



*the*  
**Golden**  
**Candlestick**

**ONE NEW MAN**

**T. Austin-Sparks**

---

*Volume 219*

# **ONE NEW MAN**

**T. Austin-Sparks**

The first chapter in this series has already been published on [austin-sparks.net](http://austin-sparks.net) with the title [One New Man](#).

## **PUTTING ON THE NEW MAN**

*"... and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10).*

*"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).*

*"... that He might create in Himself of the two one new man ... one body through the cross" (Eph. 2:15,16).*

*"Put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4:24).*

*"And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6).*

*"For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body ... and were ... all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13).*

The word which is on my heart is not an easy one to express, and we shall need to be prayerfully looking to the Lord for enablement to apprehend what He desires we should know at this time.

In our previous meditation, we were speaking about the two sides of the great revelation which has come in the New Testament, the great revelation of Christ. On the one side as to Himself and the significance of His own Person, on the other side as to His corporate Self and the significance of His Body, the church. And the passages which we have read make it quite clear that Christ is the new man who is put on, but that that new man is something into which the church is formed — *"of the two one new man"*. These are not two, separate; Christ, a new man, and the church a new man. They are brought together. Christ is put on as the new man and as He is put

on, all those who have put on Christ, the new man, are formed into this corporate expression of Christ. Not that He loses His separate personality or individuality in the church, but the church is brought into that vital corporate relationship, oneness, with Him so that He and His members — He as Head and all His members as the Body — form one entity, one new man. I think we know that; it is perfectly obvious.

But I want now to get down to something of the simple practical meaning of this as it affects us individually and collectively, for I have followed on with these other two passages — “*the Spirit of his Son into our hearts*”, that is the one side; then the other side — “*all baptized in ... one Spirit*”. That phrase, “one Spirit”, implies the corporate nature of things: “the Spirit of His Son” speaks of the personal, and, independent or separate expression of Christ.

Now we were saying in our previous meditation that in this new man, Christ, God has introduced into this universe a new order of man. Christ is the first and the type of a new order. The Holy Spirit has come to generate a new family after that unique order of Christ, that distinct and different kind that God has introduced, and it is just the practical meaning of that which is of such importance and account to us. Everything will depend upon our recognition and apprehension of that as to what kind of people we are going to be as Christians, whether we are just going to be Christians in the sense of members of the Christian religion, accepting and believing certain truths and doctrines, or whether we are going to be children of God and become sons of God. There is all the difference between those two things, between belonging to Christianity and being children of God.

## **A new constitution**

This putting on of the new man which speaks of our personal individual changing over from the realm and order of nature in Adam, to that altogether different and new realm and order of Christ, is something very radical as to our constitution. It really

does mean that something has been introduced into our very being which was not there before, which is not only something new as to its nature, but which is a Person with all the faculties and all the functions of a living Person of a different order. Christ as that new man belonging to that new and different order of being is constituted according to the mind of God, the thoughts of God, "after God", an altogether heavenly divine order. And while it may sound like a platitude or while we may be able to agree and understand it to a certain extent, it really does take a whole lifetime, no matter how long that life may be, if we started this thing as soon as we had any intelligence to be able to accept Christ personally and individually, if it commenced then and went right on and we lived our full tenure of years, it takes a full life, a whole life, for us to learn, (and even then we have not fully learned), the utter difference between the mentality of God and the mentality of man, between God's thoughts and man's thoughts, God's ways and man's ways, how God views things, judges things, estimates things, does things, as being so completely different from the ways and the ideas, the mentality and the conception of the Adamic race. The fact is that these are two worlds apart and there is no bridging these worlds. That is the meaning of the cross. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ", and baptism means a death, a burial and a resurrection; the utter end, as in a complete death, of an order, the burying of that order out of sight, right away, and another order brought in in resurrection. And the new man order is of another, not the Adam, and it takes all the years that we have of this life to learn how different those orders are. It is one of the features and characteristics of a true spiritual history that the child of God is learning how different the Lord is from what he or she is and being changed, conformed, transformed, and that means a lot of letting go, a continual letting go. It means that we have continually, again and again through our lives, to say a fresh Yes to our baptism, confirm our baptism. That is, God meant in our baptism that we died, we went out, and we have got to say: Yes, I went out and that went out and another thing. Yes, God meant that and

I must let that go out, and all the way along we are compelled on the one hand to be letting go that which God meant was put away in the death of His Son, and on the other hand accepting something altogether foreign to us, accepting something which a little while ago we would never have accepted, never for a moment would we have entertained that. If it had been put to us at a certain point in our spiritual growth, we would not have considered it for a moment, but the Lord has been doing something and we are ready to accept that which we would not a little while ago. If we are going on with the Lord, we are going to come to a hundred and one things which today we would not have considered at any price; we are going to marvel at ourselves. If you had told me a few years ago I would have done that, I would not have believed you, I would have said, Never! Here I am doing the thing that I would never have thought of at one time. That is the course of a true spiritual history. That is putting on the new man and the other man from ourselves.

### **The renewing of the mind**

How is that done, by what means, on what basis? Well, the Word says, "*by the renewing of your mind*" (Rom. 12:2), that we "*should walk in newness of life*" (Rom. 6:4, KJV), "*serve in newness of spirit*" (Rom. 7:6). What is the renewing of the mind? Well, it is the new man mind, that is all, a new mind coming in taking the place of the old. That is where the battles take place very often. We have a mind of our own, we have a judgment of our own, we have a reason of our own, and you can see Christian people so often held up by their own mind, locked up by their own judgment. They are going to think this thing through, they are going to work this thing out in their mind and they think they will get somewhere along that line, in that way, by that means. What we were saying in our previous meditation was that everything in relation to the new order of God is by revelation of the Holy Spirit. Paul would never have got himself through to Christianity by reasoning it out. All his reason was the other way, "*I verily ... thought that I ought*

to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus" (Acts 26:9). I thought that I ought. Well, when a man is there, what are you going to do with him? His religion, his very relationship to God, his conscience — for conscience only carries us as far as our enlightenment, conscience is the witness to our knowledge. When you get your new knowledge, your conscience will rise to it — when it is a matter of conscience, "*I verily thought that I ought*", there is no hope for that man along the line of reason. You cannot reason with him. See how far you will get with him when he thinks that he ought. That man needs a revelation, the renewing of the mind, another mind, a new mind.

Now that is the point. This is the very inheritance, the very heritage, the very prerogative, the very position of a child of God. If only the Lord could get this into you, it will be enough. John puts it this way — "*The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but ... His anointing teacheth you concerning all things*" (1 John 2:27). Now be careful how you apply that, because John was not saying that you become a law unto yourself and knowledge begins and ends with you and you have no need therefore for anybody to help you or to instruct or to teach you. He is not saying that generally. Do not forget he has a context and the context helps us in this connection. He is speaking about "*antichrists many*" and he says in connection with antichrists many which are already abroad, "*the anointing which is in you teacheth you*". The question is, how am I to know what is Christ and what is Antichrist, when Antichrists are imitations of Christ, simulating Christ, angels of light? How am I to know so as to be delivered from the deception of Antichrists with their wonderful wisdom, with their similarity of language to the New Testament, with their supernatural powers, their working of miracles? How am I to know when they come along like Christ in word and in deed? The anointing which is in you teaches you. You do not need that anybody teach you this and say, That is Antichrist. You know. Because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. And I do want to say to you, especially to the younger



Christians, that this is the nature of a child of God of a true Christian. It is not that you have come into a system of teaching or order of practice, a form of words or rites or ordinances and so on. It is that there is in you a new living Person with all His faculties alive and He tells you, He teaches you, He holds you. You know what is the Lord and what is not the Lord, what is life and what is death. You are able, not because of your faculties but because of this new man, the other man, and what your judgment would decide upon, this other man will not accept. You sometimes would in your best religious judgment decide along a certain line, but the man inside says, No, the Lord will not go with you and you know you cannot. Yet the thing seems so right, so proper.

On the other hand, so often you would not do certain things, your natural judgment is against it, but the new man is demanding it, is challenging, is calling for that, and here you are, and which are you going to obey? This is what is needed among the Lord's people, call it what you will — spiritual discernment, spiritual understanding, spiritual intelligence. It is a new and other man within bringing in a new and different order of things, and that is what is meant by putting on Christ, and that will make Christianity a living thing, a fresh thing, because there is no end to that. It will take you a lifetime, I do not know how long beyond this life. It seems to me it will take all eternity for me to learn Christ. For I do not think we are coming to stagnation afterwards, but then with capacities freed from the incapacitation of this mortal life, we shall learn and go on learning: "*of the increase of His kingdom (government) there shall be no end*" (Isa. 9:7). But here we are dealing with this life and what is needed is that every Christian, every child of God, should know this, that He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their heart and that the Spirit of His Son is not less than Christ Himself. It is a new man and you are learning and it is wonderful.

Be careful then about this conflict, this clash of the old man with the new. Remember that it is a matter of subjecting our minds to the Lord, letting go our judgments to the Lord. We will sooner or later, if we are going on, have to come to the place where we say, I cannot

get through this thing by thinking it out; I cannot reason myself into this new position that I am seeking, I cannot get anywhere. I have thought and worried, I have laid awake many hours trying to see through. I simply give up my own mental struggle over this and say, Lord, give me your mind about this. I let my mind go; Lord, I by faith accept Your mind. Then you are simply putting on the new man, and that is the way through. That is true; many of you know that is true. Some of us know it after many years of very bitter struggle to get through to some new place. We do not get through until we have crashed before our Lord and made our minds subject to His thoughts. You see, Antichrist, when fully-fledged, is simply going to be the superman mind taking the place of God, the mind of God. You can see it at work in the world today: the spirit of Antichrist with another mentality which is supplanting the mind of God, and it is imposed with terrific psychic force on the world. God is not going to have one fragment or shadow of the superman, the Antichrist. That is the worship of man, the bowing down to man. God will break that and grind it to powder and scatter it upon the deep, unto the four winds of heaven. That man is dead with God in the cross of Christ. He is not going to have us come in with our powers of reasoning.

You say, Well, where does the human faculty of mind or reason come in? It is a vehicle for transmitting what has come. My human mind is becoming a vehicle of something that the Lord has shown, and that is the value of it. But it did not produce this, it did not work this out, it did not originate in the human mind. It was something the Lord showed and then used the human mind for transmission. That is the value of it. It is a channel, not a spring of divine revelation.

Well now, that is one side. That is to be true individually of us. He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. That is the personal thing and we are to know the Lord individually in that way and ever-increasingly, going on to know, with that kind of inward knowledge increasing.

## **The new man corporate**

But then the Lord has another side, which is a very helpful valuable side. It is a great safeguard. It is the corporate side of this very thing. The Spirit of God has not only been planted into the individual child of God, but now it says, "*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body*", and we said that one Spirit means corporate. Neither Jew nor Greek; "*of the two one new man*". The Holy Spirit has not so many spirits as there are members of the body, but one Spirit. The value here is that we recognize that the Holy Spirit, while resident within us individually as members of the Body of Christ, is resident in us as members of the Body of Christ in a related way, and the values of this are tremendous.

## **The mind of the Spirit in the new man**

First of all, there is the value of corroboration. If, for example, here are two or three members of the Body, baptized in one Spirit into one Body, and the Holy Spirit is free, unhindered, in those members, and there is a matter which concerns the Lord, then as those members get together before the Lord, the one Spirit will say the same thing in the several members. That is what happened in the New Testament; it was true then. The one Spirit will corroborate. We shall find that we have one mind about matters, we are coming to one conclusion, and this is not by discussing, not by threshing it out but by prayer, by waiting on the Lord.

This is the principle behind things in the New Testament for progress. It was a great step forward when at Antioch the Holy Spirit said, "*Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*" (Acts 13:2). That was a big development in the New Testament, in the things of the dispensation, but how did it come about? There were in the church which was at Antioch certain brethren named. Here is a group; they ministered to the Lord and fasted, and the Holy Spirit spoke, not to one, but to all. They were waiting on the Lord, and this group of responsible men in

that church at Antioch all received the same leading from the Lord. That is a fruitful way. It proved tremendously fruitful and I am quite sure that it must have meant a great deal to Barnabas and Paul that all those brethren had got the mind of the Spirit about them, that the Holy Spirit had spoken the same thing to so many. They were not just going forward on that great mission because one man said they ought to, but the church, represented by its elders, had said it. There is strength, safety, in that. I only say that by way of indicating this principle, that there is the corporate side of the Spirit by which there is corroboration, there is protection.

### **Subjection in the Body**

And that makes necessary not only the individual subjection to the Lord, but the individual subjection in the Body of Christ, the individual subjection in the fellowship of the saints. If one man or one woman in an assembly of God's people takes an independent position, even on this matter of knowing the mind of the Lord and flouting the judgment of his or her brethren they are laying themselves open to error and deception. That is a strong statement but it is true and has proved true again and again. The Spirit of the Lord does not move that way. He is not the Spirit alone of the individual; He is the Spirit of the one Body, and while He calls for the individual to be subject to the Spirit, He calls for the individual to be subject to the saints. "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God*" (Eph. 5:21, KJV). That is the statement. That is safety, that is fruitfulness. There is nothing about that that causes loss. People hate that word 'subjection' because they think it means loss to them, they are going to be tied up and unable to move. Don't you believe it. It is the way of release, enlargement, the way of the Spirit.

Peter had to learn that lesson and I believe Peter became the very embodiment of this principle in the New Testament, for Peter while he was a disciple was always taking an independent line. "*Thou shalt never wash my feet*" (John 13:8). "*This shall never be*

*unto thee, Lord*" (Matt. 16:22). *"I will not deny thee"* (Matt. 26:35). That is the man taking an independent line; very devoted to the Lord, always with the Lord's interests in view, but independent, and he came to a crash, an awful crash, and after that it is Peter who says, *"All of you be subject one to another"* (1 Pet. 5:5, KJV). He had to learn it through a deep and terrible experience. Oh, he did not learn it all at once! At Caesarea it is still, "Not so, Lord"; but the Lord comes in and says, *"What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common"* (Acts 10:15, KJV). Now then, Peter, this subjection business again! — and he let go. Was it loss, was it bondage, was it limitation? Oh, it was enlargement for Peter and for the Lord. He gained a great experience along that line.

So you see the Spirit of the new man, meaning on the one hand a new intelligence, a new understanding, a new capacity. We are constituted a people with an entirely new and different faculty of understanding. Oh, do not let that go. I do want to see our young Christians especially moving in this way, that they are not a part of a system, not a part of anything outward in the matter of teaching, but they are knowing, they are able to say, The Lord has shown me, I have come to see, the Lord has taught me this, I know the Lord in this matter. Oh, do ask the Lord to constitute you like that.

But then remember that it is not going to make you an independent free-lance-law-unto-yourself-before-the-Lord Christian. There is the other side to that truth. *"In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body"*, and you have to bring what is personal for the corroboration of others who have the Spirit. You have to bring what is between you and the Lord, and submit it to the witness of the Spirit. *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses"* (Matt. 18:16, KJV). That is your safeguard and you need not fear; if they are truly spiritual people, if they are those who have the Spirit and are taught of the Spirit, you will only receive help, not hindrance, and you may take it that any true spiritual man or woman will never turn upon you and say you are all wrong. If they are truly spiritual, they will say, even if not seeing for the moment what you are feeling, I do not see it just at the moment; I will go to the Lord and wait upon

the Lord and when the Lord shows me, then I will tell you. That is spirituality. It is not domination.

Do remember that first of all it is altogether new, a new man. That new man has got to become a personal reality in each individual member; new, different, other, living in each individual member. In a sense, each individual member of Christ has got to be as though there were no others in all this world who know the Lord; that is that you know Him so that if you were planted where no other Christian was, you know the Lord. "*My sheep hear My voice*" (John 10:27). You know His voice, inwardly you have a knowledge of Him, a walk with Him, intelligence. You have not got to rush somewhere, wait for the next boat or send a letter to somebody to get the mind of the Lord; you have the root of the matter in yourself. May God make you like this from the beginning.

Then remember that this new man is corporate and as the Spirit and the new man are individual, so the Spirit and the new man are corporate, and these go together. You cannot separate them; you have to recognize that relatedness is a governing law of progress. No member of our body can develop by itself. It depends upon all the other parts of our body for its life, its development. And so, in the Body of Christ there is interrelatedness and interdependence of all faculties and all functions to build up the Body and make increase, and we have to come and subject ourselves among the Lord's people and walk as a part of a whole, not in any detached and unrelated way. I will leave it there; the Lord make all He can of this word.

## THE UNITY OF THE ONE NEW MAN

*Reading: 2 Chron. 30; Psalm 133; Heb. 12:22.*

### **The Blessing of life**

Reverting to Psalm 133 which stands at the centre of these two passages — 2 Chronicles 30 and Hebrews 12 — we are given very clearly to see the way of the greatest blessing. If we ask what the greatest blessing is, it is *the blessing*. “*There the Lord commanded the blessing.*” The greatest blessing that the Lord can give is life evermore, is that life peculiar to Himself, His own unique gift, life for evermore. Everything that we could desire and everything that we need is found in that life. The blessing is in Zion, and when you look, you find that there are three Psalms here about Zion — 132, 133 and 134, just a little group of Psalms about Zion particularly.

In Psalm 132 it is fulness in Zion. “*The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my resting-place for ever. Here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread*” (v.13-15). There is fulness in Zion.

Then the next Psalm, the one we have just read about Zion, is the blessing for Zion. Fulness is to be found in Zion and the Lord makes Zion the object of His blessing. “*There the Lord commanded the blessing.*” It is what is in Zion, and then what is from the Lord for Zion. Then Psalm 134 — “*The Lord bless thee out of Zion*” (v.3); then it is what goes through Zion.

In that threefold thought about Zion you have everything that

you desire or want. Fulness is in Zion, the Lord towards you in blessing in Zion, and the Lord through you to others, making Zion a channel of blessing. *"The Lord bless you out of Zion."* What more do we want than that? If we really stood in the good of that, we have everything. We have fulness, we have the Lord towards us in blessing and we have the vocation of being a vehicle of blessing beyond, all around. *"The Lord bless you out of Zion."*

And all that is bound up with this special blessing — life. The fulness is in the life and the life is the fulness. The blessing is the life and there is no greater and we want no other. And the ministry out to others is the life. That is the Lord's thought for Zion. Well, let us not hurry past that. Here is the thought of God in a threefold way for what is called Zion: fulness, satisfaction — *"I will satisfy."* You have come to the place where you have found what you are after, what you want, what you need. You are able to say, I have looked long, searched far; I have now found, I have come into that which is unmistakably the greatest blessing the Lord can give. I know the blessing of life, His life, and more, I now know what it means to be a channel of life in the Lord's hands, I have come into the blessing of being a means of ministering life to others! I am sure we all covet this threefold desire and thought of the Lord. That is the blessing.

## **The way of the Blessing**

But what is the way of the blessing? Well, it is here again — love is the way of the blessing. *"How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* *"There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life."* That wonderful story in 2 Chronicles thrills our hearts. I do not know how it affects you; it makes me feel I want to go and take the Albert Hall in London and call all the children of God together for a great celebration of the love of God. It makes you feel, Oh, that we could have something like that today where people leave their own things, their own places, their own interests and gravitate towards that centre of the love of God, the Passover, the cross of our Lord Jesus, meeting there, all contrary



things being flung into the brook Kidron; a great celebration of the love of God among His people. Our hearts go out for that. The way of life is love; it is life through love.

When they came thus to Jerusalem — and you must remember that it was a tremendous thing that happened, for the kingdom was divided and very strongly divided, Israel and Judah split asunder, but they came; a great assembly came out of them. The division was overridden or set aside at this moment. The Passover dismissed all that; it was a wonderful bridging of a terrible national rift. They came together in Jerusalem in the spirit of Psalm 133, and there are many who think that Hezekiah used this Psalm on that occasion and was inspired by this Psalm in what they did. However that may be, there is no doubt about it that it is a very living expression of the Psalm. "*Behold, how good ...*". If we had looked upon that scene that day we should have said, Behold, how good, how pleasant! After all this strain, conflict, division and estrangement, how good, how rare, how precious, to see brethren dwelling together in unity, and what an atmosphere of joy, of life. They had seven days and they said, it is so good — let us repeat it, let us go on; and they had another seven days. There is life and that life came through love.

Well, "*ye are come to Zion*" (Heb. 12:22). This is not something historic, something beyond, not something in the past; nor is it something in the future towards which we are marching as an objective; we "*are come*". That is, the Lord's people are regarded as already being Zion. The church is looked upon from above as Zion. "*Ye are come to Zion ... to the ... church of the firstborn*" (v.22-23). God's conception of His church is Zion. The trouble is that we are not what we are.

We want, for ourselves and for all the Lord's people, fulness. We want more and more, in our own case and for multitudes of others of the Lord's children, that it shall be that way and they are able to say, I have come into that which answers to my deepest need, satisfies my heart's longing. I have found; I am in the realm where everything is great, full, wonderful, too big for me! Are you there? That is what the Lord wants, where we for ourselves and for

the Lord's people know the blessing of life, for it is a life, and I do covet this for all the Lord's people and every child of God. We do not want companies of the Lord's people who are characterized in the first place by certain kinds of teaching and interpretation and truth. What we desire more than anything is that coming together, it shall be *life*; we go away feeling that we are alive again and living anew; that all that come in among us shall see and feel first of all the power of that life. Whether they understand what is said or not, whether they are able to grasp what is presented or not, they have to say, But you meet the Lord there in terms of life, there is no doubt about it, it is the testimony of life that is there! Surely we covet that; and so for the ministry out from Zion, streams of life. "*The Lord bless you out of Zion.*" Our hearts say, Lord, make this good in our case in every one of these three senses, and make us really to be Zion in that threefold way.

How then? Well, life, as we have said, is by the way of love; not firstly by the way of truth but by the way of love. It is always so in the Lord's Word. Another translation of the last clause of Psalm 133 is — "*In this fellowship has the Eternal fixed the blessing of endless life.*" This fellowship of love is life. For us here that must be both a general and a particular word of exhortation and of discrimination. We need and must have an enlargement of heart for all the people of God. We must have that continually. It is the way of life; not just love for those who agree with us or see as we see, but for all the people of God. We must have love free from judgment, criticism, anything in the direction of isolation, separateness, exclusiveness; an openness of heart and a largeness of love for all the Lord's people. I am certain that anything less than that is going to work against this threefold meaning of the Lord. It is going to mean less in the matter of divine fulness than the Lord would have. It is going to mean less in the absolute and perfect blessing of life, and it is going to mean less in the ministry — the outgoing, the blessing, out of Zion. That is, it is going to be death in a greater degree than the Lord would have it; life less than the Lord would have.

Any company of the Lord's people is only a part of the whole.

I am certain that, unless we have a heart enlarged towards all the Lord's people wherever they are, in whatever stage of spiritual development they may be, we are going to forfeit something of what the Lord would have in this matter of life, in fulness life as the blessing and life as the ministration. Oh yes, by love the life will be shown, but that leaves one other word to be said.

### **The cross the basis of love**

What is this love? What is the basis of this love? Well, with Hezekiah it was the Passover. The love springs out of, takes its rise from, the cross of our Lord Jesus. It is not just a large-hearted generosity or magnanimity. That is a dangerous thing. That will leave loopholes for many things that will be destructive and harmful, a kind of magnanimity that overlooks things which should never be overlooked. The cross of the Lord Jesus never overlooks sin; it is the strongest witness against sin. Oh no, it is this love which springs from a true apprehension of the meaning of Christ giving Himself for us, for our sins. It is a love purified by His precious Blood, purified of self, of sin; it is a holy love. I think we understand that, above all other things, the cross of our Lord Jesus is a witness to the love of God. That is what it is meant to be. It is there in that cross that the love of God is shown as nowhere else and in no other way. A people who make much of the cross ought to be a people about whom much of the love of God is found.

Oh, for a great celebration of that love in our hearts that we might find our hearts enlarged and that from this time there shall be a much greater love for all saints than there has been, a real enlargement, a real embracing of all the Lord's people, a gathering into our hearts. The Lord command the blessing through love of life for evermore.

## LIFE IN CHRIST

*"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).*

*"But as many as received Him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12).*

The matter that is before us is that of life in Christ. I do not know how far we shall get, but this gospel by John is an unfolding of that great truth and reality of life in Christ, an unfolding of its nature and its stages chapter by chapter, or part by part, in the gospel, being a progressive unfolding of this life as it is in Christ.

### **Son of God and Son of Man**

There is one thing which is behind this and basic to it which we should note, and by which we shall be helped in noting. It is the fact that the Lord Jesus is presented in this gospel throughout in a wonderfully balanced way in His two titles. Pre-eminently, of course, this is the gospel of the Son of God. John opens with that divine side. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* And he closes his gospel with that note — *"These (things) are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"* (John 20:31); and throughout pre-eminently John, or the Holy Spirit through John, was seeking to keep that divine side of Christ's Person in view with that title — the Son of God.

But it is significant and full of meaning that, even in such a

gospel with such an intention and purpose, the other title of the Lord Jesus occurs so frequently; that in John's gospel, the gospel of the Son of God, He is so frequently mentioned as the Son of Man, and so often He uses that title of Himself. And the significance seems to be this — the Lord Jesus claiming His divine Sonship, His union with the Father, His Deity and His Divinity, in effect says, While I am that, I, as the Son of God, am Son of Man; in Me, in My Person, I have brought God and man together; in My one Person man and God have been united! He Himself represents that union; on the one side, His relationship to God; on the other side His relationship to man; on the one side His Deity and Divinity, on the other side His racial relationship; and it is in that significance, the significance of His Person in that way, that we find the meaning of this whole gospel, indeed the meaning of the full revelation of God to us, for what issues is that in Christ, not in ourselves, but in Christ, we are brought into union with God and God is brought into union with us. We are not brought into the Deity of Christ; but I am not going to stay to discuss or explain that. I simply point out that here, throughout this gospel, these two titles run together alongside of each, other, and that is a matter of basic value to all that is here, and we shall see as we go on what that means.

Now, we get this presentation of John 1. The first chapter, or the first section of the gospel as mainly in what is chapter 1 in the arrangement, is comprehensive. It presents the Son, firstly as to His eternity and secondly as to His incarnation. "*The Word was God*" (John 1:1). "*The Word became flesh and tabernacled amongst us*" (John 1:14), and after that comprehensive presentation of the Son and the divine statement of John 1:4,12: "*In Him was life; and the life was the light of men*"; "*But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God.*" The breaking up and presenting of this statement in its parts follows *after* that divine statement.

An interesting fact by the way, is that there is a Jewish background to the whole. Everything here is taking place in Judea. In John the Lord Jesus only goes out of Judea when He is compelled

to, and this Jewish setting of everything in John carries its own meaning and implications.

## **Life in Christ**

In the first place, the contrast and the clash which is found between Him and Judah and Jewry clearly says that all now is in a living Person and no longer in a religious system. That is the meaning of the clash, that is the meaning of His coming into Judea, that is the meaning of all this taking place in Judea. It is the conflict between Christ and the religious system as there encamped and established.

And it says this further; the very best that is known among men in a religious way, of a religious kind — for undoubtedly Judaism was the best among men or religious orders — falls far short of the very least of what is heavenly.

Here is, on the one hand, Judaism in its citadel, at its very heart, in its capital, its highest and fullest development, and here is the Son of God in the midst of it and they are poles asunder. There is such a gap between them that there is no going to and fro. You find that right at the outset, as we shall see in a moment, with one of the representatives, a true representative, of Judaism — Nicodemus, a ripe fruit of Judaism, a full development of Judaism, a son of Israel. The Lord Jesus finds no bridge across which Nicodemus can pass to Him or across which He can pass to Nicodemus. He immediately states: We belong to two different realms and there is no passing between. The highest and best known among men religiously is far from the very beginnings of what is heavenly. That provides the setting for this whole matter of life in Christ. The highest and the best known among men religiously is far from the very beginnings of what is heavenly. That provides the setting for this whole matter of life in Christ. The highest and best but no life, not this life. Christ is outside of that, far removed from that. Everything that follows just bears that out. Seeing that that is so, let us go on with this analysis which is given us of the matter of life in Christ.

## A new beginning

We come at once to the first part which is contained in John 3. That chapter sums up the whole matter of life in Christ in one way. It says this quite simply and emphatically, although it covers a lot of ground, that life in Christ is entirely a matter of a new beginning. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus by night and said, "*Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him*" (KJV). Jesus said unto him — It is very interesting, Nicodemus, I am glad that you are getting some light; let us sit down and discuss it and let us try and get further in this matter — No, He said nothing like that. He cut right across Nicodemus and said, You must be born again, born anew, born from above. Truly, truly, I say unto you; verily, verily, most certainly I say unto you, "*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*" (KJV).

Life in Christ is not a carry-over, is not a development, is not a religious evolution or any other kind of evolution. Life in Christ is a new beginning, and in order to emphasize that the Lord Jesus takes Nicodemus back into his national history a long way and reminds him of a certain incident which took place when the life of the whole nation was at the point of destruction, when death was rampant, multitudes being stricken down and the whole nation's life was threatened. "*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up*" (v.14). The Son of Man lifted up like the serpent. That makes things very utter.

May I pause here for a parenthesis to say this. You and I may not personally need this word for ourselves; perhaps in reality we are in the good of this. We may not need a word here on the new birth. We may not need a word on life in Christ for ourselves, but we are living in times when it is very necessary for us to have our understanding made very sure and clear on these matters. May I say this to our young people in particular who will meet afresh in the world that which is the most positive contradiction of what we are

saying, to what is here. It is everywhere. It is what has come to be called or known as humanism, that is that it is in man to be his own saviour, his own sanctifier. It is in him if only he will apply himself, if only he will give himself up and go deep down enough into his own nature and put himself to the rigorous application of developing what is there. It is all there. Good is in him, he is a wonderful being full of great possibilities, such possibilities as even eventually to make a very god of him. Not many of you here, perhaps, are deceived by that, but it is very subtle, and do you know that some of the most anti-Christian cults produce the nicest type of people that you can meet? They are most definitely anti-Christian. They call themselves Christian but they are anti-Christian and they produce a delightful type of person, seemingly more Christian than the out-and-out evangelicals, very nice people indeed. They believe this doctrine, they hold this doctrine that it is all in man. He is a wonderfully created being with tremendous potentialities and hidden resources; if only you can get at them and develop them and bring them out, you soon make man a very god. You are going to meet that, and when you meet it in practical life, while you would not accept the doctrine if you have been rightly grounded in the Word of God, it is very difficult to meet that in a practical way — the nice people who put to shame many devoted Christians by their kindness and generosity and so on. Do not think that Antichrist is necessarily something which is obviously Satanic, with horns and pitchfork, fire and flames and smoke. No; he is an angel of light, something very beautiful, very attractive. The Lord Jesus goes right to the root of this whole matter when He says, *"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up."*

He must be put in the place of the serpent, in the capacity of the serpent, lifted up and on that cross like the serpent. That is horrible, unthinkable, awful. You say that sounds blasphemous, but here He said it. Paul, in whom the history of Israel was so deeply and fully rooted, seeking to counter the subtle and persistent pursuit of Judaism on the heels of every convert to Christ, explains exactly what the Lord Jesus meant in John by the serpent, He being in the



place and likeness of the serpent on the cross, when he said, "*He was made a curse for us*" (Gal. 3:13) or, in our place. We know the serpent was cursed at the beginning, we know the serpent lies under the eternal curse of God, but how does he come in here with the Son of Man? What does this mean, the Son of Man?

We have said it is His coming into racial union with man, His coming into flesh and blood, His allying Himself with us in incarnation. For what purpose? That in His cross embracing, encompassing us, including us, He might as us pass into that curse of God, suffer that curse. He turned to face the veiled face of God in an eternal moment of darkness and horror. That is turning away from the serpent, that is turning away from us. He is as we on that cross. Satan and the human race had become one in principle, one in life. The serpent had, so to speak, bitten his venom into the very bloodstream of the race in Adam. In the very constitution of man deep down there is enmity to God. In fact, he *is* enmity to God — that is how the Word puts it (Rom. 8:7). It does not say there is enmity; he *is* enmity. These very nice people have only got to be put to the test and you will find it is there. And we know it more or less, that in ourselves under stress, under pressure, under strain, under trial, in fiery ordeal, it is there always ready to express itself — enmity towards God, questioning, doubting God. Every child of God knows that. Have you never for one moment had a doubt or a question about God in your heart? Have you never for an instant had a shadow across your horizon where God is concerned as to His love, kindness, and goodness, wisdom, faithfulness, as to whether He is right? Well, I covet your faith if that is so. But I would venture to say there is no one here who has never had the slightest suggestion of a shadow between them and the Lord as to the Lord when they have been put to it. It is there, and that is the poison of the serpent in our very veins and you cannot divide between the two. You cannot take the poison out. You have to get rid of man and bring another man in. So He becomes a curse for us who, in our union with Satan, are under the curse that Satan is under. Yes, man lies under that curse. The whole creation has been subjected to vanity and vanity is the

mark of the curse. "Vanity" simply means that nothing can come through to the realization of its original purpose. It is rendered incapable of realizing its primary destiny. The curse lies upon it, a ban lies upon it. Thank God, Satan is cursed. It is an awful thing to think that man has come into that by his complicity with Satan.

But here is the glory, that another Man has come who has entered right into that fully and utterly and not only taken the curse but been made a curse and swept out of God's sight for us. The Lord says, Nicodemus, you are a very good man as the world counts goodness, a very religious man, a very intellectual man, but that is where you are; Israel is as much there as anyone. That is where you are — under the curse. It has to go out to die. It is an altogether new thing; not putting new wine into old wineskins, not patching up the old. Life in Christ is something completely new. It is different, it is fresh, it is another thing. "*You must be born anew*", born from above.

I feel it is very necessary for us, and especially for our young people going out into the world in these times, to be very clear on this matter of what the Word of God says here and what it is to be a Christian. There is no carry-over, there is no continuity. It is an end, a finish, a going out, a death, and then a new beginning. That is where we begin in the matter of life in Christ. It is a new beginning; but it is a new beginning. It is all new. Again Paul explains — "*Our old man is crucified with Him.*" We "*were baptized into his death ... that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*" (Rom. 6:6,3,4, KJV).

## **Inward union with God**

We pass on to the next step in John 4. It is another phase, another stage in this matter. You know what is taking place in John 4. It is the interview, the talk, between Christ and the woman in Samaria. The matter of life in Christ is carried this step further in that it is shown to be not only a new thing but the nature of that

new thing. It is inward union with God. You notice the emphasis that the Lord placed upon this matter of life represented by the water is — *"It shall be in you."* *"It shall be in him."* It is an inward union with God.

Now that is intimated by the way in which the discussion develops. Of course, in the first place, there on the outward circle of things in the matter of life, that is as to the world. The woman is a woman of the world in the first place and very much so as Christ drags her situation out into the light, and she is seeking life at the springs of this world, at the wells, the cisterns, of this world. She is a woman who is out for life. She has sought life in this world's things. It is soon made clear that she has not found it, she is a disappointed woman, far as she has gone and deeply as she had gone; she has not found life.

Then at that point she seems suddenly to recognize that this is a religious man that is talking to her, and she seems to jump to the conclusion that He is not just talking about natural life, natural water. He is talking about something else and He is a Jew quite evidently, and a religious man and so she swings over at once with one bound. She comes over from the natural to the religious. It is interesting how that happens. It happens very often. The other day I was talking to an officer in charge of a corvette. We were talking about things, the war, the world situation, and of course he could talk about that, and then the state of things and the cause for it all, and all he had to say was just what a man of the world had to say and nothing beyond. But then I put in something that was not of the world about this thing. I said, But don't you think that it will always go on like this, however men are wanting a new order and world, until something has happened in man himself, don't you think it is man's heart that is the root of the trouble? And immediately he was the most religious man, he could talk about religion as much as anybody, talk about the churches. It is like that, and that is what this woman did. She recognized a religious man and she could talk about religion as well. So she said, *"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men*

*ought to worship.*" She could talk about religion, temples, worship, Jerusalem, Mount Gerizim, the Samaritan temple. The temple is the place where men meet God. Then the Lord Jesus broke in again — *"Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father ... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth"* (v.21,23).

And that worshipping in spirit is all of a piece with this — *"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water"* (v.14, KJV). It is something inside now, not outside. Union with God is not external in a temple here or there. It has nothing to do with an outward order and system of things. Life is a matter of union with God in an inward way and the hour is now come for that.

And how has it come? I am here, He says in effect, and when I give life within — and the life is in Me, *"in Him was life"* and I am the life — when I become resident as the life within, in Me, in my very Person, in what I am, Son of God and Son of Man, you will find your union with God, your fellowship with God. You will not find it in the world, you will not find it in religion, you will find it in Me. Life is an inward union with God in Christ.

Well, I trust all of us know that in experience, but let us remember and always keep it in view, because there are multitudes today who think that acceptance, salvation, standing, and their eternal well-being is a matter of their going to church, observing the religious ordinances, being very faithful in acknowledging God in these ways. Oh, it is not that or anything like that. It is something very much deeper than that. It is all a matter now, not of this church or that, this ordinance or that, this place or that, it is nothing of that at all. *It is inward union with God by Christ indwelling.*

## **Subjection to, and dependence on, the Father**

The next is in John 5:17-20: *"But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work. For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only brake the*

*Sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God*". This section up to verse 30 is an important section, and it is but a development and analyzing of this one thing — life in Christ, for here *life in Christ is shown to be a matter of complete subjection to God as Father*, and there is a very big history lying behind that. You notice how in this section the question of life comes up. "*The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself: and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is a son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment. I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge*" (v.25-30).

Life and death. The whole history that lies behind this part is that when Adam decided to take the direction of his life into his own hands to proceed by a self-directing principle, a self-realization law, and no longer to be subject to God, then Adam died and death came in on the whole race. Adam was first of all placed on the basis of complete subjection and obedience to God. If he had stayed there he would have lived and he would have come through to that life which he did not possess, but, in his probation, in the time of his test, he decided to take his life into his own hands, to direct his own course, to choose his own way, to draw upon his own resources, to realize his destiny out from himself. Instead of having his sufficiency and seat in God, he was going to have it in himself. That was what Satan suggested and what Adam accepted. You yourself can be as God. Why be in the place of dependence, why not be in the place where you have it in yourself? And we know quite well that that is the history of the race.

And here the Lord Jesus in this chapter, the Son of God and Son of Man, the two brought together, this One says in repetition, "*The Son can do nothing of Himself*" ; "*I can of Myself do nothing*" ; and that is a matter of life and death. Because of that and because I

do not revolt against that, I do not object to that, but I gladly, willingly, whole-heartedly embrace that, I accept a life of dependence upon My Father and I am glad to receive everything from Him and not have it in Myself. I am glad that every movement of mine is dictated by Him, to be in this place of subjection and dependence is My delight, because of that — *“The Father loves the Son ... and gave Him authority to execute judgment”* (v.20-22).

*“As the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son also giveth life to whom He will”* (v.21). It is life in Christ on the basis of subjection to the Father, having everything out from God, and that is something which works out in our experience.

We know quite well that every bit and every instance of self-will brings spiritual arrest; every bit of self-strength interferes with the life of the Spirit; every failure to seek the Lord’s mind about things means trouble. We know it. In a thousand different ways it works out. But we know that it is life to walk in fellowship with God and to receive our direction from Him, to have our well-spring in Him. It is not easy to the flesh to be subject and obedient, but it is a living way for the Spirit. This is a law of spiritual life. Well, you know it is true in experience. Any kind, any measure, any form of self-sufficiency, self-direction, self-will, self-assertion, self-interest, self-realization, self-assurance, means spiritual death, spiritual limitation. But, on the other hand, a life of resorting to the Lord, keeping in close touch with the Lord, having everything checked up by the Lord, asking for the Lord’s way, the Lord’s mind, keeping in that position where we draw upon the Lord for our way, for everything — that is the way of life. When the Lord comes out to us in our emptiness, weakness, foolishness, helplessness and out from Himself shows us the way, makes the way plain, how living it is, how wonderful it is! The Lord Jesus lived on that principle, on that basis, was governed by that law. The last Adam was different from the first. The first let in death; the last destroyed death, but He destroyed death by dealing with the principles of death, and one of the principles of death is self-sufficiency, having it in ourselves. “Conceit” simply means having it in yourself, or thinking you have

it in yourself, being sure that you know, you can do, that is conceit — the seat in yourself. That is the way of death.

We may not be able at this time to go on further with this, but it may indicate the way of life. Each chapter in John's Gospel, each part, is the unveiling of some fresh expression of life in Christ and it is all very wonderful and while it may be interesting and informing, let us not just stay with the instruction that the Word gives. Let us remember these are things which lie right at the very foundation of our relationship with the Lord. Here it is: "*to them gave he the right to be children of God*". Now, what are children of God? These are children of God who have the new start of a new life, a new union of an inward kind, who are in complete subjection to God as Father. These are children of God and this is the way of that life which is ours in Christ.

## THE WITNESS OF THE ONE NEW MAN

*"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27-28).*

You notice that there are really two things said here. One is the individual; *"as many of you as were baptized into Christ"* — that points to what has taken place in the individual case of the believer. Then the second thing is that all such individuals have, in putting on Christ, become a one man. It is a double statement as to an individual act resulting in a corporate consequence or realization — one man. That one man made up of all the believers who have been baptized into Christ, that one man, that Body, takes up all that is true of Christ — *"did put on Christ"* — and represents it, expresses it or is intended so to do. It is a taking on and then a showing forth. It seems to me that that is the essence of what the Lord meant when He said to His disciples after His resurrection — *"Ye shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me"* (Acts 1:8). That is only saying, in other words, You will express what is true of Me, or I shall be expressed by you in the power of the Holy Spirit, and when you ask what are the things which are true of Christ which are taken up and expressed by the Holy Spirit through the church, the Body of Christ, those who have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ, there are very many things. The things of Christ are countless, but there are several major things; indeed, I think they are four. The four great



things which are brought out in the New Testament as the witness of the church by the Holy Spirit are His death, His resurrection, His ascension and His exaltation, and when it is said that we have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ, which carries with it, of course, the receiving of the Holy Spirit for putting on Christ, it is only another way of saying that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, has become resident, for *"if any man hath not the Spirit, he is none of His"* (Rom. 8:9), and *"Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father"* (Gal. 4:6). It is all one and the same thing — putting on Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit as resident within.

When that is true then, in the intention and thought of God, these four things are to become living expressions by the Holy Spirit in us and through us. I just want to say the very briefest word about them. They constitute a challenge as well as a testimony; that is a declaration of fact resulting in an interrogation as to how far the facts obtain in our case.

## **Christ crucified**

As to the first then; the Holy Spirit constitutes the Lord's people, the true believer and believers. He is an instrument for the expression of the death of Christ. The death of Christ has many meanings and values. There is only one of them that I intend to mention now. It is the witness of the veiled face, we may call it; the most awful thing that Scripture knows and speaks of, the most terrifying thing to the soul of man, the thing which caused the Psalmist the utterest remorse, was when God hid His face from Him. How the Psalmist cries, *"Hide not thy face from me"* (Psalm 27:9). You can contemplate nothing worse than that, than the real consciousness, the real experience, of God hiding His face, to wake up to the fact that God's face is no longer towards you, He has turned His face away and nothing that you can do can persuade Him to turn His face back towards you. That is terrible, the deepest of all agonies, the blackest of all darkneses.

As no one else in history, the Lord Jesus entered into that experience; in a fuller sense than it was said historically to Israel in their captivity, in a deeper and more awful sense, it was true of the Lord Jesus. *"For a small moment have I forsaken thee"* (Isa.54:7). *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"* (Matt. 27:46), He cried, and it was the utterest forsakenness. While He was in the position in which He was at that moment, there was nothing in this universe that could bring back the face of God. It may have been, so far as time is concerned, a moment; we do not know. There was darkness over the face of the earth until the ninth hour. If ever you and I have experienced even a little of what it means to grieve the Lord, to grieve the Spirit, to register the Holy Spirit's grief in our hearts, we know that it is the agony of eternity, we know that at once time loses its significance; it is awful. And the Lord Jesus tasted this death as no man or woman or accumulation of men or women in all history have ever tasted it. It was in essence eternal death, the veiled face, the turning away of His countenance, the forsaking.

We know why, and we know from what, that face was turned, for there in representation, in identification, He took the place of that which no longer had any place in the favour of God — a creation, a nature, a state of things in which you and I and all men were involved by nature. And as He entered into that and embodied that in that moment of the cross, the veiled face said with awful and terrible registration — God is finished with that, that is a realm and system of things which no longer has any approval from God. All I want to say about it now, is this, that the Holy Spirit takes that up in those who have put on Christ and the witness of the church must ever be in the power of the Holy Spirit against a whole order of things with which God has nothing to do, and it begins in us, for the powerful witness of the Spirit in our hearts is ever to make us know that with which God cannot associate Himself. That is the meaning of every gesture and restraint of the Spirit of God in our hearts if we touch death as opposed to life.

This is where we need so much more enlarging. The fact is that the Holy Spirit has taken up death and made it His very instru-

ment against death, made death His prisoner and His instrument to witness in us against that which means death. I mean this, that if you and I touch, indulge, associate with that which is not acceptable to the Lord, the Spirit of God in us witnesses by means of death in us against that. We touch something that means death to our spirit. We know we have touched something that is not of the Lord. The Lord is against that, and it has brought its registration of death in us. So the Spirit of God has taken up death, the death of the Lord Jesus, which is a mighty thing. The death of the Lord Jesus is a powerful witness. The death of the Lord Jesus says, No, eternally No from God to a whole realm and order of things and the Spirit of God registers that No in us. When we have put on Christ, we have been baptized into His death. That is not something which happens at some time in our lives and is past, upon which we look back.

The church is here collectively and corporately to say God's No, and that thing has got to be registered in the heart of every one of us. The death of Christ is a mighty, potent thing. What I would like to do would be to spend a considerable amount of time in showing how the Lord maintains in the life and history of the church His place for the death of Christ, but as something unto life, as something positive, not to keep us in the realm of death; but the power of the death of Christ is maintained.

You can see it right through the life of Israel in type and here it is in the New Testament. You find it again and again brought in, introduced, in the experience of the church and in the experience of God's servants in the New Testament. "*Death worketh in us*", says the apostle, "*we ... are always delivered unto death*" (2 Cor. 4:11-12). But I thought when we came to the Lord and received life and were joined with Him in resurrection that that was the end of death! In the matter of condemnation and judgment and separation from God, yes, but not the end of death as a means to keep us straight, to educate us, and to make us know the way of life, for we do not know the way of life experimentally only by means of death. We learn the way of life so often by the pathway of death. We just say this and pass on, that the Holy Spirit takes up this matter of the

death of Christ and makes it a mighty power of witness against what is not of God. It is the Spirit's witness of the hidden or the veiled face of God, God's No! Most of us have experience of that in some way, in some measure, the Spirit's saying No! and when He says No in us, it has a deadening effect, it is something of death. Go that way and you go in the way of death, and the Spirit witnesses by keeping death alive. Do you understand what I mean? — keeping the death of Christ as a powerful thing. Well, that is the first thing.

### **Christ risen**

And then the second thing about the Lord Jesus which is to be by the Spirit witnessed to in us and witnessed to through us is His resurrection. These two go together. The church is here, the Lord's people are here, having put on Christ, to be an expression of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We are so familiar with that that we could hardly say anything fresh and perhaps very little need be said. But let it be understood, for it needs to be brought home to us continually, that the Lord's object is always life. Whatever way He may take us through, whatever path and experience, His end is life and this life is the resurrection life of His Son. Let us comfort our hearts with this. We pass through very many dark and terrible experiences which seem like the overflowing of death, but the end, in the will and purpose of God, is always life. We talk about "ups and downs" but with the true children of God it should always be the "downs and ups", for God's end is up and not down, God's end is life and not death. We may taste death, know death's fight, but the final thing for the child of God is life. That is the testimony of the Spirit, that is the expression of the Lord Jesus — life and life out of death.

The next thing is ascension. He was "*received up into glory*" (1 Tim. 3:16, KJV). This is the Holy Spirit's testimony.

Now you see, the witness of the veiled or hidden face; the witness of the unveiled face — that is the resurrection, for towards this Man, this resurrection Man, the Lord looks. He is no longer the

man under judgment and condemnation, being made a curse for us, bearing our sin from which the face of God must be hidden, but that is all done, the veil has gone, the cloud has rolled away and the face is turned again, the light of the countenance is lifted upon Him and He dwells forever in the light. The resurrection is the light of His countenance. It is the unveiled face.

### **Christ ascended**

Then the third thing is ascension, the witness of the opened heaven. The fact that He was received up into glory declares forever that the heavens are no longer closed. The first Adam had Paradise closed and locked and barred to him and he was driven out. The last Adam has the Paradise of God opened to Him; the heavens are opened, He is received up into glory and the witness of the Holy Spirit now is that everything for and in and of those who have put on Christ, is of that heavenly order and nature. The church throughout is clothed in blue; it is a heavenly thing, it takes its character from Christ in heaven. It is, to use a phrase not very much liked, it is other-worldly. The Lord's people who have put on Christ have put on a heavenly Christ and are a heavenly people. They are other than that is here. They are different — and let us be very careful that we do not try to evade or avoid that difference. There are a lot who seek to cover it up, who are afraid of it, who would avoid its being recognized, but it is in this fact of Christ in heaven with its meaning for His people here on this earth that the real power of their witness is found. When He was here on the earth the thing that struck home, the thing that upset things so much, the thing that irritated, the thing that drew out the honest and condemned the dishonest was that He was so different, so other; He was outside, He was not of this order. It was that that struck home, it was that that affected things and people. There was something about Him mysterious and strange; He was different.

That is how it has to be with every Christian. We try by our manners and our language and in many other ways, not to let it be

seen and felt that we are different. We think that we are going to get an advantage or have influence if we can hide that and be as others in this world, talk and act as they talk and act, not let the contrast be felt too much. It does not work that way. It is that mystic difference of Christ in heaven whom you have put on, which is the very power of your witness of the Holy Spirit's fact. It will only be people who for the time being are not concerned at all about eternal things, who have no reason for the moment in their experience to be distressed, who would be in any way affected by your hiding it. I mean, you could win them, but what is the good of winning them to your side if they are not concerned about spiritual things? If a man or woman is really in need, in soul distress, the person they want is another person, not a man or woman of this world, but someone who has something this world cannot give. Then is your advantage, then is your hour, then is the Holy Spirit's opportunity, and we must live for those moments and not allow ourselves to be ensnared into hiding our light and compromising our testimony by trying to be even with people here. Let us be careful that we do not destroy one of the very features of our relationship with the Lord Jesus, which is this mystic other-worldliness, this fact that we belong to a heavenly order and do not belong to this order. Let it come out, for it is *the* powerful thing that is going to have the effect.

And, finally, Christ exalted. You will see that the four things were the witness of the church at the beginning — His death, God's No; His resurrection, God's Yes: His ascension, the witness of another world, the impact of another nature, the opened heaven. His exaltation, or, to put it in other words, Jesus Christ is Lord. "*At the right hand of God exalted, a Prince and a Saviour*" (Acts 5:31). "*We preach ... Jesus Christ as Lord*" (2 Cor. 4:5). The Spirit's witness is to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The church is here to express His Lordship, that He is Lord, that He has dominion, His Name is above every name.

May the Lord use this hurried, incomplete word to revive in us the sense of our calling and of what we are here for — to be an effective fourfold testimony, in the power of the Spirit, to Christ

crucified, Christ risen, Christ ascended, Christ exalted; and, if you want a fifth thing — Christ coming again.

*Concluded*

The purpose of this publication is to encourage God's people to lay hold on eternal life, the hope set before them, knowing that Jesus Christ, their Saviour, will soon return to establish His eternal Kingdom, "so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:12).

thegoldencandlestick.nl  
E-mail: [thegoldencandlestick@gmail.com](mailto:thegoldencandlestick@gmail.com)