who hate us, yea, we are actually to pray for those who despitefully use us (Matthew 5:44). We are to be overcomers - more than conquerors (Romans 8:37). We are to give thanks in all things believing that all things, even those which blast our fondest hopes, work together for our good (Romans 8:28; Ephesians 5:20).

We are to be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known unto God, so that the peace of God which passeth all understanding may guard our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:6). We are to rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4). We are to think on whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise (Philippians 4:8). We are to be holy, for God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). The Saviour said that if we believed in Him, rivers of waters of life would flow from our innermost being (John 7:38). We are to stand out in bold, unmistakable contrast from the crooked, perverse world, blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, shining as lights (Philippians 2:15). We are positively to hate ourselves not to pamper, nor to caress, nor to seek, nor to love ourselves, but literally to hate and to renounce our own selves, and that daily (Matthew 16:24). We are told that we can not be Christ's disciples if we do not renounce ourselves utterly and absolutely in all things, and at all times (Luke 14:26). Paul tells us that our affections are to be set on things above (Colossians 3:1).

Enough. We dare go no further. It would only increase Our shame, and our pain. We stand indicted. We are not "What Christ would have us to be. If this is the measure of the Christian life, if this is the basis upon which we are to be judged, if this is what God requires of us as Christians, like Isaiah we cry: "Woe is me, for I am undone."

Why does not the Saviour, so tender and so understanding, so loving and so wise, not make requirements more in keeping with human nature? Why does He seem to be so unreasonable? Why does He not demand of us what we might reasonably attain? He bids us soar, yet we have no wings. Talk about the super-man; it is not so much a mere overabundance of man that is required. It seems to be rather man-deified, if I may so speak, which the New Testament pronounces as the true type of Christian. Why does the Saviour go so far beyond the merely natural, and put Christian living on the basis of the supernatural? I protest, it is not natural to love our enemies; it is not natural to rejoice always; it is not natural to be thankful for the things that hurt; it is not natural to hate ourselves; it is not natural to walk as Jesus walked. Have we honestly faced this dilemma? Have we had the courage to face the implications of Christ's Word? Is anything gained by subterfuges, by pretending that the gulf between the humanly possible, and the law of Christ (i.e. what we can attain by nature and what God requires in His Word) is after all not so great?

If no satisfactory answer can be given (my contention as stated in the following chapters is that there can) the Christian system merits the aspersions of its enemies. It must face the grave charge of over-emphasis, exaggeration, fanaticism - or whatever we may call this want of adjustment between the law of Christ and human nature.

This is no new dilemma. The great Apostle to the Gentiles, makes no bones about his conviction that human nature, as such, can never attain the ideal of Christ. He does not minimise the overwhelming incongruity. He lets the glaring fact of Christ's law as an utterly unattainable ideal, as something to which human nature, as such, can never adapt itself, stand out in all its naked reality.

Romans 7 is witness to that fact. Here we have the Apostle's confession of failure, his cry of despair, his bitter regret, upon finding the Christian ideal unattainable, his

groanings over what he found to be a heart-rending dilemma, his honest admission that he actually believes that the requirements of Christ's law, are something to which human nature, as such, struggle as you will, agonise as you will, can never adjust itself. Lest I be misunderstood - lest my readers be shocked by something apparently so unorthodox - I quote Paul's own words: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do ... I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but, I see another law in my members (aye, there's the rub) warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7). Paul struggles. He agonises. He weeps. He strives as only this moral giant, one of the greatest of all time, could strive. All to no avail. The law of sin, he confesses, like the onrush of a mighty stream, sweeps everything before it.

We do well to face squarely all the shocking aspects of this dilemma. Paul did. He did not throw up any smoke screen over either his own incapacity on the one hand, or the unattainable character of Christ's law on the other. He is astonishingly frank over the fact that in himself (that is, in his flesh, Romans 7:18) he can find no good thing. He candidly acknowledges that he delights in God's law, loves, but finds it something to which human nature can not attain. If we will be honest about these things, we will find ourselves led all unconsciously to take certain steps which will most assuredly usher us into a glorious new day. It led Paul to a great discovery. It will lead us.

It was not that Paul, when he wrote Romans 7, was still wilfully disobedient, as in the days prior to the Damascan road crisis. He did love Jesus. He was a soldier of the Cross. He was a consecrated Christian. It was only that he was now seeing himself in a new light - in the blinding light of the Cross of Christ. What before, as a strict disciple of Moses, would have been excusable, now overwhelms him with its magnitude. Innocent little things, attitudes comparatively harmless, insignificant little sins which under the Mosaic law would pass unnoticed if they did not appear to be actual virtues, now break his heart. They are repulsive. They are unbearable. They seem to burn with the fire of hell. They sting like the bite of a scorpion. They stink like a decaying carcass in some slimy pool.

Paul wants to be like Jesus. It is no longer a question of mere ethics. It is no longer a question of right or wrong. Is it Christ-like? That is the burning question. Paul wants to be free. Self-love even in its secret forms, its harmless gestures, nauseates him. He would be like Jesus in all the loveliness of his humility, and of his compassion. He would love God with a pure love and serve Him with that utter singleness of eye which characterised the "only-begotten of the Father." In a paroxysm of self-loathing, and in the anguish of self-despair, the Apostle cries out for deliverance (Romans 7:24).

Is there a way out? Yes, there is. Paul found it - we can all find it,

Now my thesis is this: we have been proceeding upon a false basis. We have conceived of the Christian life as an Imitation of Christ. It is not an Imitation of Christ. It is a Participation of Christ. "For we are made partakers of Christ" (Hebrews 3:14). There are good things in Thomas A. Kempis' Imitation of Christ, but the basic idea is false to the principles that underlie the Christian life. To proceed on the basis of Imitation, will plunge us in just the sort of slough of despond Paul found himself in when he wrote Romans 7.

We are not what Christ would have us to be; the Sermon on the Mount does not find expression in our attitudes; sin as a principle is still rampant in our lives; we are not free from envy, pride, self-love, and lust of pleasure; the mountain of secret selfishness still crushes us and in spite of all our efforts remains immovable; there is little joy, so little freedom of spirit, none of that rapture which so characterised the primitive Christians; we agonise, and bleed, and struggle - but failure dogs our footsteps. What is the matter? We are proceeding upon a false basis. We are attempting to do what the Saviour Himself never expected us to do. The Christian life is not an Imitation.

The great dilemma of which we have been speaking resolves itself into most simple terms when we grasp this distinction between Imitation and Participation.

For, what is impossible to me as an imitator of Christ, comes perfectly natural as a participant of Christ. It is Only when Christ nullifies the force of my inherent "self life," and communicates to me a Divine life, that Christian Flowing in its true sense, is at all possible for me. I must be born again. "The flesh profiteth nothing." Without Jesus I can do nothing. I must live in Him and, renouncing my own life, find in Him a "new life."

Now to this "new life," the Christian requirements, so incomprehensible and unattainable while we move in the realm of the "flesh-life," are all simple. They are nothing more nor less than statements regarding its modus operandi. The Sermon on the Mount so far from cramping in any way this new life, is simply a statement of the way it operates.

The trouble is, we have not listened to Jesus. He tells us that we must abide in Him as a branch in the Vine. Matthew 5-7, without John 15, would be like so many freight cars without an engine, or like a whale without water, or a bird without air.

In that upper-room interview, the Master, knowing that it was His last opportunity to impress fundamentals upon His disciples, places the supreme emphasis upon this mystical union, this spiritual oneness with Himself of all believers - this sublime fact of participation. "Abide in Me and I in you." Our failures only confirm the Saviour's Word, for He said: "Without Me ye can do nothing."

No, we are not called upon to imitate Christ. The truth of the matter is, there would be little virtue after all in that sort of thing. Paul said so, in effect, in the oft-quoted 1 Corinthians 13 - the love chapter. It could only be a wooden, artificial thing. Even here Jesus would say: "The flesh profiteth nothing." Some years ago in the country where I was doing missionary work, this sort of thing was carried to its nth degree, when a zealous devotee had himself crucified, literally nailed to a cross where his parents found him dead, when they came to his rescue. The Church rightly does not acclaim that sort of thing, and yet theoretically she proceeds, in the case of vast multitudes of her children, upon this false basis of Imitation.

The Christian is not called upon to strain over a role as an actor would agonise over lines poorly learned. The Christian life in the thought of God is infinitely more blessed and compelling. "We are made partakers of Christ" (Hebrews 3:14). Exceeding great and precious promises are given us, "that by these we might be partakers of the Divine

Nature” (2 Peter 1:4). The Believer is grafted into the Trunk of the Eternal Godhead.
“I am the Vine, Ye are the Branches.”

“The riches of the glory of this mystery - Christ in you the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

CHAPTER 2

PARTICIPANTS OF THE CROSS: CHRIST'S DEATH OUR DEATH - PART ONE

My purpose is to trace step by step the scope of this great principle of participation in Christ - to measure, as it were, the length and breadth, the depth and the height, of this marvellous identification of the believer with his Saviour. Christ, and all true believers, are one. They constitute His body. They are, in the language of Adam, "bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh." Just what the implications of this oneness with Christ are - the overwhelming glory of such a position most Christians have never had - so much as an inkling. May the Father of Lights enable us not only to understand, but to enter into this holy temple, and to realise our oneness with Christ. This is the only spring that can quench our thirst. There is no other way to the fulfilment of our deepest aspirations as Christians.

We must bear in mind that it is the office of the Holy Spirit to graft the believer into Christ, as a gardener would graft the branch of a tree into the main body of another. "By one Spirit are ye all baptised into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Paul dwells upon this grafting process in the eleventh chapter of his letter to the Romans, where he speaks of the breaking off of Israel from the Root, Christ, and the grafting in of the Gentiles, to become partakers of the Root.

True conversion in its deepest aspect is just this. If it fails to result in a veritable grafting into Christ, it is spurious, and from the nature of the case, unfruitful. Indeed, we must be born again. We must be rooted into the very Trunk of the Eternal Godhead. We do not simply strive to imitate a Divine Leader; exceeding great and precious promises have been left to us whereby we are made partakers of the Divine Nature (2 Peter 1:4). The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).

It was the Spirit who convicted us of sin, creating in us a deep antipathy for sin, and a burning desire to be free from its foul dominion. It was the same Spirit who revealed Christ to us as the only way out - our sin-bearer (John 16:7-15). It is the same Spirit who binds us to Christ, rooting our lives into His Divine Life, and causing us to grow up into Him who is the Head. Madame Penn-Lewis, in one of her books, points out that in the Greek, the much-loved John 3:16, conveys a very different meaning from that of our English versions. It is not simply he that believeth in Christ, but rather he that believeth into Him, who shall have eternal life. By the co-action of the Spirit (and the Holy Spirit works so in conjunction with our spirit that we are often altogether unconscious of His working) we have believed into Christ. He has become our life. "But he who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:17).

Now this grafting necessitates some cutting, of course. If we will not die to the natural, how can we expect to live to the supernatural? Paul puts it thus: "If we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him." The branch which contrary to nature is grafted into a tree of another species, must die to the old life. It must send its roots into a new trunk. It receives a new life. Its relation with the old is severed so utterly, and so completely, and so continuously, that for it, the old no longer exists. It imbibes the new with a constancy which brings about a veritable fusion of the two.

A study of Christian biography reveals the fact that the great saints of the Church (and I use the term in its Biblical sense as descriptive of all those who have truly lived in and for Christ) have with few exceptions experienced what some have called “a second work of grace.” There came a time when they panted after a fuller participation in the life of God. We may speak of it as sanctification; others dwell upon the aspect of rest, and speak of the “rest of faith.” The modern emphasis seems to be upon the victorious aspects - it is the Victorious Life. Or, we might speak of it as the Abundant Life. Be that as it may - Christian experience will not be bound by terminology - the fact remains that, sooner or later, the Christian is awakened to a sense of the sin of “self-hood.” There is no reason, Scriptural or otherwise, why Christians should not immediately upon conversion, be brought to this stage, but the facts indicate that they usually wander for some years in the wilderness of a divided affection before entering into the land of milk and honey.

Again, it is the Holy Spirit who works in the believer this conviction of the sin of a divided heart. He shows the believer how tragically self-will has thwarted Christ’s purpose to bring him into utter union with Himself. He reveals with racking precision and crushing clearness, the awful consequences of the “self-life” in its enmity to Christ, and its power to choke the life of the spirit. He shows the believer the duplicity of his way, the shamefulness of a hollow piety, the mockery of a superficial devotion to Christ. The believer comes to realise that he is crucifying Christ afresh by his lust for pleasure, his greed for excitement, and his passion for self. He sees that though he has been rooted into Christ, yet, he has been drawing more from the old roots. He sees how muddy is the stream of his life, how tainted the waters, how the stench of the “self-life” has blighted what flowers have grown by their side. He begins to understand Romans 7. He, too, would be free. The secret cry of his heart also becomes: “O wretched man that I am! who will deliver me from the body of this death?”

This marks a crisis. The hour has come for a fresh revelation of the scope and efficacy of Christ’s redemptive work. The believer’s eyes are now to be opened to the meaning of the deeper aspects of the Cross of Christ. The Cross is unveiled. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ, this time not as the Divine Sin-Bearer (though the believer never gets beyond the need of a constant appropriation of the efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice for sin), but as the way out of this loathsome thing we call “Self.” It is a vision of himself as one with Christ in His death - crucified with Christ - which the Spirit now vouchsafes to the believer. He is made to see that he too died to sin in the death of the Saviour, and was ethically committed to a position of death, in order that he might be brought by the cataclysmic action of a corporate participation in the Cross, and the Tomb of the Son of Man, out from under the dominion of the “self-life” to a new life of Divine potency. He begins to see that without this participation in the death of the Son of Man, sin as a principle (that very thing which precipitated the heinous tragedy of Calvary) continues to operate in him, and to place him, in a sense, in a position of complicity with the very murderers of the Saviour. He realises that if he fails to sign the death sentence of “self,” his position as a believer becomes utterly intolerable, the acme of contradictions. He begins to realise that Christ not only died for him as a sinner, but that he, as a sinner, potentially died in Christ to sin, and that the former without the latter would involve him in moral contradictions deep-dyed and infamous. The logic of it all bears down upon him with the force of a demon, and drives him from his position of duplicity (unconsciously held, no doubt). He must either die with Christ to sin, or

continue to crucify Christ (the carnal mind is enmity against God, (Romans 8:7). He sees that unless Self is crucified, Christ is.

It is all the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not natural for a man to turn against himself and to begin to hate that which by nature he loves, as he loves nothing else under the sun; namely, "self." The Holy Spirit, as writes Dr. A. B. Simpson in *Drays of Heaven*, is the great Undertaker who finally brings us to the place to which God has assigned us; namely, to a sharing of Christ's tomb. But He can not bring us to a participation in crucifixion-life - bring us to the place called Calvary - without our consent. We must consent to die. All that the Cross signifies of pain and shame, ignominy, and death - the breaking of the Heart of Christ - is nothing more nor less than God's infinitely delicate and moral way of bringing us to a willingness to die. This was not too much if He could but woo us from ourselves, and get our consent to die.

That is why the Cross saves. It is not by Divine magic. It is not simply that Christ bore our sin. He did that. But the purpose of Calvary strikes infinitely deeper than that. In a sense, I agree with Lord Beaconsfield, who casts aspersions upon the doctrine of the atonement, and says that it is positively immoral. As conceived by many it is immoral. If Christ's substitutionary death for me stands before God as something the merit of which may be imputed to me simply because I accept the Saviour's sacrifice regardless of my mode of living, leaving in me the venomous weed, the dastardly thing which has caused this historic stench we call sin, to grow; then, by all that is potent in reason, I say that the Cross is immoral.

But that is not the Cross of Christ. That is the dismembered Cross of modern Christians. The Cross of Christ is substitutionary for "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all," but it is more. The very nature of the Redemptive work of Christ consummated on Calvary, is such that you can not receive its penal benefits without partaking of its moral benefits. That is to say, if you have looked to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, without coming by a profound willingness to be detached from self-unhinged from the false centre, self, to be hinged to the true, which is God - then it is safe to say that the actual purpose of God in that indescribable event, which one writer has called the sublimest moment in the moral history of God, simply has not been attained. The Holy Spirit has never had a chance to work in you so as to bring you to a spiritual participation in the death of the Son of God which in the Divine economy was corporate - the Body, the Church, dying in its Divine Head.

The Chief of the Apostles saw this so clearly that he cries out as if stabbed, when the startling thought of a possible continuance in sin, after faith in Christ, is suggested - a doctrine which even in the primitive Church had its acceptance. "Who shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Why not, if after all, salvation, as so many are taught to think of it, is simply a release from the penal consequences of sin. Ah! says the Apostle, "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into His death? ... We are buried with Him ... into death ... We have been planted together in the likeness of His death ... our old man is crucified with Him, that thee body of sin might be destroyed. ... In that He (Christ) died, He died unto sin once ... Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6).

Truth out of proportion, it has been fitly said, becomes error. The truth of Christ's substitutionary death without this that we find in Romans 6, namely, the fact, in the judgment of God, of our participation in the Cross, our oneness with Christ in His death to sin, our willingness, in a word, too have the Spirit terminate the old life of "self," the carnal life which is enmity against God, detaching us from "self," and centring us in God - the truth, I repeat, of the Former held without the truth of the latter, precipitates the holder into the confusion which error always entails: It is a decapitated gospel, which, because it is a false home, may do, in some cases, more harm than good.

In the Memoirs of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, there is a strange story connected with the Madame's visit to India, which fits most beautifully into this line of thought. A Missionary, who later gave himself with the zeal of an Apostle to the task of propagating the writings of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, which almost all bear upon the believer's identification with Christ in death and resurrection, had a dream that greatly impressed him. It was of the Cross of Christ. However, it was not the Saviour's bleeding form which held his eye. It was an exceedingly ugly thing, an indescribably loathsome thing, the nature of which he could not make out. What was this thing which so horrified him? Later, as he heard the message of identification, and realised that with Christ he had been crucified, the Spirit revealed to him that this loathsome thing he had seen in his dream, was none other than himself.

Oh! that the Church might catch a fresh vision of Calvary and come to appreciate the meaning of the deeper aspects of the Cross; that Christians might realise that Christ's object was to terminate, as it were, the "old creation," taking Man (Christ was the Son of Man) down into the grave to destroy the "body of sin," putting an end to the "old life," and then to bring him forth in resurrection power charged with the dynamic of a Heavenly life. Speaking of Jew and Gentile, Paul says: "Christ ... having abolished in His flesh the enmity ... for to make in Himself of twain, one new man ... by the Cross" (Ephesians 2:15-16). What a spiritual revolution it would work in the life of the Church. How the tidal wave of a Divine life would sweep through her, charging the members of Christ's body, so many of whom are languishing in the sloughs of spiritual decrepitude, with a fresh joy, and firing them with a Heavenly life - the Life of the Ages. The Church, as has said the great French preacher, Lacordaire, was born crucified and until, like her Divine Head, she falls into the ground and dies, she abides alone, the life-giving streams can not break forth from her bosom. It is not, as some one of our British brethren has said, a great stir in the realm of fleshly doing, but a Divine dying, which will bring the Church again to a flaming Apostolic zeal, and a fruitfulness comparable to that of primitive Christians.

God grant us the grace to be clear about one thing: Christ does not come into our lives to patch up the "old man." Here is where unnumbered multitudes of Christians have been "hung up." They thought it was Christ's mission "to make them better." There is absolutely no Biblical ground for any such idea. Jesus said that He had no intention of pouring His new wine into old pig-skins. He said that He had not come to bring peace, but a sword. He said that unless a man should renounce himself utterly, he could not be His disciple. Christ does not come to us to simply straighten out the "old life." He has never promised to make us better. His entire redemptive work consummated upon the Cross, rests upon the assumption (it is more than an assumption - God says it is a fact)

that man's condition is such that only a dying and a being born again, can possibly meet the exigencies of the case. So far from attempting to patch man up, and then leaving him to imitate as best he can the pattern given in Judea two thousand years ago, Christ takes him down into the grave where the "old life" is utterly terminated, and then makes him the participant of His resurrection. Christ our Lord fastens us to Himself and imparts to us an entirely "new life." But we have the new upon the basis of our refusal of the old. Christ is the Vine, we are the branches. He is the Head, we form the body.

Paul's epistles are punctuated by a momentous "if," which again and again points us to Calvary, and startles us with an imperative demand - we must consent to co-crucifixion. "We shall live with Christ, if we be dead with Him." "We shall be with Him in the likeness of His resurrection, if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death."

"We shall reign with Him, if we suffer with Him."

I have often wondered why, in that symbolic standard Moses lifted up in the desert, and to which our Lord in that classic interview with Nicodemus says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, must the Son of Man be lifted up" - I have wondered why it had to be a serpent. Why not something lovely, inasmuch as it was to typify the King in His love work upon the Cross? We read that all who saw the serpent were healed. But why a serpent - why not a rose. Was it not the Rose of Sharon who it represented? It was only after I had discovered the principle of identification that I came to understand. It was not there on Calvary's Cross alone, our "old man being crucified in the second Adam - the Representative Man - who was there upon the accursed Tree, not for Himself, but for man; there as One so identified with suffering, sinning man, so merged with the Human its iniquity and its depravity, that He could not die to self and to sin without that man should ethically die in it, since my accursed, loathsome "self-life" was nailed there to the Cross with Christ, and in the judgment of God, died in Him. What more fitting symbol than the serpent? There is in man a serpent which has stung him with sin unto death, and poisoned the springs of his being and plunged him in the night of alienation from God. The vile thing is removed and a new life injected, that is, to say the least, most unenviable. No other need be pronounced, no other doom sealed, no other action involved - the very nature of "self," once we get use into its true workings, and its real nature, is such that misery must follow in its wake. It is exorable law.

Not long ago, I was reading about the strange lot of certain young ladies who are employed in a laboratory where contact with radium is inevitable. These young ladies know that upon entering this factory their fate is sealed. They will die. After a few months, or years - I do not recall the exact time, they are released from their work with a handsome cheque for ten thousand dollars. Some live a year, some two, some three, but all eventually die from the effects of radium. Hence the ample remuneration. Doctors have examined girls who have thus toiled in contact with radium, and have found by means of the X-ray, that a strange fire slowly consuming the life, burns in their bones. Radium kills. It is the most highly concentrated force known to scientists.

Two thousand years ago, there in the manger of Bethlehem, God gave to the world His only-begotten Son. In Him, was concentrated the infinite love of the Father. But the

full force of that redeeming love was not released upon a sin-stricken world until there on Calvary the flaming heart of the Beloved broke. Then it was that the Radium of the Celestial was focused upon the great cancer of humanity's sin and shame. Radium kills. There is no power under Heaven that can withstand its concentrated dynamic. The Cross kills. The man who exposes himself to Calvary soon discovers that a hidden fire burns within his bones. The old "self-life," so resentful, so fussy, so greedy, and so touchy, so haughty and so vain, so blind to all save its own particular lust, so ready to sacrifice the good of the many if only its own glory may be secured - the old "self-life" can no more resist the impact of Calvary, than some frail barque, the onrush of a great tidal wave.

Dr. Marbie in his notable work on the Cross, speaks of the Saviour's death as "Immortal-dying." It generated a force - moral force destructive of sin - beside which all the cold ethics of the ages, all the precepts of the moralists, yea, all the laws of the nations are as the twinkle of a star beside the sun's meridian blaze. Indeed, it was not mere dying. The rocks were rent, and the earth quaked when in that hour of triumph the Son of Man cried out (the Evangelists insist that it was with "a loud voice"), "It is finished." Life did not merely ebb out. The force of it increased. That is why in the final hour the great Cry of Consummation shook the very earth. "When the centurion saw that so He cried out ... he said: Truly this Man was the Son of God." (Mark 15:39). Rightly does Dr. Mabie speak of the "death-resurrection-mid-process." The resurrection was in the death, and the death is in the resurrection. Now this concentrated Moral Radium, if I may so speak, is released in the believer's spirit when he yields himself to the Christ of the Cross. The "old life" brought under the dynamic of the Cross, is doomed to die. Resurrection life takes its place. Little wonder the Apostle to the Gentiles cried out "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom I am crucified unto the world, and the world unto me."

"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God." (Power, Greek, *Dunamis*, from whence we get our word Dynamite.)

CHAPTER 3

PARTICIPANTS OF THE CROSS CHRIST'S DEATH OUR DEATH - PART TWO

The full meaning of our identification with the Saviour in His death, can not be taken in at a glance. We must tarry here at this place called Calvary in order that the Holy Spirit might reveal to us the deep implications of our participation in Christ's Cross.

The natural man can not receive these things. They are spiritually discerned. But, if we are willing and anxious to experience the deeper things of God, the Spirit will not fail to do His work. The Truth which Jesus said would set one free, will be unfolded to us. But, we shall not only see and understand. Far more - these truths will be woven into the fabric of our very being. No Scriptural truth which has to do with our Christian life can be said to be really ours until it has wrought within us and brought us into harmony with itself. As Christians we can not speak of possessing truth apart from Him, who is the Truth.

Mature Christians who have experienced an inner crucifixion, and who know what it means to count upon Christ's death, reckoning themselves dead to sin, and alive unto God through Christ, even after the lapse of years, are led to discover deeper depths of the "self-life." Some fresh test, some circumstance which brings with it the great question of the Father's will or self-will, suddenly reveals the workings of hidden "self-life." They may have thought that they were wholly the Lord's, and that the "old self" was buried with Christ, but some sudden shifting of the scenes, seemed to awaken the old life and to set in motion what has been called "the wheel of nature." As the Spirit unveils to them the secret workings of the "self-life," they come to realise their need of a fresh and a deeper appropriation of the Cross. Their only way out is through a deeper participation in Christ's death. Only the Radium of Calvary can remove the remaining roots of the old cancer. They rise, so to speak, to higher heights of spiritual life, by sinking themselves into deeper depths of death. However deep they may have gone, Calvary has for them still undreamed of depths of crucifixion. It is both a position once and for all taken by an act of faith, in which the believer commits himself to the place God assigns in the death of His Son, and a process of growth in which the believer appropriates according to his need, an ever-deeper life of communion with the Saviour's death. Paul said that he longed to know Christ and the power of His resurrection ... being made conformable unto His death (Philippians 3:10). It is all summed up in the great paradox of the gospel: "He that loseth his life shall find it ..."

Not, of course, that there is any nullification of personality involved. Quite the contrary. Paul was no less Paul after the realisation of his oneness with Christ in death, expressed in that amazing pronouncement of the Galatian Epistle: "I am crucified with Christ." He could, with infinitely more right say: "Nevertheless I live ..."

Once the Cross removes the "I-life" so that the soul becomes "God-centred" personality in all of its glory and the full fruition of its powers, begins to develop. We can only possess ourselves when God is supreme in our lives.

If this is not clear, I beg the reader to hold in reserve all judgment as to the truth of my thesis, and to go forward with me in the development of the subject for I have

confidence in the Spirit. He is the Spirit of Truth. No truth related to the great work of redemption, as has already been said, can be held without Him. He will unfold to us the fact of our participation in the Cross of Christ, and give us the courage to abide by the consequences. It is all His work, and He can not fail.

We must constantly bear in mind that our death in Christ is a potential communion. Though from the Divine viewpoint it is a thing long since consummated, historically and objectively completed (we are told to reckon on it as a thing done, Romans 6:11), yet from the human angle, it is something held in trust for us which only upon the exercise of faith becomes effective, in experience. Just as the Saviour's substitutionary death for us becomes effective in the blotting out of our sins upon the exercise of faith, so our participation in Christ's death for the removal not of sins this time but of sin as a principle (the old life with its enmity against God and its infatuation with self) becomes effective upon the exercise of faith. The one we might call a participation in the penal benefits of Christ's redemptive work, the other, a participation in its re-creative moral forces. Our willingness is the supreme condition in the reception of either the one, or the other, though as has been stated in the previous chapter, we do violence to the Spirit of the Cross in any conscious or unconscious disassociation of the two. They are one.

When I say our willingness is the prime condition, I mean to say that God's respect for man's freedom is something so great that we may say that God can not when lean will not. He can only work these mighty works which so greatly and so eternally affect man's being, upon the condition of his consent. Wrought upon any other basis they could have no meaning. In the act of creation, crowning man with that Divine prerogative, the freedom of the will, God limited Himself. Moved by infinite love, He shared with man His very Divinity, setting bounds to His own Omnipotence by endowing man with the power to choose. Now, these bounds on the Divine side never have been and never will be violated. God woos man, but never forces him. He appeals in a thousand ways to the best in him, but never coerces him. He pleads with him, shows him the heinous consequences of sin (witness the Cross), but He never obligates him to come back into loving relations with Himself.

So we must choose. Will we be dominated by Self, or Christ? Will we continue to pamper self and crucify Christ afresh, or will we die to the self-life (call it what you will, flesh-life, the old life, the carnal - it matters not), and rise up out of the grave to live in the power of Christ's resurrection, complete in the will of God?

This is the great issue which the Cross of Christ raises. That we might be compelled (in a moral way, not by the coercion of force) to come to grips with this the supreme question of all time - yea, eternity has no greater question - God conceived the sublime object-lesson of Calvary. And that we might decide aright, that we might make no mistake in our decision, yea, that we might choose to stand with God and irrevocably break with self, Christ humbled Himself - wits willing to be spat upon, willing to be reviled, willing to be classed with criminals, willing to hang in ignominy before a jeering rabble upon the accursed tree. Could the wisdom of the ages conceive of a more potent way - a more irresistible way - a surer way of obtaining man's consent to be detached from self? If anything more designed to engender in man a loathing for self, and a love for God, could have been found, we may be sure that the Eternal

Wisdom would not have failed to produce it. "Christ crucified" - yea, verily, this is - "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:23-24).

"Our old man (some versions have it in the present, some in the past tense - both are true) was crucified with Christ." Potentially it is a completed transaction. Judicially, as believers we are dead in Christ in the ethical sense. Thus, the Father judges us. We can neither add nor subtract from a Divinely consummated work. In the Federal Head of the new race, those who spring from this the Second Adam, are crucified. Your being a German or a Frenchman makes inevitable certain habits of mind, a certain temperament of soul. Your being a Christian makes inevitable a Crucified life. The Church did not come forth from the womb of the Eternal until upon the Cross that life had been generated.

For this purpose Jesus came. His death was no mere accident. He was "slain from the foundation of the world." His death was not simply that of a martyr. "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:17-18). "Now is my soul troubled (referring to His Cross); and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this Cause come I unto this hour" (John 12:29), Verily, His death was no afterthought, but the indispensable achievement incident to the engendering of a Crucified Church. A crucified Christ that He might have crucified followers.

But, I repeat, we must choose. If the Christ spirit is to blossom out in us in its fullest splendour so that we shall attain the measure of the stature of the Perfect Man, we must, by an act of the will, yield ourselves to that which is already potentially our status before God: identification with the Cross of Christ. We must, on the basis of the Cross, and our oneness with Christ in death, refuse the "old life." "The Kingdom of God suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." We must not only refuse the "old life" in a sublime moment of surrender when the truth of our oneness with Christ bursts in upon us, but we must do it consistently, every time nature would reinstate itself. We must do it as consistently and as habitually as we would, so to speak hold our noses from the stench of some filthy alley which daily we must pass. In a sense, you have it once and for all in a position you intelligently take, for you are grafted into the Trunk of the Eternal Christ whose "death-resurrection-mid-process," you share; but in another sense it is all held in Divine trust so that you might as a free moral agent choose, and choose again, and again, and continue to choose. Which will you have? The Divine Life which flows as a great river of life from the Throne and from the Lamb? Then you must refuse your own life. It has been corrupted by sin. Cut yourself off from it by standing in Christ's death. Receive a Heavenly life moment by moment. Do this, and you shall be more than conqueror. Do this, and you will no longer agonise over a role, seeking to imitate the Christ; you will all unconsciously, spontaneously walk as Jesus walked. You could not be anything but like Him, sharing as you do His death and His resurrection. It will be an easy thing, a joyous thing, a lovely thing - like the play of children. It is now natural for you to be Christian for you have been made a partaker of the Divine nature.

Oh! that the Church might see this sublime Truth. She has been enjoying a fifty per cent. redemption because she has not realised the implications of the Cross. She has not been willing to die with her Lord. She does not "possess her possessions" because

she has not learned to reckon herself dead to sin. She is still under the thralldom of the "flesh, the world, and the devil," because she has not believed her Lord, who over and over, by precept and by example, and finally by the far depths of His self-emptying on Calvary, sought to inculcate the sublime principle of self-renunciation. She has not believed that eternal life can only be found by an utter renunciation of the "old life." She has sought to imitate her Lord - in the energy of the "flesh-life" reproduce His way. She has not been willing to acknowledge her utter inability in this regard, and to lay down her own life in order to become the participant of the Heavenly. She can not convey life to a dying world because she does violence to her covenant. That covenant was made on Calvary. It is a covenant of death. Christ led the way, He bids us follow. A deep eternal union, a grafting of the soul into Christ, a great merging of interests, purposes, aspirations, all, is to be consummated. This is the gospel. But God has, in terms so unmistakable, so eloquent, so sublime, so provoking that all ages and all races, and all generations might not fail to grasp the meaning, revealed upon what basis this union may be achieved. It is through the Cross of Christ. The "old life" must be drained out, and in the person of the Son of Man it was terminated. But the Church has not come under the consuming fires of the Radium of Golgotha. Hence, her impotence in this great hour when a world crisis not only economic but moral is upon us.

It is folly to talk of revival apart from a deep participation in the Cross. Christian leaders have become suspicious. One hardly dare speak of revival. And the Church does well in holding herself aloof from all clap-trap Evangelism. All revival in the Church which springs from the "flesh-life," that is, the merely natural, which is brought about by a mere working up of the "soulish-life"; all revival which fails to cut in upon the "old-life" and bring it to the place called Calvary for execution, is spurious. If God were to lend Himself to such revivals and such gatherings, noted for their wild-fire (two of Aaron's sons lost their lives because of the introduction of strange fire into the ceremonial offerings of the Israelites), if, I repeat, God were to place the seal of His approval upon such counterfeit fire, He would constitute Himself an enemy of the Cross. He would be antagonistic to the Son. He would be reviving what Christ has slain. Saul might refuse to hew down Agag, but not Samuel. "The flesh profiteth nothing," "Our old man is crucified with Christ." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." We read in Exodus that the oil was not applied until first the blood had been sprinkled. The oil (Holy Spirit) after the blood (Cross) (Exodus 31:32). To share the Christ-life, we must partake of Christ's Cross.

It is interesting to note how that in the great Book of Nature, this same lesson is taught. There is hardly a page in all the Book which fails to emphasise the fact that all life springs out of death. Not a tree, not a blossom, not a shrub, not a fruit, but what cost the death of a seed.

The other day a cotton planter took me out to see his plantation. I am so glad that he insisted that I follow him out between the rows of cotton, for God spoke to me through my friend's exposition of the ways of cotton seed. He dug up half a dozen seeds - just sprouting - to show me, in a manner I can never forget, that before the seed sends any sprouts up it sends a long root down. One would imagine that the seed already buried would have enough of death, and that it would send its first sprout up for air and light and freedom. No - first down deeper in its already hidden tomb.

How clearly through Old Testament type and symbol and story, the Holy Spirit flashes light upon this mystery - this fact of our co-crucifixion with Christ. Abraham must sacrifice his Isaac. Isaac was spared, yet, in spirit, Abraham offered him up. It was because he had done this thing that the promise was made: "In blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of Heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore." And even previous to that, we read, that it was from "the womb as good as dead" that he issued. Joseph is buried in an Egyptian prison before he rises to become a veritable saviour, seated on the throne which he seemed to share with the mighty Pharaoh. For forty years on the lonely slopes of Midian the fiery Moses is schooled. There were graves, if I may so speak, scattered all over the mountainside where hope after hope was buried until at last self goes down in utter annihilation. But for those graves, the Man of God who spoke face to face with Jehovah, who became the moral giant of antiquity, and whose guiding hand will be felt in the affairs of nations until the end of time, could not have been. If Leviticus with its myriad sacrifices, its rivers of blood, means anything, it means that God meets man on but one basis - the basis of the Cross.

Our pleasure-infatuated, jazz-intoxicated age will stop its ears and gnash its teeth as those who stoned Stephen. For these things hurt. But, those who have tasted of the Lord, and pant after the wine of Heaven; those who can not be satisfied with anything short of the fullness of the Spirit, and whose hearts are, as it were, "a furnace of desire" for the deep things of God, these truths that cut and burn, and blast away the old-life are welcomed with an unspeakable joy.

Dr. Trumbull, in that masterful study of ancient sacrifices, Blood Covenant, points out that all the peoples of antiquity, of whatever race, or country, practiced in one form or another, sacrifices, either of animals, or of human beings. He wisely gathers from a study which took him to the sacrificial altars of countless aborigines, that an instinct so universal and so deep-seated reveals the fact that man in his blind gropings after God, moved by the deepest intuitions of the race, never has attempted to establish harmonious relations with the Divine, without it be upon the basis of death.

The Israelites must go down into the valley of the Jordan, leaving in the bed of the stream twelve stones, in order to enter the land of milk and honey. The waters return as Israel passes, burying the twelve stones, symbolic of Israel's twelve tribes. Israel can not abide in Canaan without a constant abiding in death through the twelve symbolic stones, buried in the stream (Joshua 4:9). David does not come to the throne until in the caves of the Philistines, where he was hunted down like a dog by the infuriated Saul, he dies - deaths innumerable. The Psalms, with all their varied loveliness, so adapted to human woe, their seraphic unfolding of the life of communion, could not have been, but for the inner crucifixion in the heart of the sweet singer of Israel, brought about by the mad persecutions of Saul. Isaiah sees the Lord and is undone. He must be purged of the old life by a fiery coal from off the altar of Heaven. Jeremiah dies a thousand deaths as he weeps over the chosen people. Jonah is pitched into the sea and is swallowed by a whale - even then he does not come forth wholly purged from self. God's people have never in any age come to the mountain-peak of spiritual attainment, the glory of unbroken communion with the Most High, without having the "self-life," the "flesh-life," brought again and again to the dust of death. When the "fair one" of Canticles cries out: "kiss me with kisses of thy mouth" (the symbolic languages

of Canticles indicative of the soul's thirst for union with Christ), speedily there follows the confession: "A bundle of myrrh (bitter) is my well beloved to me." "My beloved is as a cluster of Cyprus (cemetery-tree) in the vineyards of Engedi." Ah yes! it must be death.

The Beloved can not bring us to union with Himself without a deep participation in His Cross. The fretful, greedy, self-centred, fussy, lustful, hateful "flesh-life" (see Galatians 5:19, for an analysis of "flesh-life") must die. It must be absolutely and mercilessly terminated. At this point our Saviour must be firm. He dare not spare. He must not waver. He is compelled to be severe. He can not bring us to the highest without coming between us and the lower.

Have you taken your place with Christ in His death? By an act of faith you must lay hold of that death as your death; you must place Christ's Cross between yourself and "the body of sin." You must learn to refuse on the basis of your crucifixion the life of nature, the so-called "flesh-life." You must take your stand with Christ on Calvary ground and each time that the "self-life" would assert itself, say: "In Christ I died. In His name, I refuse." This done, the Holy Spirit will bear witness to your faith and set you free, and keep you free.

CHAPTER 4

PAUL: THE CHIEF EXPONENT OF CO-CRUCIFIXION

Though the Apostle Paul never knew Christ “after the flesh,” he seems to have had a deeper insight into the mysteries of the Faith than the other Apostles. He was the dominant force in the shaping of the character and life of the nascent Church. After the Master, he is the outstanding personality of the New Testament, making the greatest contribution to the literature and the growth of the Church. Yet, he knew not Christ “after the flesh” as did the other Apostles; he had never come under the sway of the Saviour’s teaching and ministry.

After the Damascan Road revelation, Paul went not to Jerusalem “to confer with flesh and blood.” He went into Arabia. He wanted to be alone. Such an experience as he had - the vision of that blinding light, the sudden apprehension of that ineffable glory, the discovery that the Jesus of the accursed tree was none other than the Christ of God - such an overwhelming revelation of the power and beauty of Him, who is none other than the King of kings, made a period of silence and rapt meditation absolutely imperative. Paul spent three years in profound meditation (Galatians 1:16-18). It would seem as though he made a great mistake. What! not go to Jerusalem to confer with Peter, James, and John? Think of it, he (Paul) who had never known Jesus could have sat at the feet of the Apostles. He could have talked it all over with Peter. He could have obtained first-hand information from John. Some of us would have travelled around the world for such a privilege. Did Paul make a mistake? We will let Paul speak for himself:

When it pleased God ... to reveal His Son in me ... immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia ...” (Galatians 1:15-16).

For Paul, in that sublime hour, the supreme need was solitude, so that unmolested and undisturbed, he might give himself to an undivided contemplation of the vision. Christ filled and flooded the horizon. The glory of Christ so absorbed him that for three years he could not detach himself from the Heavenly magnet. What! go to the Apostles for light when the Lord Christ Himself had come with blinding glory to his spirit; go to men for truth when He who is the truth had constituted Himself his teacher?

Fourteen years later he went up to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1), but he makes the significant confession that those who seemed to be somewhat ... added nothing to him. The Apostles could give him no light. The contrary was the case. He, Paul, understood better. He had superior light. He knew Christ (the Christ of God) better. His insight into such questions as the relation of the Gentiles to the Church, the relation of Christianity to Judaism, the doctrine of the indwelling Christ, the doctrine of the mystical body, the universality of Christianity - his insight into the mysteries of the faith was deeper. His judgment was sounder. The three years in the Arabian desert at the feet of the glorified Christ had done infinitely more for this once proud Pharisee, than the three years with the Man - Jesus - had done for the fishermen Apostles. Paul was always ahead of them - as a missionary, as a theologian, as a preacher, as an organiser, as a saint. After our Lord, it is to Paul that the Church owes the greatest debt.

Now, how do we account for this? Paul, who had never known Jesus after the flesh, knew Him better after the Spirit. He, as none other was hid with Christ in God. He had been caught up to the third Heaven where he heard things unspeakable, unlawful to utter. He it was who prayed for his Ephesian brethren, that the Lord would grant to strengthen them with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith; that they, rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and that they might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now what was the central doctrine upon which Paul focused his genius? Was it justification by faith? Many would say that it was. However, a study of Paul's Epistles brings one to the conviction that the great Apostle's glorying was not simply in the fact that Christ had died for him. With that, there was always associated another aspect of the Cross, namely: the fact that he (Paul) had died in Christ.

"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" (Galatians 5:14).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

"Our old man is crucified with Him (Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Romans 6:6).

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2).

"For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

This seems to be the sublime lesson which the Saviour there in the Arabian desert where Paul listened in rapt wonderment, burned into the fibre of his being. It was the deep meaning of Calvary which the Master unfolded to the now broken Pharisee - to him who was to become the greatest of the Apostles. The veil was drawn aside and Paul saw into the hidden mystery of the Cross. He saw himself there with Jesus - in the purpose of God potentially crucified. For Paul, the Christian life was never to be a mere imitation, but a glorious participation in the Saviour's death and resurrection. For him, the believer was a member of Christ's body - bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh. For him, to live was Christ. He would not have some of self and some of Christ, or even a little of self and much of Christ. He simply would have none of self, and all of Christ. He saw that God had laid not only sins upon the Son, but also the Sinner, and that in Him he (Paul) had actually, if potentially, died. He never wavered. He committed the "self-life" to death and stood forth before the world free in Christ.

So utterly does the great Apostle identify himself with Christ, realising as he does that this identification of all believers with the Federal Head of the New Race, Christ the Lord, was something which in the mind of God had been conceived as man's way out of sin and the thralldom of the corrupted "flesh-life," and which springs, as it were, from the very nature of redemption (Christ identifying Himself with man, taking the form of a man in the Incarnation and suffering for man upon the Cross that man might

identify himself with the One who had died for him and in Him die to sin)-so utterly, I repeat, does the Apostle identify himself with his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he sees in his own sufferings as a follower of Christ what we may call a prolongation of Calvary. Paul speaks of it as a filling up that which was lacking of the afflictions of Christ. In a word, the Apostle interprets his own suffering in the light of the Cross.

We see this in the second Corinthian letter where he dwells upon the persecutions and trials which he bore. "We are troubled on every side," he says, "perplexed ... persecuted ... cast down." Then follows the amazing utterance which gives us the key for the interpretation of the deepest secret of Paul's innermost soul: "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus ..." It is Christ suffering, it is Christ receiving fresh wounds, it is Christ being crucified afresh in, and through, his servant. It is Calvary being re-enacted. Not that Paul looked upon his sufferings as in any sense a sharing of Christ's sufferings in His capacity as Sin-Bearer when He bore the sin of the world, or as a completing of the great work of expiation. That was consummated once and for all upon Calvary. In this sublime giving of Himself as a ransom for all, the sinner had nothing to do.

What I wish to emphasise is the fact that for Paul, identification with Christ is something so real that he sees in the Cross not only the death of the Saviour, but also the potential death of all those who constitute His body; something so complete that he (Paul) sees in his own sufferings as a Christian, and in the afflictions of all Christians, a constant dying of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

But we must not think of this death to which Paul says we are always delivered for Jesus' sake (2 Corinthians 4:11) as something purely negative. Out of it Paul asserts springs life-eternal life. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body ... so then death worketh in us but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4:10, 12). It is when we die in Christ to the "old life" that the barriers are all removed and the living streams break forth from our innermost beings bearing life - the life of God - to others.

Before we leave this phase of our participation let us briefly summarise its implications, as Paul saw them

First, in Christ we are dead to sin (Romans 6:11). Sin is not overcome simply by struggling against it. If it was something which always met us from without, that might not be so difficult. But our very being is soaked with it. A drop of ink in a glass of water will taint the entire glass. Self is such an insidious thing. Our very thinking is poisoned with the leprosy of self-love. Our spirit is so twisted, torn, because of self, out of its right centre, God, and rooted in the flesh; the old life is so foul in the sight of God that no patchwork, no mere polishing up, no amount of varnish will do. Jesus says we must be born again. In Christ we are taken into the tomb to be undone.

Christ can not be to us the life of God without being to us the death of self. "I came not to bring peace but a sword." Now the knife must cut if we would be free. There is no other way out of selfhood.

Second, in Christ we are dead to the world. That does not mean, of course, that some medieval cloister, or a desert retreat, or the cell of a monastery, or some St. Stylites

pillar would be more conducive to Christian living. No man ever stood nearer the heart of this world's affairs than Christ: whether in the market-place, in the temple, in the home, with the poor, the maimed, the halt, or with those who rejoiced at a bridal feast, He was ever in the stream of life where the current was swiftest and deepest. No indeed, He was not an ascetic. Yet He could say: "I am not of the world." "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world."

The world has taken on plenty of gloss since Christ's day, but the friendship of the world is still enmity with God; for the simple reason that the Spirit of the world with its shams and its lies, its greed, and its lust, springs from the monster self. Satan, working through man's pride, is still the god of this world. Be on intimate terms with this world which crucified Christ? It is unthinkable. The spirit that crucified Christ is still rampant in the world. Nothing more logical, nothing more inevitable, nothing more practicable than that the Christian should be cut off from the world. Until this world changes its attitude toward Christ, enthroning Him in its very institutions and life, we, as disciples of Christ, find ourselves compelled to stand out against selfishness and greed. We are dead to the world in Christ (Galatians 6:14).

In the third place, in Christ we die to the party-spirit. Paul, speaking in his Ephesian letter of the middle wall between Jews and Gentiles, says, that Christ broke down this wall by His Cross, making of "twain one new man." Oh! that the Church might catch this vision; that she might see herself crucified with Christ. How the walls would break down. The wall for example, of Sectarianism. "In Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew." Any intense holding of sectarian attitudes is positively un-Christian. All division is of the "flesh." Satan raises walls between spirit and spirit, group and group, sect and sect, nation and nation - Christ breaks them down. To be Christian one dare not adopt any exaggerated views of nationalism. One must die to jingoism. We are in Christ citizens of the world with vast responsibilities to the entire race. Only the Cross of Christ can do away with this welter of jingoism, and sectarianism, and nationalism. Not that a good Christian does not recognise his duties to his country. He does. Indeed, only a Christian can be all that a true patriot should be, and the truer the Christian, the truer the patriot. But over and above nationalism and sectarianism stands Christ, and as members of His body, we are irrevocably committed to the glorious program of world redemption. We have died in Christ to every divisive spirit. We can not take Christ to our bosoms without embracing humanity, for Christ identifies Himself with the interests of every living soul (Matthew 25:31-46). We can not have Christ if we will not have His Cross - and on that Cross was slain all racial enmity - in fact all that interferes with the perfect harmonisation of the life of the world for the working out of the highest interests of humanity.

"Christ ... is our peace who hath made both 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 (Jew and Gentile) one new man, that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:13-17).

Finally, in Christ we have died to the law: "my brethren ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ" (Romans 7:4). Christ has lifted us not only out of the "flesh-life" and cut us off from the world by His death in which we participate, but has taken us clear out of the realm of law. We are not under the law, but under grace - it is the

law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus which governs us. In a sense, it is still law, “the perfect law of liberty” of which James speaks in his Epistle. But we must not confound this law with the Mosaic. The one liberates, the other binds. The one gives the power to be Christ-like, the other is dead legalism. The one is an expression of the new-nature, the other is an attempt to check and control the old.

How good it is to be free - free from the dominion of the “flesh-life,” free from the tyranny of the world, free from the hideous monster which we call self; free from the legalism of a dead law which as Paul says worketh wrath; free from the bondage of fear and anxiety and worry. How good to have a liberated spirit surcharged with the life of God. It is the Cross of Christ that thus liberates. Only as we stand with Christ in His death, and appropriate by faith the liberating force of Calvary (i.e. believe that with Christ we died) can we hope to experience the true freedom for which our spirits pant.

CHAPTER 5

PARTICIPANTS OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

As we go forward step by step in the consideration of that which our participation in Christ implies, we will find that it is the key to unfathomable riches, the Aladdin's Lamp of unspeakable power, the gateway to such happiness as we had never dreamed could be possible this side the gates of Heaven.

We can not take these steps without experiencing such a radical revolution in our attitudes, our relationships, and our thinking, that all things indeed become new. We look back down upon the old way of Imitation, struggle, failure, confusion - the old way of "self," the way of the "flesh" - with unutterable relief, unspeakable gratitude that a new day has dawned. No disinherited prince who, after years of strife has at last come to his own - name, wealth, power in his father's palace - could look back upon years of loss and shame with feelings any more profound.

We find that after yielding all to the Master, He comes so to possess us by His Spirit that our very frames-of-mind are governed by Him. Are we moved to pray? He gives that spirit of prayer, access into the presence of the living God. And our prayers have a force and a vitality that leads us to laugh at the impossible. Are we tried? He holds us in Iris boson and the hisses of His mouth make: our hearts to sing. Are we tempted? He girds us with night - we are more than conquerors in Him.

The next: step which we would consider is our participation in Christ's resurrection. Not only did we (lie in Christ - in Him we arose. Our death to self is but the gate-way to a larger, fuller life - the more abundant life. As we sign our death-warrant and consign to the grave (we are sharers of Christ's tomb - Weymouth's translation of Romans 6:4) the "old life," it is only to find that we are the recipients of a life infinitely more wonderful - the life of the Ages. We become once more temples of the living God. That element of discord-self, the "fled-life" which, however religious, is still at enmity with God, for "they that are in the flesh can not please God," "the carnal mind is enmity with God" - that element of discord once removed, God conies again into His own in us and we truly live.

"God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us ... hath quickened us together with Christ ... and hath raised us up together" (Ephesians 2:4-6).

Marvellous Truth! Glorious Fact! How it enriches! What treasures of grace, what power, what glory - what a wealth of meaning. Christ's resurrection my resurrection. God raised me up together with Him. He is something adapted to my deepest need. I want life, life abundant, life eternal. My spirit pants for life. "As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God."

Jesus had said that such a life was to be at the disposal of the believer. "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "He that believeth on Me, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." "I am come that they might have life

and that they might have it more abundantly.” “I am the Bread of life, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

Were it not for this Divine life which in a measure all believers, even those who are still dominated by the “flesh-life,” enjoy (for some it is a tiny rivulet almost imperceptible, for others it is as a mighty stream, “Rivers of living water,” the degree being determined by one’s union with Christ and dependence upon Him - see Ezekiel 46, the vision of the rising waters), were it not, I repeat, for this Divine life which in a measure all believers receive, they could not participate in Christ’s Cross. Only a living creature can die. Only souls that have in a pleasure received the Christ-life can die to “self.” “Self” can not overcome “self.” We must be Christ-possessed to die to the “flesh-life.” And to the degree in which we receive Christ, we die to “self.” Or, to state the matter conversely, to come more fully into Christ we must more fully die to “self.”

In the first chapter of the Ephesian letter, Paul utters a marvellous prayer. He says to the Ephesians: “I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the, knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know ... what is the exceeding greatness of His Power to us-ward who believe.” And this power which is to us, for us, in us, who believe; whence does it emanate - what is it? It is the “power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.”

That is the matchless power which works in the believer - the power of Christ’s resurrection. Paul longed to have the Ephesians realise that fact.

When we come to consider the requirements of the New Testament as they bear upon the Christian life, we realise that they all presuppose this very oneness of the believer with Christ in the power of His resurrection. No one but a Christ-centred soul, one with Him in death and resurrection, could possibly measure up to the ideal of Christ in Christian life and service. To love one’s enemies without a deep participation in the power of Christ’s endless life, with that Divine love (Greek agape, Divine love) which the Word enjoins, would no more be possible for the purely natural man, nay, for even the Christian in whom the “flesh-life” is still in the descendency, than for a worm to play the role of a bird. There is not a New Testament requirement that does not immediately bring the believer face to face with an overwhelming dilemma. Either he must cease to move in the realm of the purely natural or die to the “flesh-life” and find in the resurrected Christ a new life - or, he must fail as a Christian. To the New Life, the life that flows from Christ, the Sermon on the Mount presents no problems. It is all natural, easy, a spontaneous expression of principles already inherent. To the “old life,” which animates man naturally, which by virtue of his oneness with a fallen race surges within him, the Sermon on the Mount can never be anything but an amazing contradiction. The ways, customs, language, of a Hottentot would be no more unintelligible or impracticable to the average European, or American, or Latin, than the Sermon on the Mount to one who has not been born again (i.e. died to the “self-life” to rise up with Christ, in the power of a “new life”).

We deceive ourselves with the cant of the hour. We talk glibly of the social gospel, and Heaven knows we need a social application of the teachings of Jesus, an injection in all the ramifications of life of the love of Christ. We talk no less glibly of following in the

footsteps of the Master. But we forget that a mere mechanical doing as Jesus did in that which has to do with our social relation, would never bring us to the Christ-life. A dead frog can be made to kick as if it were alive by the touch of an electric current.

An imitation of a Frenchman would not have me a Frenchman. I am a German and I would have to be “reborn” to be anything but what I am.

And so in the Christian life. I must be born anew. That is why Christ took me with Himself down into the grave: and brought me forth a “new creation.” He terminates my old life when there upon the Cross as Representative He died; and He imparted to me a new-life when He arose from the grave.

Christ expects nothing of the “flesh.” However religious its garments, however holy its mien, however sanctified its undertakings, it still “profiteth nothing.” It is still only “flesh.” It is still only the realm of the natural. It is still “self.”

The Christian faith is not simply supernatural in its God-ward aspects. It is not simply the Incarnation of Christ which comes under the category of the miraculous. The believer, too, becomes God-possessed. He, too, as a partaker of Christ’s resurrection comes under the sway of the supernatural. It is not simply Christ dying for the sinner. It is the sinner dying in Christ. It is not simply Christ being raised from the dead. It is the believer being raised with the Divine Head. It is not simply man reaching out after God - it is God taking the form of man and then, as the “Son of Man,” changing life’s entire process, subjecting it to the Cross for the extinction of that great monster which has been the source of all corruption, the root of man’s misery, namely: the principle of self; and bringing him out from the tomb charged with the Life of the ages - Resurrection life. This is the Christian faith - the faith of the Apostles, the “faith of the Son of God.” “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

CHAPTER 6

CHRIST'S ASCENSION OUR ASCENSION

His principle of participation. oneness with Christ has reaches so unfathomable that not even the spiritual man finds it easy to scale the heights and grasp its full meaning. We stand overawed. We stagger. Faith wavers.

I recall a recent visit to the sea after years of seclusion in a barren desert land. When my eyes caught sight of the far horizon, and the great roar of the breakers struck, as the chords of a great organ upon my heart, I stood speechless. When one looks out for the first time, after years of weary wandering in the desert land of a self-originated imitation of Christ, to the ocean of unfathomable riches which participation in Christ holds for the believer, one is not simply speechless. Like Saul of Tarsus, one falls to earth blinded by the Heavenly vision.

I must confess that when I first contemplated the phase of participation which we are about to consider, I staggered. Could it be that even this - Christ's ascension, was mine? Not hereafter, but now? Dared I mount this fiery chariot and like Elijah be swept into glory? Did the Scriptures actually teach such a thing? And how could one be upon earth and yet with Christ in the Heavens? A thousand questions surged up demanding a reply. But the Holy Spirit, who leads us, as we are willing and able to bear, into those mysteries, gave faith. I believed, and now I know. Faith is more than sight, as Hudson Taylor was wont to say. "It is the substance of things hoped for." We come actually to possess the very substance, the pith and the marrow of those unseen realities.

We are made not only partakers of Christ's death and resurrection, but of His very ascension. As Paul puts it, we were "made to sit together in the Heavens with Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus states the case in His High Priestly prayer, which had as its supreme object this very union of which we are speaking, in this wise: "I in them and Thou in Me ... Father I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory." That He had in mind His going to the Father is evident enough, for He had already said: "And now I am no longer in the world. And now I come to Thee." By faith He was already taking His place at the right hand of the Father. He was returning by the way of the Cross, the empty tomb, and ascension to the Throne He had left, and by faith He was taking with Him those who in the foreknowledge of God were to form His mystic body. The Heavenly Bridegroom was placing the Bride at His side on the Throne.

Believers and Christ are one. Therefore, the Saviour could say: "And Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me." For this purpose Christ had come: to graft into Himself a new stock; as Son of Man to constitute Himself Head of a New Race; as Second Adam to be Federal Head of a New Humanity. And as this New Man (the body) should participate in His Cross, and in the Resurrection so he should also ascend with Him into Heaven.

True, it was a potential ascension and yet even in this life, it may become actual. We must learn to possess our possessions and to appropriate by faith what by Divine Trust is actually ours. Our "experimental position" should be made to conform to our

“judicial position.” God judges us dead, raised, and seated with Christ in the Heavens. “He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3). We do well to look to the tenses of the verbs which the Holy Spirit employs, as F. B. Meyer points out. It is ours now. “He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ.” It is not death (physical dissolution) which will bring us into our heritage in Christ. It is faith. We may now sit with Him in the Heavens, because God has already made us to sit there in the Person of Christ, the Head of the Church. If this seems too much, too great a blessing for such unworthy children, let us not forget that the merest crumb of spiritual blessing comes in the same way. It is only because we are “in Christ” that we presume to address the Father at all. Since it would be just as impossible to attain the least, without Christ, why shall we not attain the highest with Him? “He that spared not His only begotten Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.” Yea, even the Throne. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne” (Revelation 3:21).

Dr. G. A. Peck, for some years a missionary in Africa, has written a book on what he calls Throne Life, or Life in the Heavens, in which he expounds this phase of the Christian life in a unique way. He states that the believer before entering into glory through the portals of death, may take his place with Christ in the Heavens and draw upon the Saviour’s Throne life. The Doctor sees the conquest of Canaan, the entrance of the children of Israel into the land of milk and honey, as the great Old Testament type. Canaan represents the highest union with Christ, the Throne-life to which every believer is called. Joshua represents the Holy Spirit who quickens and imparts faith and leads the believer into this union with Christ. The Canaanites, sons of Anak, Giants, etc., represent the mighty forces of evil, Satanic and otherwise, which oppose the believer in his attempt to “take” the land of promise - i.e. his place with Christ in the Heavens. As to Joshua the Lord said: “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you.” So to the believer the Spirit says: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ.” It is held in trust. It is already the believer’s judicially, and will become his actually upon the exercise of faith.

Though Dr. Peck’s message fell upon stony ground (such a message could only be received by Spirit-taught hearts; it seems few were prepared) the glorious truth remains. And, praise God, there are many things which cause one to believe that the Church is being roused and is about to claim her glorious possessions - rise to take her place (I do not refer to her translation at Christ’s coming) in the Heavens.

I realise that this is no “facile” doctrine, no light thing. But is anything related to Christ’s coming, His passion, His death, His great programme of world evangelisation, easy or simple? Perchance there are no mysteries connected with the Saviour’s death for the sinner? Ah! yes there are. The greatest intellects need to be shorn of pride, lest entering here they stumble and fall. And the simplest souls need grace lest they fail to see. Only anointed eyes can pierce through the veil and see into the ante-chamber of the King. If, without the Holy oil, we can not grasp the A B C of Christology, should it surprise us that the X Y Z are not easily attained? The same anointing, which according to John “teacheth all things, is truth and is no lie, which has taught us to

abide in Him,” will also enable us “to mount up on wings as eagles,” so that we may become not only potential but actual participants of Christ’s Throne Life.

A bit of psychology will, I am sure, aid us at this point. Not only the Bible, but science as well declares man to be a tripartite being. He is spirit, soul, and body. “The God of peace,” prays Paul, “sanctify you wholly and preserve you: I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.” The Bible constantly distinguishes between spirit and soul. We are told that the Word divides asunder soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12). When man fell he ceased to live in the spirit, which is the seat of God-consciousness and which God intended should dominate. He sank into “the vessel of the soul,” and then into the flesh. He became “flesh.” We read that it repented the Lord that He had made man; for He said: “he also is flesh” (Genesis 6:3).

Now the purpose of God in the great work of redemption is to bring man once more to a God-consciousness through the spirit; to quicken and to release the spirit of Man, disentangling it from that which is soulish and fleshly, and bringing it once more into the ascendancy that man might be dominated by the spirit.

So the Cross must cut, dividing asunder soul and spirit. The spirit, once released from the thralldom of the carnal, takes its place with Christ in the Heavens. The believer’s life should flow in an unremittent stream from the Throne. As to his spirit, he is translated into the Kingdom of Christ, here and now. During His earthly ministry Jesus stood in just such relations; He could say: “No man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven.” As to His spirit, Jesus was in Heaven even while He walked on earth and preached by the shores of Galilee. His life flowed in an unremittent stream from the Throne. The soul and the body were kept under.

Now when by faith we rise to claim our place in the Heavens, our spirits are released from the thralldom of the “flesh-life.” They are disentangled from the “soulish life.” We are no longer in bondage to “self.” We are set free. Our life is no longer lived at the circumference. It flows from the centre to the circumference. Thus it is that we truly come into our own, not only as sons of God, but as men - the highest realms of manhood (the Manhood of the Master) unfold within us.

Oh! the glory of the Christian life when lived in the fullness of its prerogatives, when we learn to participate in Christ in all the wealth of the redemption which He has wrought out for us. Oh! that we might see the poverty of our spirits, the barrenness of our life, the death which still envelopes us because we have not incorporated in our being all that Christ would have us to receive. John could say: “And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.” How little of His fullness have we received. Oh! how many Christians are living on starvation rations, when all the time the King would have them so filled, so charged with the life of God, so rooted in the Divine fullness that, unable to contain themselves, rivers of living water should burst forth and flow out to a perishing world. “A garden enclosed is my sister,” so speaks the Beloved (Christ) in Canticles, to the spouse (the Bride - the Church - or the individual Christian) “a spring ... a fountain ... The plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant” fruits; camphire with spikenard ... myrrh and aloes with all chief spices, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon” (Canticles 4:12-15).

CHAPTER 7

CHRIST'S VICTORY OUR VICTORY - PART ONE

At no time in the Christian's pilgrimage is he free from peril. Temptations of every hue beset his path. The farther along the road, and the greater the grace, the more subtle the snares, and the more intense the opposition. It was at the end of the road in the hour of greatest achievement, in the moment of loftiest spiritual attainment, that the Saviour experienced the sharpest and grimest conflict; and so it is with the Christian. He will never know how determined and how mighty the foe is, how cruel the enemy, how potent the opposition, until he forges his way to the highest spiritual attainment. It is when he asserts his claim to a place with Christ in the Heavens, that the great Adversary, the Prince of Darkness, begins to employ his subtlest tactics, and brings into action his most telling weapons.

It is quite possible to doubt the existence of his Satanic majesty while one is still dominated by the "flesh-life." One simply does not see. The spirit is not yet released. Satan has no great controversy, no real quarrel with those who are content to go along professing to be Christ's, while "self" in one form or another sits, so to speak, upon the throne. So long as the "old life" is not displaced so long as the Cross is simply looked upon as a distant symbol, so long as no inner crucifixion takes place releasing the spiritual faculties and entailing a vital union with Christ in the power of His ascension-life, the Enemy is not greatly alarmed. It is when the Christian realises his position of death-identification with the Divine Head, rising with Him in spirit to a place of real power, that he comes to appreciate the meaning of Paul's: "For we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in Heavenly places" (Revised Version margin). It is then that he begins to grasp the deeper significance of the Saviour's Cross.

Jesus not only came to reveal the Father's love, to express in terms of human life the Divine purpose; He not only came to heal and to teach; it was not simply to give His life as a ransom for many there upon the Cross. In the strictest sense, those were secondary objects. There was one supreme purpose of which little was said, because man in his blindness would not understand. Behind the scenes there was being enacted a mighty drama. Jesus saw Satan fall as lightning from Heaven. He saw the real enemy. Not for a second was He deceived. Back of life He saw vast hordes of demons as thick clouds enveloping the world. Men were under the dominion of the powers of darkness. The Master's supreme glory, His prime value as Redeemer, lay in the fact that He was able to break that power. He cast out demons. He faced the enemy in the desert and came forth victor.

It is significant that on that last night the Saviour should have interpreted His Cross in terms of conflict with the Satanic dominion. He said: "Now is the judgment of this world: Now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). Paul had insight into this fact for he wrote that Jesus, through death, had destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Hebrews 2:14). Elsewhere in speaking of the Saviour's Cross he declares that it was there on Calvary that He spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it (Colossians 2:14-16). It would seem that even in spiritual realms whereof we have no cognisance, when conflict takes place (in Revelation we read that there was war in Heaven) the

forces of light in their efforts to overcome, appeal to Calvary, and on the basis of Christ's victory there obtained, are able to triumph. "And they (Michael and his angels) overcame him (the Devil) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11).

But is not God omnipotent? Why could He not with one stroke have upset the whole Satanic hierarchy? He could have, but that would not have answered His purpose nor solved the problem. Man had sinned. Man had been deceived by the great Father of lies. Man had made common cause with Satan. More or less unconsciously, yet how effectively a sin-besmirched world reeking with crime testifies, man had lent himself to the great plan of the fallen Prince. God was ruled out. Rebellion broke out in the primitive camp. So it was necessary that man of his own free will should break with Satan and return to the Father. Christ as man must overcome Satan. Herein lies the virtue of it all. It was Man, "the Son of Man," employing weapons which man might use, triumphing. It was Man challenging the usurper's authority and standing for God. It cost the Saviour the ignominy and shame of the Cross, for Satan fired the Jew with a diabolic hate. No man was ever hated as was Jesus - just as no one was ever loved as was He. Any explanation of this hatred on any other basis than that of demonism simply can not satisfy. Why the best man who ever lived (perfect Man) should have been hated, as probably even Nero never was - the One who befriended thousands, communicating treasures of priceless value - remains the greatest enigma of History until we accept the Scriptural postulates. We read that "Satan entered into Judas." It was Satan who fired those hearts with the wrath of hell.

But to come to the point of interest for us. What has all this to do with participation? Much, every way. We are not only baptised into Christ's death, and raised with Him in the power of an endless life; we are the participants of His Victory over the forces of hell. When the Son of Man achieved, we potentially achieved in Him. The humblest believer may trample the "dragon" under foot. The weakest disciple who realises his oneness with Christ, may in His Name "bind the strong man" and spoil him of his goods.

It had to be through death for this reason: The "self-life" and the Satanic spirit are in unconscious affinity. However polished the former - it may shine with the culture of the ages and bear the religious glow of the best in natural religions - it is still "self," it is still "flesh-life." It has the curse of God upon it. It has the smell of infernal associations about it. It stinks. "The carnal mind is enmity with God" (Romans 8). It hates Him while it pretends to love Him. Where "self-life" dominates, be the religious professions what they may, Satan finds plenty of ground on which to work. The rails over which he runs his engines of war, are laid. Just as there are affinities in the natural world, i.e. lighting and electricity - how they coalesce; sunlight and the green of nature - how they fuse and intermingle, and are made one for the other; the glass and light - how the latter penetrates the former. The glass does not lose its character because the light passes through it. So just as there are affinities in the natural order, so there are in the spiritual. If the "self-life" is supreme, Satan does not have to be invited in. The lines are already set for the "electric" current to flow. Satan is master of ceremonies, though he be apparently non-existent. The ground is all his. That is why the Scriptures speak of that wisdom which does not descend from above as being "earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15).

So, I repeat, it had to be through death. The Son of Man through death - the utter, absolute uncompromising, all-inclusive negation of "self-life" which the Cross entailed - destroyed him who has the power of death, that is the devil. The Christian has been planted into that death. He is grafted into the Cross of the Son of God. "Our old man is crucified with Him." In Christ he dies. He shares the Saviour's tomb. And, as in Christ he dies, Satan's dominion over him is destroyed - destroyed because the "flesh-life" with its Satanic affinity is destroyed. In all realms God works according to law, and in none more strictly than the spiritual. And it is law that where the carnal mind which is enmity toward God is given free play, the Satanic hierarchy which is based upon the same principles that govern the carnal mind, and which necessarily stands in closest relation to it, has no difficulty in asserting its authority and in maintaining its power. Even Christ Himself could not set a soul free from Satan's power which failed to avail itself of the efficacy of His death, and in the power of that death failed to renounce the "flesh-life" - the so-called "old Adam-life." If He did He would be untrue to the Universe. It respects even the rights of Satan. He respects the laws of the Universe. He can only save man in ways wholly in keeping with the highest claims of morality. In other words, He must be true to Himself. He can not violate His own Nature.

I once saw this very principle at work. A missionary of my acquaintance suffered a strange breakdown which had all the earmarks of demon possession. The missionary soon comes to know the derangement which, as Dr. White of China, who has made an exhaustive study of demonism, says, has symptoms absolutely distinctive. It fell to my lot to hear the blasphemy which issued from the lips of this dear comrade - those lips which had for years proclaimed Christ. One cried out within one's soul: "This is none other than a demon from hell." Prayer finally prevailed; though there were days of agony before it did. Not even a missionary is exempt, if inadvertently, or otherwise, he gives ground to Satan by some form of "self-life," or by accepting some lie or some counterfeit emanating from the pit.

Then, too, the Authority of Christ over wicked spirits is delegated to the believer. I once happened upon an incident in Mexico City which threw light upon what has been called the "executive authority" of the Christian. The boy scouts were taking their places at street corners to learn how to deal with traffic. I watched a lad on the stool of a "gendarme." The boy signalled and the traffic obeyed. If ten thousand cars had been lined up on Avenida de La Reforma, that lad could have held up the entire procession with a single wave of the hand. And why? He stood at his post vested with all the authority of the Republic of Mexico. It was the Magic Wand law. That was sufficient. Said Jesus to the disciples: "I give unto you power over all the power of the enemy." They returned amazed and cried out: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name."

Helen Montgomery in Prayer and Missions, tells of a Chinese lad casting out a demon. A poor grief-stricken father came to the home of a Christian pastor beseeching aid for his demon-possessed daughter. The pastor was not at home. His boy taking in the situation at a glance said "I'll go with you. I've seen father do it. I know how." Afterward the lad stated that while on the way he confessed his sins and called upon the Lord for help. Upon arrival he was conducted into the presence of a poor maid writhing and foaming at the mouth. The lad immediately turned upon the unseen spirit,

in whose grip the maid had fallen, and said: "In the Name of Jesus Christ, I say, go forth." The spirit obeyed. The maid was instantly restored.

The humblest believer who realises his oneness with Christ, is invested with the very authority of the Son of God. As members of His Body we share His executive authority. Shall we not judge angels? If God be for us who can be against us? Yea, verily, mountains do move and are cast into the sea at our bidding. The Apostles exercised this power and we may exercise it. Christ stands ready to make effective the command of the humblest lamb of His flock, if that lamb is obedient. But, we can not have all that Christ has for us in this regard until He has all of us. A bit of "self" may seem insignificant enough to us, but God sees it in the light of the Cross: "self" placed the Son there. The true measure of "self" is the Cross. Pilate knew that for envy the Jews would have Christ crucified. After Calvary who ever could think lightly of envy? Envy's hands are red with the blood of the king. "Self" is still a monster and until we dethrone him (not wheedle him secretly, or, fondle him in some deep hidden love), dethrone him with the actual slaying of the Cross of Christ, we rob ourselves of infinite wealth and power; we feed on the husks with the swine.

God grant to us a disposition to die with Christ that with Him we may reign. In which case the very devils will be subject unto us.

CHAPTER 8

CHRIST'S VICTORY OUR VICTORY - PART TWO

We are all very much at sea as touching this dark subject. Among present-day Christian leaders, teachers, and preachers none seem to be willing to risk their reputation by entering into this matter. Yet, there is no greater need in the Church today than that of light on this intricate question. Witness the "isms" springing up, all under the eaves of the Church. Strange doctrines that have to do with the gifts of the Spirit, and that seem sound enough, and sufficiently grounded in the Scriptures, are causing fatal convulsions in the Body of Christ, and plunging earnest Christians, seeking fuller light, into the abyss of fanaticism. "Doctrines of demons" which according to Paul would, in the latter days, come as a flood upon the Church.

I look back over the years of my ministry as a missionary of the Cross, when Satan's dark wing oppressed me, and shudder. A missionary, and oppressed by Satan - the irony of it. Oh! the agony of the prolonged conflict when, assailed by the hosts of hell, they saw me escaping from their hands. Had it not been for the faithful Shepherd, who seeing my plight, came to my rescue; had it not been for the light which He shed upon the subtle workings of the Adversary, and the patient training which He gave me in the use of the weapons which "are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," the outcome of this warfare with the powers of darkness would have been a very different matter.

However, it is not only in heathen lands where the missionary comes to grips with demon forces for ages entrenched, as it were, in their strongholds. How many Christians there are in so-called Christian lands, who feel the weight of the murky spirit, who have been sidetracked by the great Deceiver, and who secretly groan under the thralldom of "the powers of darkness"! How few Christians there are who are enjoying that complete freedom from Satanic oppression which Jesus came to make possible! Little is being said of the "Rulers of the darkness of this world" (it is the fad of the day to pooh-pooh the idea of a personal devil-like Voltaire, who said he did not believe there was such a thing, and who nevertheless lived in mortal terror of this very monster; even the preachers of our day vaunt their scepticism in that which has to do with this Prince of darkness). Little is being said, I repeat, of that which was so real to the Saviour, in His conflict with evil; yet, Satan stalks with his millions of cohorts through the land oppressing, deceiving, murdering, inciting to evil, and plunging souls into the abyss of unutterable estrangement from God.

His chief strategy, at present, seems to be an adulterated Christianity. In a thousand and one ways he is draining out the essence - he is removing the savour from the salt - he is watering down the pure wine of the true Christian life. As has been so often said: he will float any number of truths to get into circulation one lie. He causes all our divisions. He is the father of so many counterfeit "isms." He will even give you a revival if only you keep it all in the realm of the "flesh-life." A revival which does not exalt the Cross, and which brings no soul to co-crucifixion, to a deep realisation of an inner oneness with Christ in death and resurrection, simply fails to register in Heaven. What is more, Satan may put across some of his choicest strategy under cover, in the heart of the revival, itself in the form of truth out of relation with other truths, in the stressing of some strictly sectarian view-point, in the injection of passion for the

triumph of some system of theology, in an over emphasis of emotionalism, in the setting in motion “the wheel of nature” (stirring up of “flesh-life”) through some “counterfeit.” He is willing that men shall follow Christ so long as it be in the energy of the “self-life.” He is not afraid of religion. In fact, it is absolutely essential that men be religious (i.e. bow in submission to the supernatural), for he can use to so much greater advantage souls that are open to the supernatural. The greatest crimes of history have been committed in the name of religion. Satan only fears one thing - the Cross of Christ. I do not refer to a mere symbol. I refer to all that Calvary signifies: Christ’s victory over the powers of darkness - His substitutionary death for the sin of the world, the believer’s oneness with Christ in death - in a word, the power inherent in what we have elsewhere, borrowing Dr. Mabie’s term, spoken of as the “death-resurrection-mid-process.” This is the “Rock cleft for me,” in which if I hide, I shall find shelter from the wiles of the wicked one, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

For those who feel themselves - and there are millions of professing Christians who in their secret souls know, so far as their life and walk are concerned, that the power of Satan is not yet broken - still victimised, who, in a word, are not wholly free, I would offer the following suggestions.

First: You must “remove all ground.” We give “ground” to Satan when we accept any of his lies. He often paints his lies with all the colours of the Christian faith. He quotes the Word. Witness the temptation of Jesus. We give “ground” when we fail to avail ourselves of the power of Christ’s Cross for the displacing and removal of “self-life.” If the “old life,” the “flesh-life,” is in the ascendancy, a thousand unconscious lines of communication are all set for Satan’s use. We simply have got to burn our bridges behind us and get over into God’s camp. We give “ground” when we sin. We give “ground” by the abuse of any organ or faculty. A doubt will give “ground” to the Evil One. That is why Satan tried to get the Master, to doubt. “If thou art the Son of God.” Had Jesus accepted that “if,” it would have entitled Satan to a considerable patch of “ground,” so to speak, in the Saviour’s life. If, under cover, he gets us to accept what looks like an innocent sort of doubt as regards God’s perfect faithfulness and goodness, from the vantage point given he soon forges his way into further “ground.”

The “ground” is removed by an assertion of our right to a full participation in all the fruits of the victory of Calvary. We must deliberately take our stand with Christ on victory ground; affirm what God says is true as regards our oneness with Christ in death and resurrection; deliberately refuse all “ground” to Satan, and in the Name of the Victor of Calvary take back the “ground” that may have been lost. We must claim in Jesus’ name the “ground” which belongs to the rightful King. Satan is a pretender prince. He is the usurper. He can maintain his authority over us only on the basis of lies and half-truths. We must displace these lies with the Word of God. We must take up the shield of faith “wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” It is a fight. Paul says that we wrestle with unseen foes. They are crafty; they are subtle; they are quick to discover the weak spot in our armour; they strike when we are down; they can entrench themselves in a constitutional weakness (witness 2 Corinthians 12, Paul’s thorn in the flesh which was, the Apostle says, a messenger of Satan to buffet him); they oppose and hamper and bind in a thousand ways. Of the

woman with an infirmity, whom He healed, the Saviour said: "this woman whom Satan hath bound."

But we have been made the participants of Christ, and we have an invincible claim, a blood-bought right, a glorious right springing from our oneness with the Victor of Calvary a perfect right to freedom. Are not these the good tidings which Jesus came to proclaim in the acceptable year of the Lord? Does He not proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound? Did He not cry out from the Cross "it is finished"? Is it only, if I may so speak, a ten per cent, or a fifty per cent., or a ninety per cent. salvation which He wrought out at so great a cost; or, is it all inclusive, one hundred per cent. Simon - pure salvation? The salvation which so many professed Christians have got is not worth the price the Saviour paid - the trip from glory; the infinite humiliation of the Incarnation; the ignominy of the Cross. It does not represent the victory of Calvary. It leaves Satan, if not in full control, the cruel oppressor and possessor of great fields of the spirit.

Oh! may Christians arise and take their place with Christ in the Heavens "far above principalities and powers." Their right to the air they breathe and the water they drink is no more inalienable. They are members of Christ's body and by the Word of God, the Covenant of Calvary, they are the legal possessors of all that which Christ Himself rose out of the grave to inherit. When God raised His Son from the dead and "set Him at His 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 put all things under His feet," you, too, O Christian member of the body of Christ you, who believe in Him and who have been grafted into the Vine, you, of whom Jesus said: "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in One," you, too, O Christian, were raised to sit at the right hand of God; all things have been placed under your feet. Will you not assert your right to freedom, and throw off the abominable yoke? Will you not remove, on the basis of the Calvary victory, every faculty, every power, every phase of your life whether of the spirit or of the soul, or of the body, from Satan's blighting, stultifying, deadening, damning dominion, so that in the fullest possession of your faculties you may serve God in holy freedom and joy?

Many have unconsciously come under the oppressive thralldom of the Enemy. They have given ear to his lies; they have become passive. Passivity lays us liable to demon intrusion. It is fundamental to Spiritism. The medium is passive - the "spirit" takes control. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." We are not to let go of a single faculty and expect God to control us as if we were machines. Union with Christ does not signify any such things. After coming into deepest union with Christ, so that like Paul we say: "I am crucified with Christ ... Christ liveth in me," we do not become passive. We do not give up self-control. As never before we live. Personality is vastly enhanced. The will is greatly fortified. The mind is marvellously illumined. The memory is gloriously strengthened. We are free as never before to choose, to will, to reason, and to act. We are now to act in perfect harmony with God, every faculty energised by the Holy Spirit. No, it does not lead and never should to passivity. If a single faculty has fallen into disuse and through passivity has come under Satan's baneful sway, let us in Christ's Name break the shackle, take back the ground ceded, and in full possession of our God-given faculties be free.

Finally, ground taken must be held. Satan returns in ever more subtle ways, even as he did in the case of the Saviour. And so we must be ever prepared for battle. The victory of today may be the cause of tomorrow's defeat, if it results in any glorying in the "flesh." Uncrucified "flesh-life" gives advantage to the enemy. During the World War, there were a few Germans in the American army secretly in touch with the enemy. At a critical moment these spies were at the point of betraying positions of responsibility. Had they not been discovered and shot down in time, grave consequences might have ensued. That patch of "flesh-life" may seem innocent enough, but in the hour of conflict with the powers of darkness if it is not brought under the Radium of Calvary, it will be the unprotected breach through which the enemy will pour in like a flood.

Our modern theological proprieties may forbid the use of such terms as Peter used when he wrote: "Resist the devil and he will flee" - our superior ecclesiastical airs may make those who believe in standing against the wiles of the devil feel most uncomfortable, but out on the battle-field of life where grim facts are the only things that count, it is the Christian who knows how to buckle on the armour of light and who stands against the forces of darkness that comes forth victorious, crowned with the Crown of Life.

CHAPTER 9

CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS OUR SUFFERINGS

It is striking how over and over this word Participation appears in the New Testament. We are told that we are made partners of Christ. In Romans 6, we are given to understand that His Cross is our Cross; His tomb, our tomb. In Ephesians 2, we are made to see that in Him we were raised from the dead, and actually made to sit with Him in the Heavenlies. Not only that, we are assured again and again that Christ's victory, is our victory, that we may always overcome the Wicked One, because of Calvary, and our participation in the fruits of the Cross (2 Corinthians 2:14).

And now again we are startled by the marvellous fact, that we are made to be partakers of Christ's sufferings. Peter bids us rejoice over this fact. He would have us be glad because we have been called to share the tribulations of the glorified Saviour. "Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Peter 4:13).

Paul, the great Apostle of the doctrine of the indwelling Christ, as has already been stated, was wont to interpret his trials and tribulations as a Christian, and an Apostle, in the light of the Cross, and see in them a prolongation of Christ's own sufferings. To the Colossians, he wrote: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake which is the Church" (Colossians 1:24). It was Christ suffering in and through him. The Saviour's passion is not yet over. Drops of blood still fall from His brow. It could not be otherwise, this world being what it is, and Christ being what He is.

We are not, of course, to think of this suffering as having aught to do with Christ's great vicarious suffering as the sacrificial Lamb, there upon the Cross, the burden He bore as our Sin-Bearer, when "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "This man after that He offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). "By the one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). Of this Cosmic achievement the Saviour Himself cried out with a great voice that rent the rocks, "It is finished." Nothing can be added to the work consummated on the Cross. We must take care not to permit anything of the nature of a confused thought to enter here. The entire body of revealed Truth, both in the Old and the New Testament, converges in one overwhelmingly sublime fact: Christ died for our sins. All the chorus of inspired voices are pitched to their major key. To be uncertain in our exegesis here would not only be fatal but infinitely damnable. With good reason Paul cries out: "If any one preach any other gospel ... let him be accursed." The ground of all human hope - hope which reaches out to embrace the eternal ages to come must not be trifled with.

We must not confuse these sufferings of Christ, of which we are the partakers, with the completed work of Calvary. I repeat, nothing can ever be added to that absolute consummation. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling." In that all-sufficient sacrifice for sin the believer had no part. He can only accept the forgiveness which issues from the Cross.

Nor are we to confuse these sufferings of Christ and His Body with the objective fact of our identification with Christ in His death, as set forth in Romans vi. That also is a completed thing. We are commanded to simply reckon on it as a consummated, historic fact, just as we count on the fact of Christ's death for us. For that "death-identification" we reckon back to Calvary. When we believe what God has to say about our oneness with His Son in His death to sin, and the "old life," and on the ground of God's Word simply refuse the "old life" as if it were an utterly powerless thing - which it really is, because of our communion with Christ in His death - we are released from the bondage of Self. The old life drops off like a decayed garment. We are now alive unto God. And now in the power of this new divine life, as members of Christ's body, there comes to us as an inevitable consequence a participation in Christ's sufferings. Because our life now issues from the Throne, because, in spirit, we are virtually sealed in the Heavenlies, and because, as never before, we are one with Christ - in lieu of all this we discover working within us a new spirit of love. The love of Christ constraining us, inevitably issues in a great suffering. We groan with unutterable groanings of the spirit. Could the Christ, the agony of whose prayer upon one occasion turned the sweat of His brow into blood, dwell in us by His Spirit, and pray through us, without that at times our prayer (for it is still our prayer though He inspires it) should become a groaning unutterable? Could the Christ who dwells within us, through us seek perishing souls, without that we should upon occasions be in an agony of sorrow over those who reject the Saviour's love? Could the Christ, who because of this world's injustice and greed and hate, died of a broken heart, dwell within us without that we should feel the pain of the world's sorrow and shame? Let no one imagine that because of our oneness with Christ in the Heavenlies, we are therefore brought to some fool's paradise which exempts us from further suffering. The truth of the matter is, that it simply increases our capacity for suffering ten thousandfold. It simply increases our power for the bearing of pain in an infinite manner. We begin "to bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus" (2 Corinthians 4:10). If Goethe, because of poetic sensibilities so refined and keen, found that he had withdrawn from the world, for it seemed to him that he would die from sheer pain, so great was the burden which contact with the world's sin and sorrow brought to a tender spirit,-what about one whose spirit is not simply refined, by "the muses," but brought into living communion with the Christ of Calvary?

When "praying Hyde of India" finally succumbed and took his flight to the celestial abode, doctors performed a post-mortem and found that the heart had been completely changed from its natural position. Hyde's prayer-life had been so intense - he spent whole nights groaning before the Lord, burdened for dying souls - that he literally died of a broken heart.

Witness the suffering of the early Christians, the travail of the Martyrs, the birth pangs of missionaries who are called upon to bring forth from the bowels of their compassion whole races sunken in debauchery. There can be no re-birth of souls without travail on the part of Christians. Witness the trials and afflictions of St. Francis. Juen-de-Beuf, a missionary to the North American Indians, was literally burned to death (slowly by red-hot coals, so as to increase his agony). So marvellous a spirit of tranquillity and compassion did he manifest that in the final hour of death the Indians tore open the missionary's breast and drank his blood, and ate his heart. "We would be like him," they said, "he is a god." The Galilean had won after all. It was His Face they had seen

as they watched the suffering saint, and He broke their hearts. It was Calvary being re-enacted. We are to rejoice inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings.

I have been re-reading the story of St. Francis' bloody stigmata - the sacred stigmata of the lowly and beloved Francis. Somehow it has never been hard for me to believe in Francis' wounds, which according to Catholic historians were printed upon this devout companion of lepers by a flaming seraph. Francis, they say, was wont to bleed from his hands and his feet. An exact replica of Christ's wounds appeared in the body of the great Assisan. Somehow, I have never doubted these mysterious wounds of Francis, and I am not Roman Catholic. Paul said that he bore in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus." Frances Underhill, the greatest living authority on mysticism, seems to think that Paul had experienced the holy stigmata - that the Saviour's wounds appeared in him. We do not know. Be that all as it may, wounds or no wounds, Paul was conformed to Christ's death; holy stigmata or no, Francis bore the image of the Crucified. "The flesh profiteth nothing." The great fact is that we are all to bear the Saviour's image; we are to be conformed to His death. In the power of His resurrection we are to have the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death (Philippians 3:10).

And, praise God, this suffering is not without its precious fruit. Christ turns it all to our account. He uses it all to prune the branches of the Vine that they may bear more fruit (John 15:2). Nothing touches us without first passing through His hands and being made to serve our highest eternal interests. "We bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus." Why? "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Corinthians 4:10). How are these "rivers of living water" to flow from our innermost being except the "outer-self" be broken? The grape does not yield its precious juice without the breaking of the outer wall. The walls of "self-hood" must be levelled, if we are to yield life for Jesus. That is why the Holy Spirit turns us over to death - "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh ... so then death worketh in us but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4:11).

What a blessed message for the afflicted soul. Oh! child of God, lift up your head for your redemption draweth nigh. It is not in vain that you suffer. There can be no gold without the refiner's fire. Christ is glorified in your patience. You are bidden to count it all joy when you suffer divers testings (James 1:2). From your wounds healing streams of life - Christ's own life - are flowing. This will make for the increase and edification of Christ's body. What you suffer will deepen your "death-identification-position" with Christ. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, else it abideth alone.

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:11-13).

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (2 Corinthians 1:5).

CHAPTER 10

CHRIST'S APPEARING OUR APPEARING

We have not yet exhausted the deep veins of purest gold to which this principle of participation has led us. In a sense, the most sublime of all its aspects has to do with the future developments of Christ's Kingdom. There is the great fact of the Saviour's coming about which the New Testament has so much to say. We are told to watch and pray, for we know not what hour our Lord may come. We are told to abide in Him that when He shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at His coming. We are told that the angels shall be sent forth with a great sound of a trumpet, and that they shall gather together the elect from the four winds.

The doctrine of the Second Coming may not be popular, but for that matter, what word or doctrine of our beloved Lord has been? The truth of the Second Advent may have been abused and distorted, and held out of proportion to other truths, but what word of our Master has not been abused? As good disciples of the Christ of God, we dare not be indifferent to any truth; nor dare we, without hurt to our souls, neglect any word that ever issued from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake. That the Saviour did declare again and again in unmistakable terms, that He would come again, and that the inspired writers with one voice herald the glorious appearing of the Blessed and only Potentate (1 Timothy 6:15), as the consummate event toward which all history is moving, no student of the Scriptures would deny.

Now, just because we may not be able to grasp the full significance of the Saviour's word, or understand just what this glorious appearing may involve, are we going to waver? Are we going to look askance at those who rejoice in the comfort which this great hope imparts? Are we going to fail to heed the Apostolic injunction, "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, and every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure," because we can not comprehend the *modus operandi*? Is the Saviour worthy of trust only when He is understood? Will we follow only when the intellect can support us? Is it any more wonderful than those things which have already transpired? the Incarnation, the raising of Lazarus, the Cross, the empty tomb, the ascension, our oneness with Christ in death and resurrection? What of the prophets did they understand the full import of the revelation vouchsafed to them as regards the first coming of Christ? Indeed, they did not understand; and I dare say that the marvellous events which transpired in Galilee, the proclamation of which, even after two thousand years, still causes the ears of the world to tingle, were no less baffling to them, as from ancient times they looked forward to them, than those unfulfilled prophecies to which we look forward in our day.

I am not ashamed to confess that I do not understand. But I do believe. And since I have come to realise my oneness with Christ in death and resurrection, since I have come to enjoy the full fruits of His Victory on Calvary, since I have learned to participate in the ascension of my Lord, as one who has been made to sit with Him in the Heavenlies, and since I have learned that my sufferings as a follower of the Crucified are after all a filling up of His sufferings; since the true import of the everlasting gospel has wrought in me, I look forward as never before to the coming of my King. Could it be otherwise, when I know that even in that supreme event I shall participate?

We are plainly taught that when Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory (Colossians 3:4). He can do nothing without us. We are His body. Oh! marvellous thought! Christ has bound us to Himself with ties so strong (no man would speak of his own hand as being near or far, his hand is part of himself; no man would undertake anything without a full participation on the part of every member of his body in that event), Christ has bound us, I repeat, so eternally and utterly to Himself that we must figure in His movements. Of course we shall appear with Him. It could not be otherwise - we are His body. The Church has been so grafted into the trunk of the eternal Godhead, so incorporated in His life that He and the Church are one.

Oh! the unutterable glory of this mystic union with Christ. To what an ineffable destiny it commits us. We no longer concern ourselves about whether or no we shall go to Heaven. The truth of the matter is, we would rather not go, if Christ were not there. He is Heaven. The faintest glimmer of light from His holy countenance beside which the sun is but a shadow, suffices the heart. Paul could not have done otherwise than sing there in prison when at midnight with Silas, he rejoiced. His back was bleeding with the stripes; it was midnight; he was in prison. But he sings as a participant of Christ; Heaven's ineffable light bursts in about him, and he forgets all but the fact of Christ.

We are to participate in Christ's coming. We are to be caught up. We are to be changed. Chariots of fire are to sweep us from earth in the twinkling of an eye. One thing is still lacking in our incorporation in the Godhead. Christ's work is incomplete. Redemption is still in its swaddling clothes. Paul says there is a great groaning in nature. One writer has referred to it as the trinity of groanings. The whole creation groaneth. The Spirit groaneth. We groan. For what? "For the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23). Our bodies are to be changed. We are to be glorified with Christ. As His body was glorified so our bodies are to be glorified in Him. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly ... 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 corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory ... thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:48-57).

We are moving forward toward the most stupendous transactions in the history of the human race. We would not be dogmatic. We would not quarrel over the interpretation of dispensational truth. It behooves us to be exceedingly tolerant, as Christians, as to one another's mode of interpreting the Word in its bearing on the future. Some believe that the shadow of the great Tribulation is already upon us, that we may be caught up at any moment. Others tell us that the event may not transpire for thousands of years. Be all that as it may. No one knows but the participants of Christ's Coming. Nothing can befall Him that does not befall us. We are yet to participate in a fuller measure in the fruits of redemption. We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. With Him we shall reign. The stream of life, which proceedeth from the Throne, and from the

Lamb and which breaks in upon us, so that even now “rivers of living water” flow from our innermost being, is going to just overflow all its banks some day, so that Death will be literally swallowed up in victory. Our ascension with Christ will not be merely in spirit as it is now - our participation in the ascension will, as it were, blossom forth in its true splendour; and then we shall shine as the sun forever in the kingdom of the Father. “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready ...” “And he saith unto me, write: Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Revelation 19:6-9).

Oh! that God may give us a heart to make due preparation for the participation in the yet unfulfilled history of Christ. For as we have been made to partake of the death of the Federal Head of the New Race, and in Him were resurrected and made to sit in the Heavens in spirit, so, in that sublime event toward which the Church moves, the marriage supper of the Lamb, we too, shall participate. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

CHAPTER 11

A TYPICAL CASE

The value of any principle in the realm of religion and j ethics can only be determined by its bearing upon life. Human happiness must be the standard of measurement. Is there real dynamic in it for the ennoblement of life, and for the fulfilment of man's deepest spiritual aspirations?

When we apply this standard to the principle of participation as over against imitation in our relation to Christ, our contention that the Christian life should be lived on the basis of the former, receives an overwhelming confirmation.

In my biographical studies - I have for many years been a lover of biography - I recently came upon what I shall call a typical case, in the experience of the founder of the China Inland Mission. Whether we agree, or not, with the missionary principles laid down by Hudson Taylor, an unbiased study of his life and work will not fail to bring us to the conclusion that he was one of the great missionary peers of history. His achievements were colossal. At a time when the interior of China was closed to foreigners, and when ignorance, fanaticism, and race prejudice made it exceedingly hazardous to venture into the interior of China, Dr. Taylor established a chain of Missions in almost all the great provinces of the interior. The Church records no more amazing story of sacrifice and of achievement than that of the humble doctor who laid the foundations of the kingdom of God in the interior of China.

But Hudson Taylor was not always victorious, not always that joyous expounder of the faith, which in the later period of his life all who came to know him, found him to be. The fact of the matter is that even though he had already achieved great things as a missionary, and had mightily influenced the Church in the homeland, though he was highly esteemed as a man of God and held in reverence by Christian leaders of many lands, yet, in his letters to loved ones he pours out the grief of his heart, the pain of his secret soul, over the fact of his spiritual poverty. There is a hidden plague in his heart. He is consumed by secret longings. Like Paul, he cries out: "Oh! wretched man that I am! who will deliver me from the body of this death?" He longs to be victorious over sin. He struggles, he agonises. In spite of all his efforts, sin as a principle continues to master him; the Saviour is no more real to him than before; he can not, in the true sense, overcome. If ever a man strove to imitate the Master, he was that man. But all to no avail.

In 1869, a great change took place. It was so radical, so complete, so overwhelming, that all Mr. Taylor's fellow-workers were soon cognisant to the fact. A tide of Divine life swept through the Mission. A change so great had been wrought, that in all the doctor's attitudes - his correspondence, his sermons, his prayer life, his very purposes - a new light shone forth.

I quote from a letter by Mr. Judd: "He was a joyous man now, a bright, happy Christian. He hid been a toiling, burdened one before, with latterly not much rest of soul. It was resting now in Jesus, and letting Him do the work, which makes all the difference. Whenever he spoke in meetings after that a new power seemed to flow from him, and in the practical things of life, a new peace possessed him. Troubles did

not worry him as before. He cast everything on God in a new way and gave more time to prayer ... from him flowed the living water to others.”

“When I went to welcome him,” wrote Mr. Judd, “he was so full of joy that he scarcely knew how to speak to me. He did not even say ‘how do you do?’ but walking up and down the room with his hands behind him, exclaimed: ‘Oh! Mr. Judd, God has made me a new man! God has made me a new man.’”

To his sister he wrote: “I feel as though the first glimmer of the dawn of a glorious day had arisen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust.”

But just how was this great change effected? I draw somewhat at length from a letter written to his sister, October 17, 1869: “... as to work, mine was never so plentiful, so responsible, or so difficult; but the weight and strain are all gone. The last month has been perhaps the happiest of my life; and I long to tell you a little of what the Lord has done for my soul ... Perhaps I shall make myself more clear if I go back a little ... My mind has been greatly exercised for six or eight months past, feeling the need, personally, and for the Mission, of more holiness, life, power, in our souls. But personal need stood first and was the greatest. I felt the ingratitude, the danger, the sin of not living near to God. I prayed, agonised, strove, fasted, made resolutions, read the Word of God more diligently, sought more time for mediation and prayer - but all was without effect. Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of sin oppressed me ... each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power ... Then came the question - Is there no rescue? Must it be thus to the end - constant conflict and instead of victory too often defeat? How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive Jesus, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God (i.e. God-like) when it was not so in my own experience? ... I hated myself. I hated my sin; and yet, I gained no strength against it. I felt I was a child of God: His Spirit in my heart would cry: ‘Abba Father’; but to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless.

“All the time I felt assured there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how was I to get it out? ... I knew full well that there was in the Root abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As the light gradually dawned on me, I saw that faith was the only pre-requisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fullness and make it my own. But I had not this faith! I strove for it but it would not come; tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply laid up in Jesus, the fullness of our precious Saviour - my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. Sins committed seemed but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause, which could not, or would not, take God at His word, but rather made Him a liar. Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world - yet, I indulged in it ...

“When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes, and the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never known it before. McCarthy, who had been exercised by the same sense of failure, but saw the light before I did, wrote: ‘But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One.’ As I read I saw it all, ‘If we believe not, He abideth faithful.’ I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh! how joy flowed) that He had said: ‘I will never leave

you.' Ah! there is rest I thought. I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me?

“But this was not all He showed me, nor one-half. As I thought of the Vine and the Branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured direct into my soul ... I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. The Vine, now I see, is not the root merely, but all - root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit; and Jesus is not only that: He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh! the joy of seeing this truth. I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in - Christ.”

And now comes the part bearing yet more directly upon the subject in hand:

“Oh! my dear Sister, it is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Saviour; to be a member of Christ. Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? Or your head be well-fed while your body starves? Again, think of its bearing on prayer. Could a bank clerk say to a customer: ‘It was only your hand wrote that check, not you,’ or, ‘I can not pay this sum to your hand, but only to yourself’? No more can your prayers or mine be discredited if offered in the Name of Jesus (i.e. not in your own name, or for the sake of Jesus merely, but on the ground that we are His members) so long as we keep within the extent of Christ’s credit - a tolerably wide limit.

“The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything ... for He, I know, is able to carry out His will and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for the easiest positions He must give me grace, and in the most difficult, His grace is sufficient. It makes little difference to my servant whether I send him to buy a few cents worth of things, or the most expensive articles. In either case he looks to me for the money and brings me the purchases. So, if God place me in great perplexity, must He not give me much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trial, much strength? His resources are mine, for He is mine ... all this springs from the believer’s oneness with Christ.

“I am no better than before (may I not say, in a sense, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be); but I am dead and buried with Christ - aye, and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, ‘and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.’ I now believe I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best, all my past experience may have shown that it was not so; but I dare say it is not now, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away. I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realised as present as never before. He can not sin and He can keep me from sinning. I can not say (I am sorry to have to confess it) that since I have seen this light, I have not sinned; but I do feel that there was no need to have done so. And further - walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly confessed, and pardoned; and peace and joy (with humility) instantly restored ...”

I have quoted at considerable length from the Doctor's correspondence, because his experience illustrates so strikingly the incalculable difference which this principle of identification makes. The Doctor had been a burdened Christian - he becomes a joyous, triumphant one. He had been a Christian who strove and agonised in the energy of the "old life" to be Christ-like, only to be brought at last to utter self-despair. He realises, at last, his position of identification with Christ in death and resurrection, and there emerges a new man, who is swept forward by the tide of a Divine life, and who no longer serves mechanically, from a mere sense of duty, but spontaneously from the inner surgings of a Heavenly life.

This is a typical case. Had Mr. Taylor written for the very purpose of giving us something that would illustrate in perfect detail the force of the principle which throughout these chapters we have attempted to set forth, he could not have offered us anything more to the point.

The apprehension of this principle (i.e. identification with Christ in death and resurrection) revolutionised the life and work of a great pioneer in modern missions. And, wherever it is apprehended and faithfully acted upon, wherever this oneness with the Saviour is realised in actual experience, whether it be by the humblest believer or the greatest Christian leader, the same glorious results must follow. Defeat must give place to victory; spiritual poverty and decrepitude to riches of grace and fullness of life; weakness must give place to power; a mechanical striving to imitate Christ, to a delightful spontaneity in the participation of His Divine Life; a gnawing sense of insufficiency for Christian life and service, to a glorious all-sufficiency in a deep union with the all-sufficient Christ. There will be a happy fulfilment of the promise, staggering in its amplitude, found in the ninth chapter of 2 Corinthians - "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

CHAPTER 12

THE BEARING OF THIS POSITION UPON THE CHURCH, MISSIONS, AND PRAYER

ITS BEARING UPON THE CHURCH

That the position which we have been considering is revolutionary, involving radical readjustments in all phases of the Christian life, we would not deny. As never before, "old things are passed away and all things are become new." The believer becomes "a new creature," the old life having been terminated by the Cross of Christ, an ever-deeper participation in which, results in an ever-fuller participation in the power of the Resurrection.

That such a position should greatly affect the believer's relation to the Church as a visible organisation is, of course, to be expected. In one sense it unhinges him. His attachment to the true Church, which is the mystic - Body of Christ, becomes so deep, and so real, that he feels himself somewhat detached from the visible Church as it has been organised (perhaps I should say disorganised) by man. In dying to the "self-life," he naturally dies to all that is nurtured by the "self-life." This means that the Church itself, regarded as a, visible organisation, in so far as it is out of line with the Holy Spirit (and no one even among its most devoted servants will deny that it is in many aspects of its life out of line), in so far as it may give place to the "carnal life" which expresses itself in strife, sectarian greed, class distinctions, unsound doctrines, racial antipathies, and the like - the Church, I repeat, in so far as it fails to express the mind of Christ, simply fails to grip him. He dies to every form of the "carnal-life" whether in the Church, or out.

The tie which now binds him to Christ is so strong that he finds himself bound to all those who, regardless of denominational affiliations, are enjoying like precious faith. If he is, for example, a Methodist, he finds himself as much at home in the presence of Episcopalians, or Baptists, or Presbyterians, and experiences a spiritual oneness as deep and as precious with those of other Christian organizations who have been rooted into Christ, as with those of his own Church affiliation. It is no longer a question of ecclesiastical procedure, but of life. The rising tide of Divine life, once it rises high enough (it is forever overflowing all of its banks in those who have learned to stand with Christ in His "death-resurrection-mid-process") simply wipes out the great ecclesiastical barriers; the mighty walls of the sects, disappear. One could no more realise a deep oneness with Christ in death, and in resurrection, and not realise a profound oneness with all those who receive the same influx of Heavenly life, whatever their denominational affiliations, than one could be a member of some particular family and not be bound to the members of that family.

This does not mean, of course, that we may not have our preferences. It does not mean that we cease to be Baptists, or Presbyterians, or Disciples, or Lutherans, as the case may be; any more than we cease to be Frenchmen, or

Englishmen, or Americans, or Germans. We are not pleading for organic unity. Organic unity could never bring about the kind of unity of which we speak; nor could denominational differences, once it exists, dissolve it.

We are seated with Christ in Heavenly places, and from this high rampart we look out upon life, conscious that we are free from its petty strife. Race prejudices can no longer affect us. Class distinctions have been swept away. Sectarian grooves can no longer contain our sympathies. The great discordant force of the universe - mother of all sin - so far as we are concerned has been put to naught. Christ's Cross has created for us a new and harmonious universe. Our love (the love of Christ constraining us) flows out in sympathetic yearnings for the welfare of all men. "Come with me, my Spouse," says the Beloved of Canticles, who is Christ, "look from the top ..." (Canticles 4:10).

As regards the ceremonies of the Church we cease, of course, to rest upon them. I do not say that we cease to adhere to the forms of our particular Church. They have their place. The means of grace will always be essential. By saying that we cease to rest upon them, I mean to say that we no longer look upon the sign as the thing signified. For instance, Baptism could never be anything more than a Divinely-instituted rite, signifying an inner renovation. We are "buried with Him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with Him." Baptism points the way to the spiritual participation of the believer in Christ's death; as it also is symbolic of his resurrection with Christ. But if this spiritual union has never been realised (and without a full and irreversible surrender to Christ it never can be, forms or no) dare we rest in forms? If, as Paul says, a violation of the law made a Jew's circumcision uncircumcision; shall we not say that a Christian's violation of the principles of union with Christ makes his baptism equally void? "The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit that quickeneth." Would a bride be content with the outer trappings, a ring, a church ceremony, legal recognition, etc., in that which has to do with her nuptials, if her husband is living in whoredoms? Does she not rightfully demand fellowship, faithfulness, love, purity, in a word, oneness of spirit? Will the Heavenly Bridegroom be satisfied with ceremonies, forms, and empty symbols, if we are not His in spirit? He took us with Himself to the Cross to annihilate forever the "self-life," and all that which would come between Him and those of His Household, that He might unite them to Himself in holy, spiritual wedlock. Dare we offer Him the trappings and withhold the reality? "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or the new moon, or the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17).

ITS BEARING UPON MISSIONS

It is, however, in the field of missions and missionary endeavour that the effect of this position is most telling. It is here that I have myself put to the test this principle of identification with Christ in death and resurrection. The result has been so overwhelmingly satisfying, so far-reaching, so incalculably blessed, that I look upon the years prior to the experiencing of the power of the Cross, as wellnigh wasted. I walked with an uncertain step; I aimed at an uncertain goal; I employed uncertain weapons; I garnered exceedingly unsatisfying fruits. I see now that much of my labour was not only unsatisfactory, but positively harmful.

I preached Christ in the power of a "self-originated" fervour and consequently mutilated Him. It gave Him no chance to reveal His true self. Christ must be preached in the power of a Christ-centred, Christ-possessed, Christ-empowered life. Christ is never truly preached until the one who bears the message is himself so hidden away

with Him in God, that it is no longer the messenger who speaks, but Christ speaking through him. He (the messenger) must learn to bury himself in the Saviour's wounds, so to speak, and die to his own life, if he would present Christ in Apostolic fashion to perishing souls. Rivers of living water must accompany the message - the listener must be inundated in a Divine life, if he is to be given a chance to appraise the Christ of God, and see Him in His true glory. Unless the gospel is preached with "the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven" it is not the gospel at all, no matter how true one might be to "the letter." "The letter killeth - it is the Spirit that giveth life."

Christian leaders in all lands are painfully aware of the fact that missions today are passing through a crisis. The triumphant note of a half-century ago is gone. From all lands comes the word - and the confession is made by missionaries themselves - that missions are not duplicating the sort of thing we find in the Book of Acts. The great expanding machinery of missions moves as never before since the Saviour issued the Great Commission, and yet, missions are not breaking the power of the "old-life" of heathenism. Converts are not the Christ-empowered, Christ-centred, Christ-possessed Christians, radiant with the joy of a Heavenly life, which Divine grace can make of them. Of course, there are outstanding exceptions in all mission fields, but the fact remains that things are at low ebb as regards missionary endeavour the world over.

The crux of the whole matter lies in the fact that we have not exalted the Cross. A watered-down gospel may win adepts in heathen lands, but it can never bring about results that will be satisfactory to Him, who at so great a cost consummated the work of redemption on Calvary's Tree. Nor, can it cope with the mighty forces of heathenism, break their power, and cause to operate the redeeming force of Divine grace in their place. Only a gospel which brings souls to the experience of an inner crucifixion (death of the old-life), and a glorious resurrection as a result of union with Christ, can ever do that. Unless converts experience an inner union with Christ (and such a union is possible only on the basis of the Cross, i.e. the "old-life" committed to death with Christ), however much they may struggle to imitate Him, or however much they may succeed in glossing over the "old-man" with the veneer of ecclesiastical forms and of Christian culture, such a counterfeiting of the Christian life, sincere as it may be, will sooner or later break down under the strain to which it must be subjected in non-Christian lands.

ITS BEARING UPON PRAYER

When we come to consider prayer in the light of "Co-crucifixion," as this position may be denominated, we find that prayer first comes to its own on this basis. Prayer is nothing if it is not communion, and true communion is only possible when the "old-life" which can not have fellowship with God, inasmuch as in Christ it was condemned and potentially put to death, is terminated.

The reason why many are finding prayer so unsatisfactory and the life of prayer so unattractive, is because they have attempted to enter into the celestial realms of prayer in the strength of the "old-man." The "old-man" can no more wield these weapons, which "are not carnal but mighty through God," than he can "love his enemies," or "rejoice always," or "have the mind which was in Christ Jesus," or fulfil any other Christian grace. He (the old-man) may imitate these graces, but actually possess their, never. They are "the fruits of the Spirit." They come from above. They are the

outworkings of the Christ-nature imparted to the believer and incorporated in his being on the basis of the Cross, i.e. a removal of the old nature by a participation in Christ's death.

True prayer can only be inaugurated on the basis of "co-crucifixion." This is the prime condition. "If ye abide in Me and I in you, ye shall ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done unto you." We must be "in Christ." But we can not be in Christ in the fullest sense, without that we commit to death in the power of the Saviour's death (which in the mind of God was corporate, we having been crucified with Christ), the "old-life."

It is when we realise our oneness with Christ in death, and in resurrection, that prayer becomes the marvellous force that we find it was in the life of the Saviour; the invincible dynamic that it reveals itself to be in the book of Acts; and the ineffable experience of the great saints of the ages. It is then that our spirits, liberated by the power of the Cross, from the fleshly and the soulish entanglements, "mount up on wings as eagles." It is then that communion with the infinitely adorable One who inhabiteth Eternity, comes spontaneously and naturally to its fullest expression. It is then that the injunction: "Pray without ceasing," ceases to be an unintelligible command; for the spirit released from the thralldom of the "flesh-life," and freed from all Satanic oppression by an appropriation of the full benefits of the Calvary victory, rises to take its place with Christ in the Heavenlies where prayer is the continuous in-breathing of the life of God. It is then that prayer, energised by the Spirit of the living God, which it can not be until it is freed from all selfish ingredients, becomes at times a groaning which is unutterable, and which does not fail to move mountains, and achieve the impossible. It is then that prayer becomes a working out of the will of God, and therefore, must prevail, be the difficulties what they may, however staggering the problem, however great the need. It is then that the great disparity between what the Master said that prayer would accomplish, and the miserable caricature that it is in the actual practice of millions, is removed, and prayer blossoms out in all the glory of its true nature.

Seeing prayer in the light of the Cross and our participation in the Saviour's death, and resurrection, we are not the least surprised over the achievements of some of the great prayer-warriors of the Church viz. Hudson Taylor and a few fellow-workers praying for a thousand workers to be thrust into China, with the result that the Lord gave them not a thousand, but eleven hundred and fifty-four; George Muller, of Bristol, receiving in answer to prayer, millions of dollars for the support of his many orphans; David Brainerd wrestling with God in the forests of New England for a great revival, not only among his beloved Indians, but for great in-gatherings of souls throughout the whole world, and thus becoming, according to some of the historians of missions, the prime factor in ushering in the great era of Modern Missions. Such achievements abound in the life and work of those who have known the Lord Jesus, and the power of His resurrection and who, like Paul, have had fellowship with Him in His sufferings "being made conformable unto His death" (Philippians 3:10).

May it not be that the great world crisis, with its economic, financial and moral agonies, which has enveloped the nations in the dark clouds of pessimism, is due after all to the spiritual decrepitude of the Church? The Church is the Divine agency for the redemption of the nations. What they are going through, inasmuch as they are

absolutely dependent upon Christ and His Church for the development of the moral and spiritual life-forces, without which nations as well as individuals become reeking carcasses of corruption - what they are going through, I repeat, is a sure index to the state of organised Christianity. The pending suicide of civilization which verily is causing men's hearts to fail them for fear, can only be averted by that Divine impact which is the Spirit of Christ operating within the hearts of men, and which again and again, as history only too clearly reveals, has brought the nations out of chaos and charged them with new vigour and hope. The crying need of the day, as it has been of all times, is the expulsion of the monster of selfishness from the hearts of men and the opening up of the floodgates in the life of the nations for the free circulation of the great love of Christ. There is no other healing for the nations, there is no other hope for the individual soul.

Shall we not then give place to a pure Christianity? Christ can not possess us, and cause the rivers of Living Water which He has promised, to flow forth from our hearts with healing, renovating, transforming, abounding force, unless we are willing to be dispossessed of our own life. Christ will not rear His edifices upon the old foundations of selfishness. It is not a case of simply denying ourselves certain things; but of a complete renunciation of ourselves. Christ took us with Himself to the Cross. The so-called Adamic life was potentially terminated at Calvary. Shall we not, drawn by that love which so moved the Saviour that He was willing to be spat upon, willing to hang between two criminals while the mob jeered, willing to be trampled under foot as though He were a despicable thing, that we might have Life - shall we not respond, with glad surrender to the unfathomable yearnings of the Crucified?

He would have us share His Cross - He would have us divorced from the carnal mind, which is enmity with God, by a participation in His own death. Into His death we have been baptised (Romans 6:3). If we are followers of Christ, then His death to sin is our death to sin - His resurrection, our resurrection - His victory, our victory - His ascension, our ascension. God grant to us the grace to claim our full heritage that thus we may be more than conquerors. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).