

that "groaning" is related to that "manifestation of the sons of God." That is, when all who shall be born of God, born from above by resurrection union with Christ shall—with Him—be manifested in glory. These are they who have recognised that His death was their death as a part of the first Adam; that His burial was the eternal entombment of that "body of death," that His resurrection was the birth of the New Man, the "new creation"; and having recognised this have, by faith, accepted and entered into it to walk in that "newness of life" in all its implications. Such, knowing Him and the power of His resurrection to a measure in themselves are called into the intelligent sharing of those mighty travailings and spiritual pangs which are toward the full manifestation of the sons which is to synchronise with the emancipation of the whole creation from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the sons of God. Every "new birth" from above by the operation of resurrection power is vindication of the creative work of Christ. Every such spiritual new birth is related to the universe and is not a thing in itself. Every new born one is constituted a part of the effectual travailing power of the Spirit of Christ "Who maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Much more has yet to be shown as the content and issue of all this, but here our purpose is to show that the instrument, purpose, and consummation of the *whole* creation is Christ—and Christ inclusive and corporate. Without Christ there is no purpose, no adequate motive, no hope, no goal, no justification, for existence. Without Christ there can be no world, no future, no harmony. All must be aimless, abortive, chaos, inexplicable, mockery, despair. This is the outlook of all that is "outside of Christ." Hence the great emphasis upon "In Christ."

This surely is the "Mystery" so often referred to in the New Testament. It is the mystery of the universe so much explored and speculated about by philosophers, scientists, theologians, mystics. God reproducing Himself in a glorified humanity. Jesus the Archetypal Man. Incarnation is the key to the mystery and Church—Christ's Body—the corporate example and instrument. This explains the universe and gives the secret of all creation. In the light of this we understand why Christ is called the "Logos," and as such He is "the First and the Last," for Logos means Thought,

Reason, Power, and the Personification of these.

In the beginning He creates all things. In the end He fills all things. T. A.-S.

## "THE CROSS AND SPIRITUAL SERVICE"

*Notes of an Address given at the October Conference*

THE theme of our Conference is one which is practical for all present, as we are all the children of God, and our great concern is to serve Him. You remember how He, Himself, says in the 12th chapter of the Gospel of John, 23rd verse, concerning the work which the Father has committed to Him, the service by the Eternal Spirit about to be consummated in His Person, through that completed victory in the Cross, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." But there follows the principle upon which God is glorified in Him. "Verily, verily, I say unto you except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

This is as to Himself; He must die as the corn dies that the full ear, which is the Body shall come forth. But this principle extends to every member of that completed Body. "He that loveth his soul"—his personality, those things that relate to himself either externally, or those interior possessions of the person. We need to recognise these last are the more subtle. It is the human personality in its fallen state that is the biggest hindrance to God's Purpose in the Body. The clash of personalities, especially as we seek to come into closer fellowship, temperaments, strong wills, attitudes of minds, habits of thought due to upbringing, all contribute to a failure to realise the oneness of that Life in the Christ of which our brother was speaking last evening, because that oneness of Life is in the Spirit, and not in us as individual souls. The Lord, therefore, lays down this principle of service as in the members of the Body—"He that loveth his soul shall lose it, and he that hateth his soul in this world shall guard it unto Life Eternal." That is to say the soul at length shall be possessed by the Life Eternal. This is the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls.

What we are concerned about now is the progress of our spirit in God. The birth is a heavenly one. It is a birth out of the Risen Christ Who has become a quickening, or life-giving Spirit. We have to recognise that the

salvation we have obtained is in our *spirit*. The effects of that salvation are manifested, of course, moment by moment, in the soul and in the body. The soul is quickened by the spirit; and the body is quickened by the spirit, for the Life now is a Life in the Spirit, a Life hidden in God, and therefore a Life only realised by faith, and not by feeling. It is well for us to really stress this principle of our life, that it is wholly a spiritual life, and "He that is spiritual discerneth all things." Naturally, of course, we are still psychical, soulish. There is no blame in that as such; it is our infirmity that we partake not only of that nature of the psychical man, Adam, even if he had been un-fallen. But he had fallen before he became our ancestor, and thus we partake in psychical life engulfed in the satanic world around us, of which we are unconscious, but which is ever subtly laying hold of that aspect of our nature.

But our new life is a Life altogether out from the Spirit and is in us as spirit. This is why the Holy Spirit is stressing so much in these latter days the distinction between soul and spirit, because it is the last defence of the enemy, it would seem, when he can get good people, children of God, to alternate between life in the spirit and life in the soul, and the clash and turmoil of personality as such is bringing about confusion in the church. Thus here is laid down the principle upon which alone spiritual service is possible:—

"He that loveth his soul shall lose it, and he that hateth his soul shall guard it unto Life Eternal."

You see how this leads on to service because the next verse reads: "If any man serve Me [minister to Me] let him follow Me." That is, to minister to Him we must follow Him whither He has gone. You remember how in the 14th chapter of this same gospel, speaking to His disciples, He says, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." This mystified them, but the Lord gives us the revelation. He told Peter that he could not follow Him into that Life into which He was now entering. We read in the context that Jesus knew He had come out from God, and was going back into God. Whither I go ye cannot follow Me now—into God. How can you follow Me into God? Jesus knowing that He had come out from being with God in eternity and was going back to God in eternity but now as *Man* did those things, and confronted the disciples with the fact that they could not follow him. But there they were bringing their own mental

conceptions to bear upon this and saying, Why cannot we follow Thee now? But we cannot begin service until we are with Him where He is, and He told Peter for his encouragement, Ye shall follow Me afterwards. You see the whole thought is that He was going back to be with the Father as Man, and we are to follow Him *there*. You can only follow Him there by the enablement of the Holy Spirit, as we first of all accept that great basic truth that the Holy Spirit is hammering into our hearts these days, the truth of *identification*. The fact that we have been, and are willing to be crucified together with Christ, that we are identified with Him in death, and thus there may be an entrance into another Life which is His Life; then in that Life we follow because in that Life we are with Him; in that Life we are joined to the Lord One Spirit, and this Life is hid with Christ in God. So He says, "If any man minister to me [desires to serve me] let him follow Me," follow Me *there*. This is a very different conception to thinking that He left us an example as He was among men, and that we should try and imitate the faithful standard of His life. You see the foolishness of it. If our flesh was unable to obey the law, how could we obey the law of a life infinitely beyond us! We cannot enter into it even; we have to be born out from Him, and thus be with Him "Our life hid with Christ in God."

"If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me; and *where I am there* shall also my minister be."

Thus we are to be with Him, and it is with Him in fellowship that we can begin to serve. We do not serve Him as outside of Him, we serve Him only as members of His Body, in Him. We cannot serve Him outside His Body. A great many of God's children to-day are not realising this truth, but are seeking to serve Him outside of the Body, and you recognise that though they think to serve the Divine objective, they are really hindering the way of God's progress; for we can only serve Him in the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of One Body, Who ministers in and as out from the Body of the Christ of God. "Where I am there shall also My servant be," there with Him. That is what the Apostle John means in the beginning of his letter when he says, "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." We are in one Life with Them, in one activity with Them, and it is necessary then that we should live as out from heaven. That is the vital

principle of the Christian life and service that we should live as out from Him, from God, moment by moment. "Where I am there shall My minister be. If any man minister to Me [thus], him will My Father honour."

Now we see how necessary the Cross is to service because otherwise our service will be cutting across the lines of the Divine objective, and we shall discover, though we are building upon the right foundation even Jesus Christ, we have built but wood and hay and stubble, and when the fierce day, the evil day comes and everything in heaven and earth is shaken (and we recognise we are in that day now, at least the scriptures teach us so) nothing will stand but that which has been wrought as out from God Himself, and only that which is in the Body of Christ will stand. Nothing else will. How important, then, that we should recognise what is the manner of Christian service, and how it rules out immediately every self-interest and every self-activity. Now the Cross must be applied to us in the matter of service and this is where we are least willing. There have been demands upon our life when we have accepted the Cross, but we still do not see the principle of the Cross in service. We still want to do our own works. We are very enthusiastic in this direction, but the word of God says, "How shall they proclaim the unspeakable things of the Christ except they be sent." In John v. 17 you have that familiar passage where the Lord unveils the manner of His service. It is still the same. The service that we are engaged in is His service, not ours for Him, but His service in us.

"Jesus answered them and said, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (You know this word "work" means to work by an energy.) The Jews understood what He meant. He and the Father worked by one energy, by one Life; they were fellow-labourers together in one Spirit. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only brake the Sabbath, but He said also God was His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

Then the Lord Jesus unveils the method of His working:—"Verily, verily, I say unto you the Son can do nothing from Himself." It was not from Himself. Here He was on this earth a marvellous personality with every power, endowment of mind and sensibility and will, and surely without sin. Yet from all that equipment of His pure and holy personality He could do nothing. If we pause just to consider the implication of these words we shall see

what is the mystery of this service, that it is out from God by the Eternal Spirit. He from Himself could do nothing: and we know what manner of Man this was, without sin, pure, holy, and no doubt with every possibility of wondrous activity in every realm. The Lord Jesus could have, as man, dominated the race if He had chosen to cast His personality upon men; if He had chosen by sheer force of will to attract men He could have been King of kings on this earth, *but only on this earth*; if He had sought to fascinate and allure by all those marvellous endowments of mental prowess He could have become One who could have charmed the race with wisdom; if He had thrown the glamour of His personality upon people with an attractiveness toward Himself He could have won them all. Many people speak of Jesus as if this had been the method of His life, that His winsomeness was always flinging itself around people, and He was trying to allure and charm them in that character. It is a complete mistake. You find that when He came up against situations of a character when the qualities of His soul might have been exercised, He put up a barrier between Himself and others. You find at Jerusalem, when He could have had the ear of many, He refused to commit Himself to them, because He knew that it was not reliable, and He would not commit Himself to man. He made it as difficult as possible on that score. He refused to use any factor of His own personality as such in the realm of the soul, so He says here, and we will look into the Word, "The Son can do nothing from Himself." Well now, how does He work? "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He works out from God by the Eternal Spirit, and He will only work in this way. It is only as the Spirit moves Him, and as He is led by the Spirit, governed by the spirit, impelled by the Spirit that He works and that is His consistent method in this world—completely helpless, tied down in all the realms of self-achievement, but moving out from God. Now this means humiliation; it means constant obedience of faith; it means the crucifixion of everything that seems desirable; it means depending upon another supply of Life as out from God. That was the method of His life. Read down the chapter, and you see how He speaks of this work that He does. "The Son can do nothing from Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing." Now how did He see what the Father was doing? In the fellowship of One Spirit. In

the same way that He saw Nathaniel praying in his private arbour when he was exercised in his spirit, Jesus saw him praying there under the fig tree, the revelation of which at once convinced Nathaniel that He was the Son of God, the King of Israel. He saw Him because He was in fellowship with the Father, and there in the Eternal Spirit He had had this revelation of Nathaniel. This was the method of His living. "What He seeth the Father doing; for whatsoever things He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner [that is by the Spirit]. For the Father fondly loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and greater works than these will He show Him, that He may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead ones, and maketh them alive, even so the Son maketh alive whom He will."

You remember the reference in John xvii: "Thou hast given Him authority over all flesh that He may give Eternal Life to as many as Thou hast given Him." This Eternal Life was the Life shared with the Father and the Son from all eternity, and He is going to give this Life that has become manifest in the flesh to as many as the Father will give to Him. This is the new work that the Father will give Him to do, this work of making alive the dead ones, and making them alive now in such a fashion, not merely raising the dead in their old nature, raising dead bodies; but raising you and me, who are dead, into a Life in God. That is the thing He does. It is hidden from men, and they cannot see much of what is happening, and even Christian people do not often appreciatively estimate it; but principalities and powers are able to discern what is happening. The devil knows what is happening when God the Son in His victory, through the suffering of death, is able now to give to us, the dead ones, His Life, the Eternal Life. That has been the burden of the Spirit evidently in these days both here and in Dublin, that you and I have entered into that Life. It is not that you and I are quickened and are alive unto spiritual things, and unto some prospects. It is not that. It is much more. We have entered into that Life. This is the marvel, and we are to realise this Life; and it is in this Life, and out from this Life that the service is.

We have seen the nature of this Life more than once here together. It is that Eternal Life which was with the Father. It is not everlasting as commencing now; but it is that Life that was in Eternity, that came this way, and then in the Out-Resurrection was mani-

festated, as the Apostle declares in his epistle, made One with the Father in the Man, and now goes on unto Eternity. You and I have entered into that—His Life. "If ye were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ is." That does not merely mean that you are to live to some abstruse consideration of Christ, it means that you enter into the things of the Christ now moving forward to their consummation. There is an intensity of the Divine passion in the Christ of God seeking its fulfilment; and you and I are to be in that. The pulse of God is to throb in our hearts. The Spirit of the Eternal is to move us forward, and that is the ministry, that is the service. It is not, so to speak, you and I pottering about doing good. We must not leave those works undone, of course; but there is another work, and He says with the intensity of His own heart that must characterise us, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." Do you not catch the accents of His Spirit? "I must work the works." You and I are here in this Conference because we do desire with all our hearts to work the works of Him Who has also sent us now, as we are born, out from Him and anointed by Him, into this world to complete those works of God by the Spirit in the church, which is His Body. So we see the nature of this Life, it is a Life that is raised into the Godhead, and our Life is hid with Christ in God.

And then the wonderful comfort is that this Life is in Itself an overcoming Life. It is not that you and I have to overcome; He has overcome, and His Life overcomes still. This is the victory that overcame the entire cosmos, the entire system unseen, things antagonistic to Him, even our faith, the faith of the Son of God. But it is most important, as we saw last evening, to recognise that this Life is in a Oneness. "This is the testimony that God has given concerning His Son, that God hath given to us [now] the Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the Life; he that hath not the Son hath not the Life." This Life is in a oneness, in a unity. (1 John v. 11 and 12.)

Well, as we have seen, the Son worked *with* the Father on earth: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work"; and then lower down in the chapter (John v.) you notice how in the 26th verse, you get the origin and basis of this service, the peculiar nature of the work that the Son of God did in the earth, the work which

He completed in Calvary, but the fruit of which work is now to issue in a working of His Spirit in the church so that there is manifested before principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God in this thing which He has got not only in His Son, but now in a corporate collection of sons.

What a triumph of grace is this! God gathered dust and made Adam, breathed into him the breath of lives, but God does eminently more wonderfully now, He does not gather dust, He gathers the foul and loathsome debris of a fallen Adam's race. You and I are by nature the children of wrath. We are not even dust, but we are involved in all the uncleanness of the fall; in all the horror of the pit; defiled, in our personalities by every conceivable avenue whereby the subtlety of satan can come in upon us. It is well for us to recognise the exceeding sinfulness of sin as the satanic thing which is against God in the universe, and which has infected us by nature. And though with regard to our individual salvation we may be assured, one is constantly asking God to search one lest one may be in the state where we are somehow hindering Him, for if you are self-assertive you are in His way. You know that here Satan has his way of coming in still. Oh, the wonder that God takes not the dust now, but He takes this loathsome debris, as it must be to Him, this leprosy, and He makes out of this leprous flesh of fallen man the Body of His praise. He gets us into a unity. Here is the marvel of His grace that He gets us to be so brought into Himself and to be so willing that our flesh shall constantly be crucified, and our self-life so constantly laid down that you and I become *one* in Christ. Why if He can get five brethren as on this platform and make them in the Holy Ghost alive unto God together as one unit, the universe would know the praise of that! It is a marvel of God, and when He can get a fellowship of this number and more, and He can get throughout all the world His own children living now unto this inner thing, this thing which is hid with Christ in God, and get it manifested here on earth, why here is the love of God revealed, here is the Redeemer's love in Calvary revealed in the unity of the Spirit. He gets His glory; and when He gets His base even in two or three, as we have seen, He begins to shake the heavens and the earth. It is a marvel that He gets the oneness realised at all. When He gets two brought into that Oneness, not because they have some predilection for one another, but

because they find themselves in a oneness in God, then He has got a manifestation of this thing; and He can begin; He has a basis. One feels that God is waiting for this more and more, to get the children of God into this oneness, into this Life that is hid with Christ in God, because in that oneness is the nature of this service. It is not that you and I seek to enter into some ministry of our own, but we come into this, and then God gets this manifestation of His glory before principalities and powers, and He then has a fulcrum from which He can begin to move the heavens and the earth. That is the wonder of this ministry we are called to enter into as it is found the energy of a life in us. Now notice in this 26th verse: "For as the Father hath Life in Himself, even so gave He the Son also to have Life in Himself." He means as Man He shared the Life with the Father from all Eternity. As Son of Man He is now having that same Life in Himself on earth, and it is this Life in Himself which contains the nature of the service. And for our comfort we read in the 6th chapter, 57th verse, that we also as members of His Body can have this Life in ourselves, "According as the living Father hath sent Me, and I live because of the Father [He was sent out from the Father by a begetting, and He was kept in this world serving the Father in one Spirit by an Anointing]; so he that eateth Me [the word 'eat,' as you know by this time is 'to ruminate,' to always have in the mouth; so to speak. It does not mean 'to eat' in the sense of having a meal at one time, and then there must be another meal. It means to have something always in the mouth] "so he that *ruminate* Me, even he shall live because of Me." You and I are called upon to continually partake of Christ by faith, to ruminate upon Him, to always have Him in the mouth, to be continually drinking of His Blood and continually eating of His flesh. In the 53rd verse this term which is peculiar to eating, ruminating, is introduced which has not been used before; but He now uses it in relation to members of His Body. "Then Jesus saith unto them, except ye *ruminate* the flesh of the Son of Man, and continually drink His blood, ye have no life in yourselves." We are to have life in ourselves, not Life in ourselves as a self-sufficiency, but Life in ourselves as He had Life in Himself, that is the Eternal Life, and it is in this Eternal Life the service is. It is out of this Eternal Life the work proceeds.

Now we have had a vision of the work of

Christ. We have seen its immensity, and we know that by the finger of God He worked in this present world. How? Because of the refusal to do anything from Himself. Thus His words and His acts were of the Eternal Spirit, and His sayings were the actual sayings of God, and His deeds were the actual deeds of God. "So He learned obedience through the things that He suffered." By this self-crucifixion continually until at last He came to that place where the great work of God by the energy of the Eternal Spirit was to be wrought, and we know how He died. Here He laid down His "psuche" or soul in the energy of the Eternal Spirit, and He needed the power of the Godhead to do that. He received the commandment of the Father that He might lay down His "psuche," because His "psuche," or soul involved the Godhead. We need to recognise this, that God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost were implicated and involved in the "psuche" of Jesus, and thus that the Godhead was involved in the Blood of Jesus. That is a wonderful thing to have seen. We must get rid of the old idea of the blood merely as a corpuscular fluid. The blood was shed there at the foundation of the altar, but it is upon the horns of the altar that God saw the Blood as Life. It is by the Priesthood that that Blood was raised to be there; and that Blood was taken through into the innermost; and there by the priest is sprinkled out from between the Cherubim eastward—manward, indicating that it proceeds out from God. But what God sees is Life, not death. This is the spiritual nature of the Blood; and we need to recognise that the Blood of Jesus involves the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Ghost—all involved in the "psuche" of Jesus. You cannot limit, or define the "psuche" of Jesus. It is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh; and now something of that which was the life of the flesh on the earth in the Blood manifested in the presence of the Godhead. Of course, we only have our finite human terms and types to indicate this. We need the Spirit to recognise that there has been a cleft in Deity, and it is in that riven cleft of Deity that Jesus Christ, truly Man, has entered in—Cleft! And you and I enter in through the Vail, that is to say, His Flesh. And then it is out of that Life, a Life hid with Christ in God that you and I are to serve. But this Life is found in a oneness, as we have seen.

We have seen also that that last work of His, the work of the Cross was in the energy of the

Eternal Spirit by which things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, the visible universe, or the invisible universe have all been reconciled to God in the blood of Jesus. You can see its immensity, but you and I cannot understand the length and the breadth and the depth and the height if we are merely looking at things from our own mental objective, from the standpoint of a mere historical record, and of a mere geographical place. The thing has been done in time and space, but it is an infinite thing and reaches beyond all ranges. Now you and I have to get that vision of Calvary, and see the Lamb in the midst of the Throne, and recognise the Throne of God is also the Throne of the Lamb—One Throne—and God is involved in everything that was wrought in Calvary. If we have seen that, we have seen the infinite nature of God; and recognise that the last act of Jesus in His flesh was that tremendous work by which, through the Eternal Spirit, He rent the universe and offered Himself to God and has become in God the Man in Whom governs, "For in Him dwells the fulness of the Godhead in bodily form." We see, then, the nature of this work now entrusted to us as His children. He says in the 14th chapter of John, 12th verse:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth *into* Me [notice the word here] the works that I do he shall do also [the works of the Holy Ghost, the works of the Father]; and greater works than these shall he do."

Not a greater work than Calvary. That is the all-inclusive work. It does not need to be said that that is one all-embracing work, the work of Calvary; but greater works shall ye do because the works that prefaced Calvary were works confined to the sphere of this earth, but the works that followed them were the works made possible by the finished work of the Cross, whereby the works of God came down upon the heavenlies, down upon the principalities and the powers. Those are the greater works. We cannot go into this matter now, but there is a tremendous significance in the phrase that both the first and the last Adam were made for a little while lower than the angels. Yes. He also, the last Adam was made a little lower than the angels in the realm of His soul. "For a little while lower than the angels," but because He refused to live in His "psuche," or soul, He was able to live out from the Eternal Spirit. Here, lower than the angels, He brought the authority of the Throne right down here upon this earth, and there

functioned here, in his weakness, the eternal will of God; and He was able to bring upon the situation here, although in the realm of His soul under the principalities and powers, the tremendous dynamic of the Throne of God, and to break back through the Cross to the Throne of God as Man—"Lower than the angels"—you see all those works that He did up to Calvary were works done, as it were, when lower than the angels, under the principalities and powers in the realm of His weakness, His flesh, His soul, yet by the Eternal Spirit, doing down here on the level of the dust the works of Almighty God. Then He says to His church, "Greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto the Father." What works are those? We have thought they were more healings, more of the signs and wonders. We have labelled and tabulated works! No, you see that what the church is now called upon to do is the work of a Risen Life, the works of a Life hid with Christ in God, the works in the energy of a victorious Spirit Who has obtained the victory. God hath made Him to become a life-giving or quickening Spirit. It is the works of that Spirit, the works of the King, the fruit of Calvary. So you see the beginning of the works of the church are the works from the Throne down upon the principalities and powers; and they are the works first of all of prayer. That is why we need again and again to look into the heart of this matter of "praying in the Holy Ghost." What is praying in the Holy Ghost? We have a great deal to learn. We are only on the fringe of it. It is when two or three of us come together in the unity of the Spirit, in the oneness of that Life, the Anointing of God is upon us, and the Body is manifested. It is not that you and I are approaching from angles questions and matters upon which our own minds begin to bear, and we agree, and then pray as we think; but it is this, that when we do come together the Spirit comes through and prays the greater works, the works of the King Who has now ascended in the Throne.

Well, now you find in this passage in John xiv. the whole suggestion of this, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth into me, the works that I do, he shall do also [the works of the Holy Ghost]; because I go into My Father." It is because I ascend, because I break through, because I am going back to be in the Godhead, but now as Man, I will shed forth of My Spirit, the Spirit of the Godhead proceeding through Me to dwell in and upon

the church; not in and upon individuals as such, but in and upon the church: "Greater works than these shall ye do," the works not lower than the angels, but the works above the angels, the works of the heavenlies. This is the whole meaning of Ephesians—we cannot enter into it now—that you and I come into what we call "position," but while it is position, we come into a relationship in Christ whereby we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, and you find the Apostle lower down in that chapter, despite the fact that these people caused him gladness of heart in the faith of the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, he yet prays that the eyes of their heart, or understanding, may be enlightened, and they may know ultimately what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from among the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies. That is, that you and I are to know now in fellowship that Life. When we come together we do not come together only as those who are interested in similar things, but we come together in order that the works of God might be manifest in us—*His works*.

Now we stay upon the fringe of that. We see the conditions. Our brother spoke to us very openly and straightly about the necessity of Oneness, and then there needs to be some further revelation. We think when we have obtained a unity that we can work; but "I can from myself do nothing." One has recognised this, that then we think we can do it, we have the secret we can do it. It is the flesh. The Lord has got to get the flesh slain and still, and make us recognise that we are impotent; and no flesh can glory in His presence. God is calling for a people who so recognise the Cross as it must be planted right in them to the dividing asunder between the soul and the Life which is hid with Christ in God, that when they come together there can be this mighty movement of the Spirit of the Eternal God in their midst, that they can pray those prayers which come out from God Himself, and, being heard in this world, bring about that thing which He is seeking to do, the shaking of things. You and I are called to this wondrous ministry. When the Lord has a people together, even a small number, who know what it is to find their life in Him in the Throne, He can begin to operate. You can see the massed gatherings of Satan. Anyone who can discern the signs of the times

can see how Satan is encompassing, and how he is involving the race, and the nominal church. What is God's answer going to be? What is going to be His vindication? What is going to be His manifestation? Oh, to get the weakest, the nothings, the hidden ones, if they will so have it and come together, that He may, by His Spirit, begin to show these greater works, the works of prayer, the works by which the travail of the Spirit shall be expressed in hearts that are broken, that live for their Redeemer, and brought into oneness with Himself, so that there shall, in these last days, take place swiftly that gathering out of the highways and the byways, if necessary, of those who must fill His house.

May the Lord give to us some hint of this truth for His Name's sake. Amen.

T. M. J.

## "THE SERVANT OF THE LORD"

### II.—THE WISE MASTER-BUILDER.

(Continued.)

HAVING spoken of the fact of the spiritual edifice which God is building in this age; of the specific endowment of Divine wisdom essential to all His "Fellow-workers"; and of the first expression of that wisdom in the matter of the Foundation, we now go on to speak of the means used by the Holy Spirit for the effecting of this purpose of God. Just a word on the method which leads to the means.

It is perfectly clear in the Word that the divinely appointed method in the first place is the preaching which is a proclaiming and an announcement. There are many other contributing ministries not less important, as they are all interdependent, but the first in order—not necessarily to large audiences—(there are instances in Scripture of preaching to one) is the proclamation and announcement of a certain comprehensive and all-inclusive fact. This being the case it is of very great importance that we should know that fact and its inclusions. Many inquiries have been set up as to the unsatisfactory situation which exists for so great an area in relation to the gospel and Christian life. Questions concerning wide-spread indifference, gospel-hardening, wholesale backsliding, disappointing "converts," ineffective Christians, low level of spiritual life, worldliness in the "Church," the

misleading of believers by false doctrine and deceiving spirits, spiritual immaturity, &c. &c. To some extent such conditions existed from the beginning, even in the great apostolic days, but it was then much more the exception than now. It was then something in the midst of the greater and better conditions which made the apostolic Church so mighty in the world. Now, it would seem to be the other way round. The genuine thing is the smaller company in the midst of the more general failure. Far be it from us to join in the tirade against that which bears "His" name, but we are so constantly confronted with the heart-breaking story of the difficulties of service, the disappointment of workers, the despair of Christians, that we must enter the inquiry and seek to help. Now without pressing it as our conviction—which certainly it is—we would present it as a question: may not this state be largely due to an inadequate gospel? Is the means used such as is calculated to achieve the tremendous end in view? Have we an adequate conception of what that end is? May it not be that such an inadequate conception has resulted in the eliminating or neglecting of essentials on the one hand and the labouring of certain unworthy factors on the other. With regard to the latter; is fear of hell and gain of heaven really worthy of the "so great salvation"? Is the horrors of being doomed to eternal punishment, giving rise to all the sensational means and methods by which fear is meant to be produced, really a sufficient motive? Is the personal going to heaven with all the personal gains and pleasures associated therewith, producing all the sentimental appeals intended to capture by pathos, emotion, excitement, pleasure, &c., really mighty enough to bring through the eternal purpose? Are souls ever born without travail somewhere, and will they ever get through without that travail becoming experimental in themselves to some extent? May it not be the gospel of "escape from hell and going to heaven," with all the cheap elements of its proclamation which has nauseated so many, turning them away in disgust; which prejudices the true; and which has become played out in the emotions of many who can no longer be appealed to along these lines, setting up a gospel deadlock?

Perhaps, after all, the best method of dealing with such questions is the positive one, that is considering