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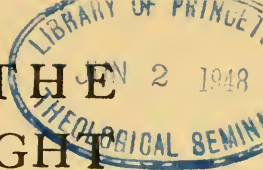


STUDIES IN THE  
HIGHEST THOUGHT





# STUDIES IN THE HIGHEST THOUGHT



BY

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"THE FOURTH DIMENSION," ETC.

*"ALTIORA PETO"*

HODDER & STOUGHTON  
NEW YORK  
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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## PREFACE

THESE Studies were given by request at the Alliance Club, London, and are now published in book-form in response to the wishes of many friends. They are of course elementary and introductory, but as they have for their subject the relation of the finite to the Infinite, of man to God, I have ventured to use the superlative in connection with them.

There is no question that the higher mysteries of the Christian faith transcend both in depth and height all the boasted wisdom of the East, and even in these brief Studies sublime themes are touched upon that awaken our deepest feelings of reverence and of awe.

There is a great love of the mysterious abroad to-day, and it is hoped that some who may be thus attracted to these Studies may pursue them until they reach the end of all mystery in the Divine.

The Studies are here given as delivered, with but few necessary changes; and the reader must pardon the abrupt and somewhat dogmatic tone that may characterise the spoken more than it does the written word.

It is hoped that in spite of all imperfection of style the subject matter may appeal to readers of many shades of thought and belief.

A. T. SCHOFIELD, M.D.

19 HARLEY STREET, LONDON, W.,  
*Easter, 1911.*

## INTRODUCTORY



# INTRODUCTORY

## DEGREES OF THOUGHT

THOUGHTS and mental activities of all sorts are becoming of increasing interest every day. For long ages nothing was known about them and they were deemed matters of great obscurity and little interest. But now I have before me several books devoted to their consideration and classification. I have also one that regards them as possessing definite extension in space and as having various forms and appearances significant of their character. They are also said to possess various colours, mostly of a very vivid and striking character.

I have, for instance, the form and colours of the thoughts of two people observing a street accident as said to be seen by a "sensitive" observer. The one conveying only vague sympathy is not nearly so bright or definite a thought-form as that from an

Increased  
interest in  
thought.

Thought  
extension  
and colour.

active helper. These and other interesting matters relating to thought are becoming the subject of much attention, and although all such new and startling ideas are rightly received with great caution, it would be rash in the present day to assert there is nothing in them.

Three  
degrees of  
thought.

It is not, however, with the shapes and colours of thoughts (if indeed they possess any) that we are occupied here. It is rather with the different planes or degrees of thought — of which, as we know, there are three: positive thought, comparative thought, and superlative thought. The positive or high thinking is generally coupled with plain or spare living, and indeed it is commonly recognised that for all effective thinking too much of the material is a distinct hindrance.

The posi-  
tive — high  
thought.

Thought on this plane would include all relating to ordinary study of an elevating nature, and would be connected with high aims and a noble life. It is supposed to flourish in embryo amongst the more studious of our undergraduates at the Universities, and to be the ordinary stock-in-trade of professors, philosophers, statesmen, poets, and men of letters.



The next degree, or "Higher Thought," is of a very different order, and is the badge or title of a distinct school that has lately sprung into existence, being largely recruited, if not indeed originating, from the other side of the Atlantic. It is a distinct variety of the genus known as Christian Science, and is akin in many respects to the New Thought, Theosophy, and similar cults.

The comparative —  
higher  
thought.

It states in their prospectus that "the Higher Thought recognises the true nature of man and the power of his thought to influence the conditions of man's life." This very modest programme, however, by no means covers the extent of the Higher Thought, which ranges far and wide over the whole field of occult phenomena.

There can be no doubt whatever of the earnestness and zeal with which this cult is pursued and its followers are inspired. The object, too, is clear: to develop the human to the utmost limit of which humanity is capable by raising his powers to the highest state of efficiency. All means are invoked to this end; telepathy, thought transference, psychometry, thought concentration are each of them developments in this direction.

Its objects.

Respira-  
tion and  
thought.

The last, we are told, can be greatly strengthened by slow and deep respiration; and if these can be brought down to only two or three in the minute the power of thought gained is very great. Thought images (it is said) can then be built up and the thoughts themselves so concentrated and brought to a focus that they can be projected in any desired direction so as to influence people at a distance.

All this is most interesting and a certain percentage of it is doubtless true. Nevertheless, although the wonders of the "Higher Thought" are far greater than I have indicated, even when it reaches its utmost limit there is still room for one degree higher — the superlative.

The super-  
lative —  
highest  
thought.

I have therefore, greatly daring, taken this superlative as indicating the range of thought faintly indicated in these few brief Studies. The essential difference between the highest thought and the higher, which is really the justification for the use of the superlative, is that whereas the latter has man and his will as the objective, the former is primarily concerned with God and His will.

It may doubtless be objected by some that

another difference of some importance is that the former is within our power to study, as we have all the facts at our disposal, but that regarding the latter we know nothing.

Of course such an assertion might be equally made of any science whose text-books were set aside, and I have clearly shown elsewhere\* that the Bible cannot be regarded ultimately as a human production, but that it contains a full revelation of the true God and of man's relations to Him.

The grounds on which this is maintained is the unparalleled circulation and perennial vitality of the Bible, which after 2000 years has no rival whatever in any other book on earth; its proved force in its transforming power and character, so that cruel savages become by its influence alone changed into kind and noble men; and the unique characters and thoughts it contains — the conception of Jesus Christ, the real force of "love, eternity, trinity," etc., being found nowhere else.

For these and many other reasons we regard the Bible as a real revelation from God to

\*The Mystery of the Book. 1d. Morgan and Scott, Ltd.

man and a complete manual of the "Highest Thought."

It seems, too, that now is the psychological moment for this assertion and for Studies on this special plane.

The swing  
of the pen-  
dulum.

The pendulum has swung well over from the material to the mystic; and unsatisfied hearts, tired of the commonplaces so often offered them in the name of Religion, and disgusted with the cheap types of Christian formalism that everywhere abound, are seeking, seeking earnestly and persistently, as they never sought before, for the true God, for the ultimate Good, for the meaning and end of life. The pity is that they turn from the Bible as from some shibboleth they are weary of hearing, simply because they are really ignorant of its Divine directness and simplicity.

Even the amazing mysteries of the incarnation, life, and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ have been so cheapened and popularised as to lose most of their majesty and saving power.

The degra-  
dation of  
Christian-  
ity.

My feelings, as I write this, are very like what I often experience in my consulting room, where I have to treat a certain class of disease for which a "rest cure" is essential.

Years ago one could recommend and carry this out, without doubt or difficulty; but now it is far otherwise.

It has become such an absolute commonplace, so deteriorated in its methods and details, so popularised and vulgarised and carried out so inefficiently and carelessly <sup>Vulgarised medical treatment.</sup> that I find now I have often to apologise for mentioning it, and experience great difficulty in restoring the shattered faith in its efficacy. Many, indeed, go away uncured because they cannot be persuaded to undertake again what they have already tried ineffectually.

It is so here in a still greater degree. As I write these lines I am absolutely certain that Christ and Christianity as revealed in the Bible, and not as debased and degraded by our modern tenets and practices, constitutes a perfect panacea for the deeper ills <sup>The panacea of true religion.</sup> of mankind, and would bring light and joy into thousands of distressed lives.

There is undoubtedly a craving everywhere for reality and for genuine relief and rest for the burdened soul and conscience; and I can only hope that in the attempt I here make to present the old evangel in a some-

what modern dress, and to depict some of the little known glories of the spirit life, that I may be able to present clearly without distortion some glorious truths of the Highest Thought.

# THE FATHER OF SPIRITS





## FIRST STUDY

### THE FATHER OF SPIRITS

IN entering upon the first of these Studies I may briefly recall the essential difference between the comparative and superlative in thought. The Higher Thought "recognises the true nature of man and the power of his thought to influence the condition of man's life" — a study that centres round humanity.

The object of the Highest Thought may be stated in the same words, merely substituting "God for "man." It "recognises the true nature of God and the power of His thought to influence the condition of man's life"—a study that centres round Divinity.

Turning to our first theme, "The Father of Spirits," I will read the one verse that embodies in so many words my subject in this Study. It is in Hebrews xii. 9: "*We had the fathers of our flesh,*" it says, "*to chasten us, and we gave them reverence.*" These are our earthly parents. Then follow these

Distinction between the comparative and superlative.

Subjection to the Father of spirits.

words: "SHALL WE NOT MUCH RATHER BE IN SUBJECTION UNTO THE FATHER OF SPIRITS, AND LIVE?"

The Father of spirits, or, as the margin says quite correctly, "*The Father of our spirits!*" That is a phrase that is so profound that I feel sure that few have fathomed it. Let me repeat the words. "*Shall we not,*" asks the unknown writer of this epistle, I think probably the Apostle Paul, "*much rather be in subjection unto the Father of our spirits, and live?*" I will venture to say that none, however great their attainments, know in its fullest sense what life means until they know what it is to be in subjection to the Father of their spirits.

Fulness of  
life the  
result.

This is a deep saying, and the more we ponder it the better we like it and the truer we find it: we feel that it must be so in the nature of things. Of course the Father of spirits has a general and also a special meaning. He is both God and Father. In a general sense "in Him we live and move and have our being."

Father of  
spirit, soul,  
and body.

He is the Father of our spirits: therefore we live. He is the Father of our souls, ani-

mal life, author of our energies: therefore we move. He is the Father, in a sense, of our bodies: therefore we live and breathe physically, — “*God in whose hand,*” said Daniel, at Belshazzar’s feast, “*thy breath is, hast thou not glorified.*”

Consider the three. The God of our spirits gives Life. The God of our souls gives Movement. The God of our bodies gives Existence — the tripartite nature of man united in the most profound psychological synthesis in one phrase by the apostle in that remote age when psychology was hardly dreamed of, in his sermon on Mars Hill.

Therefore, in a general sense, God is the Father of all men’s spirits, but only to those who give Him subjection and learn to live in the highest sense is He the special Father through regeneration by the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I take it we get both the special and the general sense in the words: “*Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?*”

The choice is given us, “*Shall we not,*” because we are neither clods nor stones, nor even of the inferior orders of the animal

Free will is asserted here. kingdom. Made in the likeness of God we are endowed with free will. Pundits and those who split hairs and words may deny that we have free will. Each one of us, however, is quite conscious that we are free to read this book or no, and that we can stop when we like.

This will can be used for evil.

Now having this free will, instead of being in subjection to this Father of spirits, it is quite open to us to deny, to ignore, to rebel, to offend against Him; to destroy, to defile, to degrade ourselves. All who do this can never know in its full sense the meaning of the simple word "Life." But this will can be used for our good and for God's glory. Therefore our quest is, how to be so truly in subjection to the Father of spirits that we may have life, and have life more abundantly.

Why not enjoy life more?

We have at best only a limited number of years yet of life in London, or in the country where we reside. Why should not that life be of the fullest, best, and noblest character? Why should not we enjoy life to an extent we never have yet experienced, and reach an ideal that we have never yet conceived? This may be attained by Studies in the

Highest Thought, in that thought which is concerned with the relations of God and Man.

Now what God requires from *us* are three things — justice, mercy, and humility. <sup>God requires justice, mercy, and humility.</sup> I find the whole duty of man crystallised in that wonderful verse in Micah vi. 8: "*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*" The man who does these in the perfection to which the scripture here alludes is a man who pleases God and a man who walks with God. But although that is what God requires of us, what *we* require in order to be able to perfectly fulfil those three duties is power, and will, and faith. <sup>We require power, will, and faith.</sup> God requires from us ethics and good works; to produce these we require a surrendered will and a quickening faith.

Once our wills are captured, the citadel of our being is His, and from that moment true happiness begins in our souls. It is the capturing of the will that is the first secret of the Highest Thought. <sup>The will must be captured.</sup> "*My son, give me thine heart.*"

God does not want the head or the under-

standing first, but the heart and the will. The question asked is, "*Shall we not much rather be in subjection?*" The one who is in subjection has a captured and surrendered will, and that is where the battle with self is fought. Shall we live to do our own will or God's, or shall we reach that blissful summit when our own will and God's are absolutely indistinguishable; when our wishes are so surrendered that God's will is ours?

Counsels  
of perfec-  
tion.

You may say, "These are counsels of such perfection that they are of little use to us poor erring mortals who may study this book; you must think you have a very wise company of readers to talk like this." It is not our wisdom, however, that produces wonderful results, but it is our surrendered will. "*My son, give me thine heart*" is the secret entrance to the highest spheres of this life.

Is there a  
Way to the  
Father?

I have, in this Study, to say a few introductory words about this Father of spirits. How God reveals His will and how He gives us the power to obey it. The "Way to the Father" will be the subject of our Second Study.

Some may here ask, "Can God reveal the Way?" To say "No" is of course absurd,

because it limits the Omnipotent and makes the Infinite finite. There is no reasonable, rational being who can ever say that God cannot do anything He pleases. The next question is, "Has He revealed the Way?" The answer to that is "*The Book*." There is only one "*The Book*"; all the others are books, or a book, but this is *The Book*. There is *The Book*. only one work in the world called *The Bible*, and this single fact is of great importance.

I would greatly like to turn aside here for one moment in order to establish the claim of this little volume to be a revelation of the Highest Thought from God — a true revelation; and the reason I dwell on it for one moment is because the claims of the Bible have been so greatly disputed. In the first place, this book that we all possess has, at the present day, nearly 2000 years after it was written, a single circulation that, *Its unique circulation.* I believe, exceeds in extent the united circulation of every book of its size in any one year.

That is to say, if you take all the books published in one year of men's writings of this size, this one old collection of sixty-six

writings, most of them belonging to a small obscure nation which is scattered all over the world, the Jews, probably exceeds in number at the present day annually the combined circulation of all other books published in one year of its size. To compare the circulation of this book with any other single book is of course absolutely ridiculous.

Compared  
with  
Shakes-  
peare or  
Plato.

For instance, I suppose the greatest book we have in England is the works of Shakespeare, but the circulation of Shakespeare is absolutely as nothing compared with that of the Bible. The greatest of the ancient books, taking a work about the age of the Bible, would be the writings of Plato; but you would require a very powerful microscope to see the number of the works of Plato circulated compared with the Bible. There is nothing on earth to compare with "The Book" in circulation, and this hard, crude fact has to be faced in the first place by those who place it on a level with other books and deny its special inspiration.

What is the  
force be-  
hind the  
Bible?

There must be something about this book that makes it circulate in such amazing quantities in every language and every country over the face of God's earth at the pres-



ent day, and the question is, "What is the force that gives it this perennial vitality?"

Then you have here in the Book sixty-six <sup>Its perfect harmony.</sup> booklets bound together, written by independent writers, most of whom never saw each other, and many of whom never heard of each other, and whose lives were spread over some two thousand years of time; and yet when these booklets are bound together they produce a complete harmony and furnish cross references to each other's ideas that gives you a conception of sixty-six performers in some great oratorio, meeting haphazard <sup>The Bible as an oratorio.</sup> in the orchestra one afternoon, never having seen each other, or heard of each other, or seen each other's scores, or knowing the title of the complete piece, but each playing his part for the first time, and yet succeeding in producing perfect music. You will at once say there must have been somewhere a Master Hand, a composer as well as a conductor for this orchestra to produce this wonderful harmony of music from sixty-six independent performers.

Another amazing thing is this,— that this <sup>Its unchangeable character.</sup> book has never been added to. No one knows what was its origin. It was not cer-

tainly human; we presume it, therefore, to be Divine. When I say it was not human I mean that the popular idea that an authoritative Council of the Jewish nation bound together an Old Testament is erroneous. There was nothing of the sort. The Jews never had our Old Testament as such. This Old Testament grew together and some time before Our Lord's appearance became a complete whole, but no one knows by whose authority it so became to the exclusion of the Apocrypha. No one can say why the closing chapters (given in the Apocrypha) are excluded from the Book of Esther in the authorized version. There is a hidden reason for it, but I think that no one who compiled it knew that reason. I might just allude to it for one moment, because such little points are so significant.

The Apoc-  
rypha.

I do not know whether any of my readers are fond of botany or not, or of looking at sea shells or animalculæ under a microscope and seeing the infinite perfection in the smallest things made by God; but here is an instance in literature of the same perfection.

Book of  
Esther.

In the Book of Esther the word "God"

never appears. God refused to have His name in that book because His people had cast Him off, and although the whole story is a record of how He intervened on their behalf, it is as One behind the scenes whose Name shall not be known. He is incognito; His name is never to be found throughout the narration. This fact is now well known.

But what about the chapters that are left out? Curiously enough the last chapter of Esther ends in the Bible with three verses; the fourth verse and the remaining chapters are in the Apocrypha; and the fourth verse begins with these words, "And God said." The writer had never noticed that God was never to be found in the book, and all this part that is shut out is full of His name, showing it, from our point of view, to be spurious. But who was clever enough to think of this? This is only one instance out of hundreds of undesigned coincidences.

But if such be the wonders of the Old Testament, the New Testament is still more <sup>Wonders of the New Testament.</sup> miraculous. Most people have peculiar ideas as to what the New Testament is and where it came from. They think it was a selection

made by the great early Fathers of the Church. As a matter of fact the great Fathers of the Church assumed no such authority.

Its formation is Divine.

The canon of the New Testament bears the imprimatur of no man's name, of no Church Council, of no human authority. It came together; it grew like a plant. Its exclusions and its inclusions are equally remarkable. No one can tell why the letters of Apollos are not in it and the letters of Paul are; no one can tell why the letters of Polycarp are not in; why some of the beautiful sayings of Saint Chrysostom are not in: but for some inscrutable reason a Divine hand has caused certain books from the earliest ages to be recognised as inspired in a particular and peculiar sense.

Endorsed by the Church.

When these writings, which had become so regarded, were known as the New Testament, a Church Council then endorsed the fact and said, "This is the New Testament," but they did not form it or gather the book together. It was only after the selection had been made by no known human agent that they stamped it as Divine by their authority.

There is yet another remarkable circum-

stance. It is not only that no one has ever been able to destroy this Bible, either the Old or the New Testament, though attempts have been made to do so by the richest and cleverest and most powerful kings and emperors with the utmost intensity and determination. As we well know, Voltaire fully thought there would not be a Bible to be seen soon after his death, and as we also know — I need not repeat the whole story — the house in which he lived at Geneva is now the Bible House. That is only one incident; the point is this: that since the canon of this New Testament was closed no one has succeeded in adding another line.

You would have thought that the Early Church would have said, "But there is Saint Jerome, there is Saint Athanasius, there is Saint Chrysostom, and the wonderful sayings of Polycarp; we must introduce these and add to the body of the Scriptures." They have never been able to do so; and in all the two thousand years of the Church's history all the saints of holy life that have written marvellous works have never had one word of their writings put into this inspired collection of books that we call the Bible, "The Book."

The Bible  
is inde-  
structible.

It cannot  
be added  
to.

Some Divine hand has been behind the whole thing, has put these books together, forced them to be recognised as the Word of God, and then so closed the canon, so sealed the book with seven seals, that no one is able to open it or to add another word to it. And this book is circulated now, as far as we know, as it originally was written, in a greater number than any other book in the world.

The sacred  
canon is  
closed.

But it is not only indestructible, but it is unique in its *ideas*, in its *words*, in its *story*, in its *personality*.

It contains  
unique  
ideas.

It contains *ideas* that are not to be found in any other work on earth. It contains the true idea of eternity which you cannot find in any Greek writing or in any classic. It contains the extraordinary conception of the sovereignty of God and the free will of man, — two actual incompatibles which are both asserted and which are both true and are to be found nowhere else. It contains the idea of the Atonement and it contains the extraordinary idea of tri-unity without plurality, — three in one. The idea of the Trinity in itself is a true, unique, biblical conception.

It contains *words* that have been expressly coined for this book. The word "love" (Agapé) was never known until it was written in this book. The word "Jehovah" is peculiar to this book.

It contains  
unique  
words.

It contains a *story* that has not its equal in the world. As the Bishop of London said the other day, "it is the only story in the world worth spending your life in telling."

It contains  
a unique  
story.

It contains a *Personality* which, by the confession of friends and enemies alike, Pagans, Jews, Turks, and Infidels, is so unique that all men bow down before that Personality, though all men may not adopt the Christian creed, — the personality of the Man Christ Jesus.

It describes  
a unique  
person-  
ality.

On these and many other grounds I claim that it is inspired in a peculiar sense and contains a message from the Father of spirits to every thoughtful man and woman which they would do well to heed. It is a living book; it has given life to thousands.

This book is immortal; it has the seed of eternal life in it and a power in it to change the lives of the worst of men into God's own likeness; and it is doing so, and has done so, every day for the last two

It is a  
living  
book.

thousand years. The sacred books of the East are not living books. They do not change the lives of men; they do not profess to; but this book will penetrate to some South Sea Island and change the whole character of its inhabitants by its unique power.

We require  
stereo-  
scopic  
vision.

There is one more thing about this book that I must mention. I have been laid up at home for the last three weeks with a little accident, and a friend brought to me a most beautiful stereoscope and pictures. If you look with the eye only at the stereoscopic pictures they appear like ordinary photographs; but any one who has seen these pictures through a stereoscope will agree with me that a moment occurs, when you are looking through the stereoscope, when the whole scene leaps into incredible life before your eyes. The mountains stand out and the solid figure of a man is seen climbing in the foreground. You can see behind him and all round him, and the whole scene changes from a picture to reality.

When does that moment occur? When you get the stereoscopic vision, when your two eyes, acting together on the two different pictures, unite them in your brain as one, and



the whole thing becomes as absolute a reality to you as if you were there on the spot. I always consider that stereoscopic vision is one of the greatest marvels that we have, — to be able to see solidity from a flat.

In the same way the Word of God becomes <sup>It must be seen with two eyes.</sup> as absolutely different the moment you get stereoscopic vision of the mind as a stereoscopic picture does when it is really seen through the instrument. There are two eyes which are requisite to see the Bible with, and the moment we see any part with those two eyes, it is a most extraordinary thing, but the passage becomes solid, lifelike; the words leap into their real power and solidity before our eyes; and we see in the book something we have never seen before, though we may have gazed at it in church or elsewhere for forty years. It becomes real fact, solid truth before our eyes the moment we get stereoscopic vision.

And what are the two eyes that we have to see it with? The eyes of our understanding <sup>The eyes of the understanding and heart.</sup> and the eyes of our heart. We have to see it with the head and with the heart. We have to understand it with the head; our heart has to feel the thrill and power of it;

and the moment those two are blended together we get a stereoscopic beauty of the Bible which we have never seen before.

All this  
proves its  
Divine  
origin.

I therefore maintain, as I now leave the subject of the Scriptures, that the whole phenomena of the Bible in its circulation, in its formation, and in its contents are absolutely unaccountable unless we regard it as coming from God and containing a revelation of His will. This book has now spread over the world and the revelation it contains is more powerful today than it ever has been before. I say "more powerful." Look what it effects.

The Edin-  
burgh Con-  
vention.

Some of you may have heard a sort of an echo in the papers of the Convention at Edinburgh last year. As a matter of fact that Convention is registered in Heaven. There never was such an event before upon this earth since it has been a planet. Men of every division of the Christian faith in united harmony were there assembled in the most earnest conclave to consider how they could best advance the interests of Christ's kingdom and secure that His gospel should reach every creature who had not yet heard it; and all this done on most practical and

businesslike lines by men who had travelled half round the world to unite in Edinburgh to consider this subject. Such a thing has never been done before, and such is the power of this book.

This Bible, as I have already said, reveals a special sonship besides the creative power in whom we live and move and have our being, — a special relation to this special Father of spirits by ties of blood and birth and privilege; so that we are spoken of in this book as children by birth and by blood ties by being born again; and we are spoken of in this book as sons by adoption, by privilege, as becoming heirs to coming kingdoms in a coming eternity. To many the word “eternity” seems still an empty myth, but to thousands of reasonable and rational and thinking beings it has become a greater reality than the world in which we live.

Many of my friends who study the Higher Thought, and all who know the Highest Thought, will agree with me that the things that are unseen, which are eternal, are after all the real things, and that we live and move now in a world of shadows.

We get in this new connection with God

Our relationship with the Divine.

a relationship surpassing that of Adam in Eden. There God walked with man in His home in Eden; now man dwells with God in His home in Heaven. He dwells with the Father of spirits in his spiritual home now, and the man who in his soul and the affections of his heart does not live with the Father of spirits in His heavenly home has little power to represent that Father in this world. This is indeed the climax of the Highest Thought. No higher thought is possible than that a man or a woman may be living on this earth and yet be at the same time in Heaven.

The climax of the Highest Thought.

That such an idea is not my own and is not a transcendental vision is shown by the simple fact that every letter St. Paul wrote — and St. Paul was one of the most practical of men — was written to people in two places at once. "*To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse.*" This was a small village down the Lysander Valley not far from Ephesus, and if you had gone to Colosse you would have seen men and women walking about the streets, but you would have observed a something about them that would have shown you they were

In two places at once.

somewhere else at the same time. You would have seen they were men who had had a heavenly vision; you would have seen they were men who were wrapt in the Highest Thought; you would have seen they were dwelling in their souls with the Father of spirits, while their feet were walking the streets of Colosse.

So it is with the man or the woman who has grasped with any power the meaning of my text; "*Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of our spirits, and know life more abundantly,*" by having our souls set free to live in the highest regions of thought, of power, of life, of enjoyment so that our outward life down here may be a reflection of the joy that our inward spirits live in; so that in a sense no one can touch us without at the same time touching in some measure the Father of spirits. Such is possible, such is probable, such is the absolute sober truth concerning numbers who are in our midst to-day.

It was true of Christ. The only Begotten Son would never have declared the Father, His life in Palestine would never have been any marvel if while He was living there He

The higher  
and the  
lower life.

Christ was  
always in  
two places.

was not all the time in Heaven. The One who came down from Heaven was the Son of Man who is in Heaven, and on earth He was a man who dwelt in the bosom of the Father in Heaven all the time. That is what made Him so supremely happy.

He was called "The Man of Sorrows" because He lived in a world of sorrow for which He felt intensely, but He had His moments of happiness; and I sometimes think He used sometimes to hide His happiness, though He could not hide His sorrows. He used to retire apart to a mountain to be alone with His Father, and who can tell the joy and delight of such moments of spiritual communion? They may be concealed from us, but there is not the slightest doubt that it was in the power of that hidden life that the perfect life of Christ was lived on earth. So with us in our poor measure. This relationship, as I say, is known and enjoyed by thousands. I will just add one word about it and I have done.

Christ's  
joys and  
sorrows.

We read a great deal and we are very much interested in the new power which has lately been developed. I am very sorry to see that, in the papers, it is constantly being

called now the new arm for warfare. Every new invention seems to be cursed with the necessity of being dragged in as a new means of destroying other people. I refer to aviation. <sup>Aviation in the Bible.</sup> It is a wonderful thing, it is a new thing, and it is a thing that interests us all. It is a thing which in its spiritual aspect is very old in the Bible. As you know, it is talked about in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, to which I will most briefly allude in closing.

Young men fail; young men faint; people get tired of the journey and the dust and the mud and the weariness of life in going through their seventy years of existence in this world, and they have not strength enough to go through it without weakness and weariness and ennui and so on. But Isaiah says "*they that wait on the Lord shall change their ability.*"

Before they waited on the Lord, before they <sup>How to fly.</sup> knew the Father of spirits, before they soared into the regions of the Highest Thought they could walk and they could run, but there is one thing they could not do, — they could not fly. But "*they that wait upon the Lord shall change their ability*"; they shall receive a new power that they never had before — "*they shall mount up with wings as eagles.*"

The power  
of flight.

Where to? To their Father of spirits in His heavenly home. The moment they do that what happens? "*They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint*"; and as the Apostle says, "*for this cause,*" because we can fly, "*we faint not.*"

Never  
grow old.

The man who has learnt to fly never faints; the man whose spirit lives with the Father of spirits in Heaven is never tired of life however he may be fatigued, but he has an unfading freshness, a perennial power about him that nothing can weary or tire. A man said once to Joshua, "I am eighty-five years old to-day; I am as fresh, as strong and as able as I was forty-five years ago when I started to walk through this howling wilderness." Why? Because he had been living with God in Heaven all the time. There is the secret of perennial life.

Having thus shortly opened the subject in this very imperfect way I will say no more here, but I will ask any who are interested in the development of the Highest Thought — and I may say it has extremely interesting developments — to pass on now to our Second Study on The Way,—the way to that Father of spirits of whom I have briefly spoken in this First Study.



# THE WAY



## SECOND STUDY

### THE WAY

THE first problem of the Highest Thought is that which concerns our relation to the Father of spirits. We saw that life in its fullest sense was only found in those and only enjoyed by such as lived in subjection to this Father of spirits, and that in this surrender of the will lay the secret of a satisfied and successful life and the entrance to the highest state of holiness and happiness. But the point that remains for our present consideration is how this Father of spirits can be reached by mortal man, and the answer is found in the encouraging and delightful title of our Second Subject — “The Way.”

The secret  
of a happy  
life.

Take a brief survey of the world as it is at this moment and consider the seething, struggling mass of mankind over the whole world, striving in all directions for divers sorts of objects which in themselves yield no satisfaction when attained. Look across the

The world  
as it is.

Atlantic at the picture of the great American nation, with its politics and its millionaires, and consider that here we are supposed to see the latest advances and evolution of mankind in its intelligence and wisdom. What an incredible and amazing picture it presents!

Prepara-  
tions for  
war.

Turn to the older countries of Europe and observe the nations here spending some 500 millions in preparing for a war not yet declared, but which curiously by common consent is morbidly declared to be inevitable, and this for no earthly reason that is known. Look upon these perplexing problems of our boastful race as they are to-day and then turn your eyes away from mankind to the Father of spirits, who loves all these struggling, striving creatures, and mark that for thousands of years, owing to the Divine spark which is in every man, the deepest aspiration of the human race has been to find a way to God.

Perplexing  
problems.

You remember how the talented author of "No. 5 John Street," a book of remarkable power, stood on the steps of the Royal Exchange one day, as he might have done this morning at 12 o'clock, and seeing the masses coming to and fro, incessantly hurry-

ing and bustling in front of him at the Mansion House in the City of London, wondered what it was all about — what they were all aiming at; what was the ultimate good they were seeking; what all this confusion, like the crowded movements in a hive of bees, meant, and whither it all tended; but he could find no satisfactory answer.

We have now before us, however, a wonderful subject to consider,—whether there really is a Way across the impassable morass <sup>The im-</sup> of men's opinions and ideas and all the <sup>passable</sup> seething, struggling confusion of this world's <sup>morass.</sup> aspirations and religions that leads to the Father of spirits. Here and there an attentive observer may see a few, silently threading their way through the bog, across the morass, holding some unseen clue which appears to guide their footsteps, so that they fall neither on the right hand nor on the left, but seem to be steadily progressing in Indian file across the wilderness of this world towards a heavenly home. We cannot cross this limitless bog, this pathless forest without finding the Way.

Travellers in Africa will tell you that an African path is the most wonderful thing

An African  
forest path.

there. They will speak of trackless forests hundreds of miles in extent, with a single way not above a foot broad, formed through countless generations by the footsteps of one man after another, along which alone you can travel through that pathless forest in safety to reach the other side. So is there a Way, narrow though it be, to the Father of spirits, and there are some of my readers who may have found this Way and some who may not. But these latter who are earnest souls *will* find it; for they are undoubtedly seeking it, and they that seek shall find.

Is there a  
a way  
across?

Look once again on the picture of life. On one side of the pathless forest and the limitless bog is the restless crowd; on the other side the Father of spirits waiting for his children to come to Him. The one question is, Is there a Way between the seeker and the sought from man to God? How are we to find it? This is indeed what all the world, the serious world, is seeking in one way or another to-day.

Well may we call these Studies in the Highest Thought, for they seek to solve the highest problems and the deepest yearnings

of human life. Never were there so many altars to unknown Gods as at this moment. <sup>A hundred altars to unknown Gods.</sup> If St. Paul saw one on Mars Hill we see a hundred in London to-day. I do not look at them all as perversions from the faith — far from it; though undoubtedly to shut the eye against the light is a very different thing from groping in the dark before the light shone; there are determined gropers in the dark who still, seemingly ignorant (perhaps willingly) that the true Light shines, seek for themselves for one reason or another some original path, some way of their own to find this Father of spirits.

I would not for a moment cast a doubt on <sup>Our three guides.</sup> the earnestness or reality of their quest, but I would point out to them that there are for all three guides, and three guides only, that can help us to find the true and right way. We have been given by God reason, emotion, and will. These are the three parts of the human mind or spirit — the reason or intelligence, the emotion or heart, and the will.

Now consider our question as to the Way in the light of these three guides. First in <sup>1. The light of reason.</sup> the light of reason or experience.

An appeal  
to thou-  
sands.

If I am in earnest in seeking a way to the Father of spirits that I may live as I have never lived before, let me see if the voice of experience has nothing to say. Are there any who have found this Way? Are they living to-day or in past ages? In answer I hear thousands and tens of thousands of witnesses, who appeal with an irresistible voice to my intelligence and reason, saying one after another, not only by their voices but by their lives, "We have reached the goal. The Divine is our Father. We know experimentally what life more abundantly means."

The way to  
the Father  
is by  
Christ.

And one and all tell us that the Way by which they found this Father was through Jesus Christ His Son. All language of experience throughout all ages of those who have found the Father of spirits tells us it was by one means, and by one means alone; thus corroborating by experience the words of Holy Writ which says, "*No one — crosses this bog, traverses this impenetrable forest — cometh unto the Father (of spirits) but by Me.*"

If we turn from experience, reason, and intelligence to the heart or the instinct, we



find the same finger pointing to the same Way. Look, for instance, at two ignorant men who are seeking the way to the Father of spirits. One morning in despair they take a walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus. <sup>Two disciples going to Emmaus.</sup> A stranger joins them; they know him not. His words speak for themselves, not to their reason, but to their instincts, to their hearts. "*Was not our heart burning within us while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the Scriptures,*" that led us to the living Way?"

I appeal to my readers if this burning of the heart has not revealed to some of us the living Way; and whether those vital instincts implanted by Almighty God within <sup>2. The voice of instinct.</sup> us have not by His Spirit responded to the voice without and owned that Jesus Christ is the way to the Father?

There is yet one other guide, that of the <sup>3. The subject will.</sup> will as it bows to authority. When the voice of authority speaks it is a question of the submission of the will to it. We turn to the Book and we find these words — "*I am the Way.*" If the will bows to that, we have found it; if we hesitate we have still the question whether experience does not say

the same thing, whether the inward voice of the heart does not burn with the same answer; and if these three agree in one surely we can have no doubt whatever that in accepting it as a final reply we are following no cunningly devised fable when we proclaim that the Way, the only intelligible way, the only practical way, across the morass of this world to the Father of spirits is Jesus Christ, His Son, Our Lord.

A threefold  
cord.

A threefold cord is not quickly broken. The voice of reason affirms the truth by experience; the voice of emotion confirms it through the echoes of our heart; and the voice of authority proclaims it to our will in the words "*I am the Way.*"

Four  
definite  
articles.

The Book wherein this is written stands apart from all others, and to it alone, as we have seen, is the definite article ever applied — *the* Book. There is one Son who stands alone from all the other sons that this Father of spirits has in His vast family; He only has the definite article — *the* Son. The others are sons, or *a* son; He is *the* Son. *The* Son is proclaimed in *the* Book as *the* Way to *the* Father — all is definite, authoritative, and clear.

Now if you will take the trouble to look for one moment at the close of Matthew xi, you come to a topic of great interest in connection with our subject. *"Neither doth any man know the Father save the Son, AND HE TO WHOMSOEVER THE SON WILLETH TO REVEAL HIM."* The only One who knows the Father of spirits is the Son; and the only ones in addition who can possibly know on earth this Father of spirits are those to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him.

The Son  
alone  
knows the  
Father.

To whom does He will to reveal Him? He continues immediately without a break, *"Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden."* Why? *"That I may reveal to you the Father, because I am the Way."* The only One who can reveal the Father of spirits to our spirits, that we may live, is the Son, and He wills to reveal this Father to all who are weary and heavy laden and who will come to Him. *"Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."* "How do I give you rest? By making known the Father unto you. I am the only One who can do it."

Christ  
alone  
reveals the  
Father.

An amazing metamorphosis takes place in the human heart, however restless, how-

The amaz-  
ing meta-  
morphosis.

ever anxious, however weary, perplexed, dismayed, distressed it may have been, the moment the Father of spirits, revealed to us by the Son, becomes in very deed and truth known to us as *our* Father,—for all trouble vanishes. For the first time in our lives our souls are at rest.

Professor  
W. James  
on conver-  
sion.

Professor William James, of Harvard, the great American psychologist, who has recently passed away, attributed a great part of the joy and delight of what is called conversion to the fact that at that moment the whole being of man became at rest, because for the first time—to use an expressive phrase which has passed into somewhat cant usage—he is then “In tune with the Infinite.” That is to say, spirit, soul, and body are at rest with the Father of spirits through His son Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Spirit, soul,  
and body  
at rest.

The ineffable calm that comes over the spirit when, by means of this Way, it reaches the Father is of such a real, solid, lasting character that I could confidently appeal to the testimony of thousands at this moment who live in Him, and move in Him, and have their being in Him, and find a refuge from the strife of tongues in the secret

presence of the Most High, in the midst of the whole confusion of this world.

It is for this reason that the Son appeals <sup>Thy will and God's.</sup> to us to come to Him if we are weary and heavy laden. Why? Because he says, "I have got a burden too. You toiling millions are not the only burden-bearers. I have got a burden; I have got a yoke, but *"my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* Why? *"Because my delight is to do the will of my Father."* Who are the toilsome, groaning men of the world? The men who are doing their own wills from morning to night. What makes a man move without effort, with an easy yoke and a light burden? Simply learning to love to do God's will instead of his own. From the moment he does this his life, instead of a sigh, has be- <sup>A song for a sigh.</sup> come a song, instead of a toil has become a pleasure, instead of perpetual failure has become an assured victory. And this is what always happens.

There is no difficulty or mystery about it. The moment I know my Father, so great is He, so full of love, that He captures my heart, and I cannot choose but do His will, because the moment He is made known to

me by the One who is "*the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" His will becomes the greatest pleasure of my life.

The yoke  
easy, the  
burden  
light.

Now that is what is set before us in S. Matthew xi, that there is only One who knows the way to the Father, that He is ready and willing to show it to all who are heavy laden, that the moment they take it they cease to be weary and heavy laden, that they find perfect rest to their souls; and though they still have the common lot, the daily toil, the constant drudgery, the burden is no longer heavy, and they are no longer weary. The yoke is easy and the burden light from the moment they love to do the will of God, because He has now become known to them as their Heavenly Father.

I now turn to another description of "The Way" in S. John x, where there is a passage which I am sure will delight us. We there read, "*I am the Door*" — that is the Way. "*I am the Door; by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.*" What does the Door admit me to?

The Way  
of Life.

In the first place it is the *WAY OF LIFE*; it brings me into life. It brings

me into life because before that Way, that Son, that Christ, that Saviour could become the Door for me into the Father's home He had himself to lay down His life, and it is only through the Cross that I enter in.

Oh, that Cross! If we could only see it as it is, with its arms stretched out as it were on a dead world, in life-giving power if they would but accept it, or even lie passive to receive its blessing. As Elisha stretched out his arms and lay on the dead body of the widow's son and brought him back to life, so the Cross of Christ, The power of the Cross of Christ. in its living power, the atonement made by this Son of the Father, will restore all to life who will have it. The colour will come into the cheeks, the chest will begin to heave, the limbs will begin to move, and in the force of a new life that dead spirit shall rise through the quickening power of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is the Way. There on the Cross the Saviour hung; there He ever is before the eye of faith, stretching out His arms of sal- The arms of salvation.vation for all the world, that everyone who is weary and heavy laden may find, through

Him, the way to the Father across the pathless forest of this world.

That is the picture, and it is because of this that He is "the Way of Life." The moment the Cross is accepted in my heart, the moment this Way is revealed to me, I receive a fresh life, and pass in through the door, and enter the Way of Life. Till then I am practically dead, as regards the Father. He is far away beyond the forest, at the other side of the morass; and I cannot know or speak to Him without Christ.

The Way  
to the  
Father.

Secondly, the Way is the *WAY TO THE FATHER*.

The Way  
of Liberty.

Thirdly, the Way is the *WAY OF LIBERTY*, because its law is love. I am always reminded here, in connection with liberty and love, of a collie dog that I had in London for some years, and being of great value, was never taken out except on a strong steel chain securely fastened to its brass collar.

The story  
of a collie.

But on one never to be forgotten day, when that dear dog of mine, who is now buried in the little animals' cemetery at Hyde Park, came up and stood by me to have the chain fastened on his collar (for he knew



he must not go out without it), I said, "No, no chain for you. We have done with chains." I opened the front door and out he bounded, for the first time free; and you would have thought he was going away to the end of the world, and that I would never see him again.

But he had not gone to the entrance of the Terrace before he looked at me, ran back again, and there he was trotting behind me. What was the secret? He had learned to know me, and having known me he could not choose but love me with his poor dog's heart — not because I was good, but for the simple fact that I was his master.

A dog must love his master, and though he may be a worthless drunkard, he will love him just the same. A dog's heart is the most pathetic thing on earth. Once he gives it he needs no chain. He was now joined to me by a stronger chain than any blacksmith could make, — the golden chain of love.

It is the same with our poor hearts. We have not got dog's hearts — our hearts are not as faithful as those of a dog. Alas, the

To know  
God is to  
love Him.

human heart is not so loyal as even the affection of poor dumb animals, though in intelligence, as the passage below shows, we far exceed them. Nevertheless it remains true that once our souls know this Father of spirits as our Father we cannot choose but love Him, and from that moment we understand the meaning of this word: "*Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in. I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee.*" It is enough for God to indicate where He wishes us to go, for us to run, because the whole service, the whole life now is a life of love; and A LIFE OF LOVE IS A LIFE OF PERFECT LIBERTY.

No bond-  
age in  
Christian-  
ity.

There is no bondage in true Christianity. There is the most terrible bondage in the Christianised Judaism which most of us substitute for it: "Thou shalt do this and thou shalt not do that, thou shalt go here and shalt not go there; thou shalt say this and not say that."

Look at the verse before us. "*I am the Door. By Me if any man enter in he shall be saved.*" That is, he is brought to God, and the moment he is saved and understands this

law of love, from that moment he is a free man. "*He shall go in AND OUT and find pasture.*"

I never understood that. I understood that if I went *in* I would of course find pasture. I would go into the Church <sup>Where to find pas-</sup> and into religious circles and into Chris-<sup>ture.</sup> tian company, and I should find pasture there because these are "sacred." Yes, but what if I go *out* into secular scenes, shall I lose all? Must I keep in the fold? No! The one who goes in and out of the front door is not a servant. The very fact of this going in and out shows that he is a son and belongs to the house. He is the son of his father, and he is free to go in and he is free to come out.

Yes, it may be so, but then of course if I go out I shall not get any pasture. Ah! "*shall go in AND OUT and find pasture*" in both. The distinction between sacred and <sup>No sacred or secular.</sup> secular no longer exists. All belongs to my Father; He gives me *all things* richly to enjoy. From henceforth I call nothing common or unclean, and I am as near Him in my recreations and pleasures as in my most earnest devotions. It would pain me if it

were not so, because the cord that binds me to him is a cord of love.

The practice of the presence of God.

You remember Brother Lawrence, 'that poor servant in the seventeenth century, who was a cook in a monks' kitchen in Paris, how he testified to this? He found pasture everywhere. He said that it did not matter whether he was on a canal boat going to buy wine for the use of the monastery, or whether he was standing before a hot fire cooking the monks' dinner, with people talking all round him and shouting a hundred contradictory orders, he was nearer to God in his soul at such moments than when he was kneeling before the altar in the Church.

I "*go in and out and find pasture.*" I am a free man. Free! Why? Because I am brought to God by Him who is the Way, and from henceforth the chain that binds me is the law of love which is indeed the law of liberty.

Willing reception of Christ.

Now how am I to start and tread this blessed Way? There must be first a willing reception of Christ. One verse will make that clear, John vi. 21: "*Then they were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat: and*

*straightway the boat was at the land whither they were going.*" This is a wonderful picture. Here is the little boat, or if you like to keep up my simile, the little party of travellers that want to cross this great forest to the Father of spirits. Here is One who offers to show them the way.

The moment they willingly receive Him into their midst and accept Him as the Way they are across the forest and in the arms of their Father. No more darkness, no more danger, no more storms, no more doubts. The moment we willingly receive Christ into our little ship of life we touch the shore. We have reached it; it takes no time at all.

Persons may take up this book, for example, largely ignorant of these truths of the "Highest Thought," and reading that Jesus Christ the Son is the Way to the Father of spirits may lift up their hearts and say, "I willingly receive Thee into my heart, Lord Jesus. I willingly take Thee as my Saviour and my Way to the Father. *Show us the Father and it sufficeth us.*" And the moment they willingly receive Him into the soul they are at the land whither they

How to  
reach the  
shore.

A change  
in a  
moment.

The sur-  
rendered  
will.

are going. They have reached their Home. So simple, so instantaneous is the change when once the will is surrendered.

Observe here again the force of the question "*Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?*" Shall we not much rather willingly receive Him into our ship and reach the land whither we are going? No more tossing, no more distress! It is wonderful what a change occurs when this soul-surrender is brought about.

Perhaps I may turn aside for a moment and relate a personal experience that happened to me the other day. One hesitates to say much about it; I have never spoken of it yet, but it just occurs to me that it may be of some interest in this connection.

Adven-  
ture on  
the Zuyder  
Zee.

I was yachting on the Zuyder Zee with a party of young friends, and was at a very distant and lonely part of it, in the island of Urk, and I, with all the party of twelve, had to catch the mail train to London at a certain hour from Enkhuisen, which is a town at the extreme top of the Zuyder Zee.

We set sail from Urk as our captain thought with hours to spare, but he very

soon found the wind was contrary and a storm began and the sea rose, and things got from bad to worse. I was down in one of the cabins, and received messages from the deck from time to time. At last it got near the hour when the train should start — and I then sent word to the captain and said, “When shall we be in?” He replied, “I can’t say at all; it may be two hours or it may be seven hours; at any rate there is not the slightest hope of your catching that train.”

I was in despair, when relief came. It was not with me a question exactly of receiving Christ into the ship, but this thought came upon me. I had been reading some books at the time about the power over wind and waves of various occult forces, and I thought, “If these various forces can be exercised in this way, surely Almighty God can at His will and with the greatest ease do as He pleases.” Therefore in the cabin, without saying a word to any one, I just offered up a short and earnest prayer that if it was God’s will we should catch the train, then He would be pleased so to alter the wind that we could enter the harbour.

The yacht  
in a storm.

All hope  
lost.

Prayer for  
change of  
wind.

You know how little faith we have in material prayers nowadays, and I do not much like speaking of them myself because anybody may say, "The thing might occur by chance," which of course is possible. What really happened was this.

I offered up this prayer, because we were in great distress about the matter, and I had hardly concluded it when my nephew from the deck shouted out, "The captain says we shall be in Enkhuisen in half an hour." I said, "It cannot be. He told me he could not tell when we should be in, that we might be two or seven hours." But my nephew replied, "He says the wind has veered right round, and is now blowing fair for the harbour."

The storm  
ceased.

It certainly was not five minutes after that prayer was offered that the wind changed to the opposite direction and blew us straight into the harbour and we were in plenty of time for our train. This may be taken as a striking illustration of the text, for we were immediately at the land whither we wished to go.

A perplex-  
ing prob-  
lem.

My closing word to-day is this. There may be some perplexed readers who may



say, "I have got Jesus Christ in my ship. I am a Christian; I know something of these Studies in the Highest Thought, though not perhaps exactly in the way you have been putting it to us, but I must say that my voyage is such a rough one that I sometimes wonder if I am in the right way."

I will in conclusion refer such to one other The true solution. Scripture, Matthew xiv. 22, which I think will give those of us who are much tried, and who have very troubled and distressed lives, the greatest comfort. "*Straightway Jesus constrained the disciples to enter into the boat and to go before him unto the other side. . . . But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, distressed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.*" Here Christ absolutely constrained the disciples to get into the boat; therefore it must have been by His will that they left the shore.

But I want to point out to you, from this wonderful passage, that though Christ constrained them to get into the boat, yet the wind was contrary from the moment they Contrary winds and rough waves. got in it, and the sea was rough. It may be the same with us.

We often ask God to show us the way, and

Our  
Father's  
education.

then when it becomes rough and tossing and difficult we begin to doubt that it can be His way. But a contrary wind and rough waves are no proof whatever that we are not in God's path and in God's way and going straight to the Heavenly Home. Here is an instance. No one can say that these disciples were not right in going, because Christ sent them; He constrained them. Why? Because the blessings of our life are not blue skies and smooth seas. The blessings of our life lie in learning the lessons in the Highest Thought about our Father's will and in the psychological education of the spirits and souls of men.

Christ  
walking on  
the water.

Christ had a great lesson to teach these disciples — how to find Him in their deepest distress. And it was necessary there should be winds and storms in order that in their midst they could learn their lesson, for they could learn it nowhere else. And I believe there are some lessons that every Christian soul has to be taught that cannot be learnt excepting when the wind is contrary and the seas are high. It is only then that the vision of Christ walking on the water shows His power is greater than our troubles and

we learn to trust in Christ and in Christ alone.

Therefore should any one who is in distress of life through things having gone wrong with them, in money, in health, in estate, or in family ties or relations, read this with sore hearts and question with a doubt which is really suggested by the Evil One, "Can the Father of spirits love me as He says and let me be as I am to-day, with my heart sore and cast down; can my Saviour have directed my path when I find it leads through such troubled waters, with such howling contrary winds?" To such I say, Yes. You get the whole picture in this 14th Matthew. <sup>Never doubt God's love.</sup>

The solution is, You are being educated in God's school. You are being taught to lean hard upon Him, and to trust better in the wisdom and the love of your Father in a way you never could learn but for these storms and but for these winds. Take comfort therefore. You are already in your soul at the land whither you would go. You can rest in your spirit in the Father's Home, and although you may need to be educated by the storms of this life you can be at rest in the midst of it all, for those waters on <sup>Hard lessons at school.</sup>

which the Saviour walks shall never drown you.

Education  
of the  
spirit.

Such is the education of the spirit, such is spiritual psychology. I earnestly commend, therefore, to all my readers, this study in the Highest Thought, this acceptance of the only Way that leads to the Father of Spirits; and would remind you that in the next Study I hope to go one step further into the most mysterious subject that we have before us in these Addresses, and one about which perhaps least is known — The Inner Shrine.

# THE INNER SHRINE



## THIRD STUDY

### THE INNER SHRINE

THE subject of the first of these Studies <sup>First and Second Studies.</sup> in the Highest Thought was the Father of spirits, and we found that life, in its fullest sense, could not be said to be known or enjoyed until we knew this Divine Father and were in subjection to Him.

In the Second Study I spoke of the Way by which He was reached. We regarded life as a trackless morass or a pathless forest, and on the other side of it stood the Father of spirits. We saw ourselves walking along a safe but narrow path, that led across the swamp, that led through the forest to the Father's Home. We discovered how to find it; we saw who had first trodden the path alone and who had now become himself the "Way," and we saw that, once the path was entered, our lives became lives of fullest happiness and perfect safety.

We have to-day before us a still more <sup>The Third Study.</sup>

remarkable subject, as we turn our eyes to a third marvel in the "Highest Thought." We must consider it with great caution and with great care, because the subject is so profound; and as, after all, we are only finite beings with a limited capacity for apprehending these problems of the Infinite, it does not do to tax the mind beyond its powers. One of the worst things one can do, moreover, is to practise the habit of introspection. Self-analysis is always fraught with more or less danger.

Dangers of  
introspec-  
tion.

To-day, however, we shall be obliged, owing to the exigencies of our subject, to turn our eyes in upon ourselves and to go through, in this Study, some form of close introspection. We will not dwell too much upon them, but we must learn something of the marvels within us.

Tripartite  
division  
of man.

Looked at broadly and simply, we who are about to consider this subject are in the first place, as we have already seen, tripartite beings; according, at any rate, to western ideas. Eastern philosophers no doubt divide with greater minuteness the whole human being into seven parts; but Christianity and all western philosophy are content with three —



the well-known body, soul, and spirit; the body being wholly material; the spirit being wholly immaterial and without form or extension in space; while the soul partakes somewhat of the other two — being immaterial so far as it is connected with the spirit, and yet having possibly some slight materiality as connected with the body. This, indeed, is the only way in which the well-authenticated and numerous appearances of non-substantial forms or ghosts can possibly be explained.

We have also consciousness of body, soul, and spirit.

In connection with the body we have *sense-consciousness* — consciousness given us by touch, sight, hearing, feeling, etc. — by all our senses. Connected with the soul there is *self-consciousness*, or mental consciousness, the knowledge of ourselves, by which we can conduct some kind of introspection or looking in on our minds. With regard to the spirit, there is *God-consciousness*, or a capacity of understanding these deep truths of the Highest Thought which God seeks to make known to us.

Without some such capacity on the part

of every human being no revelation of God would be of the slightest use to us. It would be as useless as writing a Bible for animals, or something of that sort. There must be some faculty within that can respond to the voice of God without. Observe, therefore, that connected with the body we get sense-consciousness, with the soul self-consciousness, and with the spirit God-consciousness.

Spiritually  
dead.

Again, we find in Holy Writ that before we have the knowledge of the Father of spirits we are described as dead, — dead in sins and so forth. That refers to the deadness of our spirits, because they are not in connection with this Father of spirits, and therefore not alive in the highest sense. When people are described as dead theologically, from a Christian point of view or a scriptural point of view, it never means that their minds are dead; it never means that their bodies are dead. As far as one can analyse it, it means that the spirit is dead, dead towards God; that is to say, there is an absence of response, *though there be a capacity for it.*

I am a  
spirit.

Lastly, in these definitions we find that the “ego,” or the “I,” or the personality — I, myself — is principally connected with the

spirit. No one would say, "I am a body" or "I am a soul." With regard to those things they would say, "I have got a body."

But if you have got one, it shows you are not it. You would say also, "I have got a mind or a soul." Well, then, you are not "it." But what we *are*, as nearly as possible, is spirit.

The "ego," therefore, naturally associates <sup>The ego is spiritual.</sup> itself with the spirit of man. I am a spirit — not a disembodied spirit, but a spirit with mental and physical qualities,—mental because I have got a soul, physical because I have got a body. I am, therefore, a tripartite being.

The subject before us for our Study to-day is the "Inner Shrine." How shall I explain <sup>The Inner Shrine.</sup> what I mean by this expression? Take a crowd of people at some place of worship. You see ordinary men and women in the dress of the day, yet within many of them, I believe, these Inner Shrines, unknown possibly to their possessors, may assuredly be found. Let me give an illustration of the contrast between the humble exterior and the glorious interior of a true Christian man.

The butterfly on the path.

You walk along a gravelled walk where there are a few dead leaves and a few twigs. You notice particularly a brown twig or leaf lying on the path. And then, a miracle occurs! Behold, with a glorious flash that thrills through you, it changes into a vision of transcendent beauty. On the path suddenly you see flaming scarlet and purple and yellow, — a gorgeous painting of the most exquisite contrasted colours flashes into your eye from the gravel, and then it is gone again, — and the brown leaf reappears.

What is it?

The humble exterior and gorgeous interior.

A butterfly, outwardly painted in the humblest colours, the commonest browns, apparently with the coarsest brush, so as to make it look like a leaf but when it opens and reveals the interior, decorated inside with the most gorgeous tracery by the hand of the Creator.

So with the outward appearance of many a person whom we meet. Inside the greatest splendour, painted by Almighty God; outside an ordinary, quiet exterior. It is only by a flash now and then that the glory of the "Inner Shrine" is revealed.

Take another illustration, the Tabernacle

in the wilderness. Could anything be more <sup>The Tabernacle.</sup> ugly than that hump of rough brown goats' hair? All that any one saw in the desert of the glory of God's house or tabernacle was a sort of brown mound rising in the midst of a vast camp. If, however, one were privileged to go in to the camp and enter through the veil, between the pillars into the interior of the Tabernacle, one would have seen visions passing all one's imagination. One would have progressed step by step until one reached the inner shrine, the Holy of Holies, where were concentrated every glory of radiance and colour.

Above purple and blue and scarlet and <sup>Within and without.</sup> fine-twined linen and golden Cherubim; all around walls of gold; in front the Ark of the Covenant, with the golden Cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat, and between them the dazzling blazing radiance of Almighty God himself, — all this was hidden under the outer covering of brown goats' hair, reminding us of the contrast between the outside of the butterfly and its glorious inner wings as they flash on our sight.

It was thus also with Christ. You saw <sup>Christ on earth.</sup> a humble man walking about the streets of

Jerusalem and Capernaum, "*His visage was so marred more than any man's, and there was no beauty that we should desire Him,*" followed by a string of poor Galilean peasants, who could not even speak the ordinary language of Judea,—rough, uncultured country folk. But let the wings flash and reveal the hidden glories of the Man Christ Jesus, and then you would know what the "Inner Shrine" really meant.

At  
Emmaus.

Or, go to that little flat-roofed, one-storied dwelling in a village called Emmaus, with nothing to distinguish it from other houses,—a commonplace exterior. Take off the roof and look inside, and there you see the hidden glory of the Lord of Life, at home in the house of two of His friends.

The degradation  
of  
the Shrine.

So it is with us. We have within us in the recesses of our spirit a shrine or an abode where God may dwell. But so far from it being always a shrine of glory, it may become perfectly hideous with darkness and defilement. If you want to know to what depths this holy Shrine is capable of being degraded you have only to look at Matthew xv. 18: "*But the things which proceed out of the mouth; and they come forth out of the heart, they defile*

*the man. For out of the heart*"—that is, out of this place which ought to be the most glorious centre of one's being, so defiled, so lowered, so degraded it may become that — "*Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man.*"

How, then, speak of glory in connection with such an abode of shame as our inner being may become? Because it may also be a wonderful shrine though, I have pointed out, still connected with a lowly exterior; in fact the exterior is never a guide as to what is within. Look at Saul and look at David! Saul and David. The first a man head and shoulders taller and finer than any man in Israel, a man we would all have loved to see. What about the inner shrine? Full of evil thoughts which caused him to lose his kingly throne. Look in contrast at little David, one with no kingly bearing, but with a heart of gold, who could take his harp and from the Inner Shrine produce his wondrous psalms.

How, then, does this inner part of us become a shrine, and what right have we to say

that such is ever the case? In 1 Corinthians, vi. 19, is a verse on this subject that I must read. You can refer to many other scriptures at your leisure, but this one I will quote: "*Know ye not that your body*" — let us take it to ourselves now and turn the eye of introspection inwards — "*Know ye not that*  
 Our bodies as temples. *your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you*" — that is, the Holy Spirit of God — "*which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price; glorify God, therefore, in your body.*"

The bodies of these Corinthian Christians are here described as being temples. That word "temple" is not the common word; it is Naos, the Shrine, the Sanctuary of God, the Inner Shrine. How can anybody become such after the description given in Matthew of the depth to which it may degrade? Well, this is the way.

One day at the door of that Shrine the Saviour stands knocking, as you may have seen in Holman Hunt's inimitable painting now in St. Paul's Cathedral, "*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*" Why does He knock? Why not come in without knocking? Because the door of that shrine has only got a  
 Christ at the door of the heart.



handle on its inner side, for no one can enter my spirit but by my own will. You may admit devils there, or you may admit the Christ of God. You may be possessed by the one or the Other.

So there stands the One who is the Way to the Father of spirits at the door: "*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*" As I pointed out in the last Study, when we stand at His door there is no knocking. His door is always open; but the door of our heart is not. "*I am the door*"—there is no need of a handle there, for the door stands open wide; "*by me, if any man enter in*"—there is no knocking there. We never have to knock, but Christ always has, and the difference is because we control the door of our own spirits by our will, whereas the door of the way of life admits all. That door is ever open, ours is ever shut.

When we like to turn the handle of the door, when we willingly receive Him, and when we say, "Enter into my heart and make it a living sanctuary of God," the thing is done. But it must be by our own will that the door of our heart is opened.

Let me just repeat that once again.

Christ's door is never shut; we never have to knock, but He always has; because the door of our heart is shut, and it can only be opened by our own will.

Death  
comes  
without  
knocking.

There is only one thing that can come into us without our will, and that is something we would never willingly admit. You will find it spoken of in Jeremiah, ix. 21, "*For death is come up into our windows.*" That is the way death comes in. It cannot come in by the door because we would never admit it, so it comes in by the window when we are not looking. It carries us off without our will. Death comes in without leave, but life can only come in by our leave. We can keep life out, but we cannot exclude death.

As I have already shown, we may open this shrine to evil spirits or to Christ, but it is our will that must open to either.

Christ  
takes pos-  
session.

Now supposing that we hear One knocking at the door of this shrine, and our will opens the door, what happens? We are described in the scripture as then being "Born again by the Holy Spirit." That is to say, Christ enters, and by His Spirit He takes possession of that inner shrine, and proceeds to make it his sanctuary and temple of glory. We are

then described as having a new nature, a new heart, and a new man.

As a reality that word "new" means that nature, heart, and man are so entirely taken possession of by a fresh Power and consecrated to a new use, as to make them practically new organs and beings. That is what it comes to. It is not really that any new parts or organs are added to us, but there is a new power within: and we open our hearts under the influence of the Highest Thought to the Spirit of our Father, the Holy Spirit: He takes possession of our heart, and we become the sanctuary, or shrine, or temple of the Holy Ghost. There is a new power.

What do we find in this Shrine? What was in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle? What do we see there? We see an Ark and inside that Ark there are three things. We see the Tables of the Law, a little pot of manna, — the bread that came down from Heaven, and Aaron's rod that budded, — the type of the eternal priesthood.

What do we find in our inner shrine? Three things. The law, as in the Ark of the Covenant, — "*Thy law is within my heart.*" The law,  
the manna,  
and the  
budding  
rod. That is the first. The manna, the bread

that came down from Heaven; the humble Christ, lowly in heart, come down from Heaven into my soul. The rod that budded — the eternal priesthood of Christ for me. The law of God the Father; the humility of Christ, the Son; the priesthood appointed, realised, and enjoyed by the Holy Spirit.

Anything more in my shrine? Yes, — everything, as in the Holy of Holies, is sprinkled with blood. We may reach the higher thought, or other stages of thought, but we cannot attain to the Highest Thought without this element. I know it is naturally repugnant to our feelings. I grant it leaves no room for pride; but nevertheless it is essential, if my heart is to be a sanctuary, a holy shrine, an inner shrine, that everything should be sprinkled and purified with the blood of the Lamb. We cannot enter the Divine Way but by redemption or atonement, innumerable as the efforts have been in these later days to do so. The moment we try to do so, we leave the region of the Highest Thought; we step off the Way, and are plunged into a morass of human opinions.

Life out of death.

So that, although there is glory in this golden

shrine consecrated to God, the blood gives a solemn element to it, because it speaks of death as the source of life. We may sing, and tune our harps with a glad song to our Heavenly Father of spirits, but it will always be "*with a solemn sound*" (Psalm xcii. 3), On the harp with a solemn sound. because our joy has been purchased, as we remember, by blood at infinite cost to Another.

Is there anything else inside this shrine? Yes. The gold of that Ark and the gorgeous colours in the Holy of Holies would look very dull indeed were it not for a light beyond the brightness of the Sun which illumines this shrine.

What we need to realise is that this shrine is in us at the present moment if we have opened our hearts to that knocking, and that within us shines a glory beyond the brightest earthly light, just as between the Cherubim there was the Shekinah of Glory, The presence of God within us. the evidence of the presence of Almighty God.

"But," you may say, "you are not going to tell me that there is anything in the Bible that warrants the thought that there can possibly be the presence of the Godhead in me as I read this? Indeed the

thought seems to me to be bordering on blasphemy."

The  
Trinity  
may dwell  
within.

In spite of this, I must answer "Yes," and if you deny it you must consider the Bible, which affirms this, to be unworthy of credit. "*Your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you.*" Is not that God? "Yes," you say, "that is God the Spirit, but what about the Father and the Son?" Well, let me just read about them. There are only two places in the Bible where the Father is said to dwell. One is in the high and holy Heaven, which He inhabits eternally, and the other is in the human heart. Look at John xiv. 23, where it says: "*If a man love me he will keep my words. My father will love him and we*" — Father and Son — "*will come unto him and make our abode with him.*"

The light  
and glory  
within.

My words as to this Divine mystery must be few. The sense of awe is profound as we hear such words and try to realise for one moment that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost absolutely may make Their abode in the inner shrine of the spirit of poor human beings like ourselves, and produce there a light and a glory above the brightness of the sun.

Well may I say this is a mystical subject. <sup>A deep</sup>  
 Well may I say it is the deepest of all sub-<sup>mystery.</sup>  
 jects, — to consider God as not afar off, to  
 consider God as, not merely in Heaven, but  
 as being within. Our hearts are indeed the  
 only places on earth where God the Father  
 is said to dwell.

Just think of this amazing fact that God  
 dwells in the heart of the one who is obedient  
 to His word. "*Shall we not much rather be  
 in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?*"  
 What happens? If we do, our hearts are  
 irradiated by His Presence; and truly we may  
 then be said to begin to live. Listen to <sup>Faber on</sup>  
 these marvellous lines of Faber on the subject: <sup>the inward</sup>  
<sup>Presence.</sup>

"But God is never so far off,  
 As even to be near,  
 He is within, Our spirit is,  
 The home He holds most dear;

To think of Him as by our side,  
 Is almost as untrue  
 As to remove His Throne beyond,  
 Those skies of starry blue.

So all the while I thought myself  
 Homeless, forlorn, and weary,  
 Missing my joy, I walked the earth,  
*Myself God's Sanctuary."*

Who will ever be weary and lonely again once they know the glory of the Inner Shrine?

It is outside consciousness.

One word here, however, of great importance. We are never conscious of this Inner Shrine. You may consider long and may say "where is this shrine, where can I locate it? Whereabouts can I place it within me? You tell me of these glories; the Bible assures me of them; they are doubtless true, but no ray of consciousness seems able to reach that secret place where God dwells. I am wholly unconscious of it.

"I concentrate my thoughts, and try to realise that I carry within me the glorious shrine. But it is quite unknown to my consciousness."

And is in the unconscious mind.

"No, it is in the region of the unconscious mind." Deep in the recesses of unconsciousness lies hidden this Holy of Holies. Just as in the Holy of Holies of old no man's foot was ever allowed to enter, no eye was ever allowed to gaze on those hidden glories, so into this Inner Shrine no ray of consciousness may ever penetrate.

God could have placed it in consciousness if He had wished, so that we could have studied it. Why has not He done so?



Because He does not wish this Divine Presence within to be an object of adoration or of study, but a source and centre of power. No adoration of ourselves. He wants to turn our thoughts objectively to Himself in Heaven.

When we pray to God we do not pray to God within, although He may be dwelling there. We pray to our Father which is in Heaven. He wants us always to direct our thoughts outwardly by the power that directs them from within. The blessing of our lives, the spring of our joy, the source of all good deeds, thoughts, aspirations, lie in this glorious Shrine within, but never is it to be an object or a centre of self-consciousness. We pray to God in Heaven.

God has, therefore, in His infinite wisdom placed it beyond the gaze of introspection. We never can reach God by thinking of ourselves. What we have to do is to recognise the fact of His indwelling, and then from it we get Almighty Strength: and sometimes a voice speaks to us from thence.

We say at times "A thought struck me"; or, "Do you know I felt impelled to go there;" or "I felt obliged to speak to that man." Many of us know something of this inner guidance. This shrine that is within is The inner Voice.

indeed the source of inspiration, the centre of all blessing in our lives. -

In connection with this there is a word in Matthew, vi. 6, which is capable of two interpretations: "*But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber.*" The word is not "closet"; it means also "treasure house," "store-house," or "barn"; and many think it is retiring into our inner consciousness and praying from there "*to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee.*" I am not sure that this is the force of the passage, but it is an alternative meaning which is of great interest.

The closet,  
or store-  
house.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers, in his wonderful poem on St. Paul, refers to it on page 44. If any of you have that book, it will be an inspiration for you to read the lines, which are too long to quote here. This Presence within is, therefore, a source of power and joy, and not an object of adoration or prayer.

We must learn to distinguish between the different voices that speak to us from within. "*His Spirit* (with a capital "S") *beareth witness with our spirit* (with a small "s") *that we are children of God.*" Our spirit, with the little "s," is one voice. Then there is a

The Spirit,  
and our  
spirit.

God's Spirit (with the capital "S"), living in the Inner Shrine, that speaks too; that is another voice. Can we distinguish between these two voices?

The two  
voices.

Constant introspection is not good, but it comes within the consideration of the Highest Thought as to whether I ought not, more clearly than I do, to recognise the Voice of God when it does speak to me, and to be able to distinguish between His voice and my own impulses and wishes. And yet, for want of practice, we often mistake the one for the other, and often do our own will when we think we are following God's. All this is a matter of spiritual growth.

In our mystic vocabulary we speak of a man who has just opened the door of his Inner Shrine to the knocking outside as "a little baby"; then we talk of the one who has had the Shrine in his heart for some time as "a young child"; then we become "young men"; and at last we reach the "full grown man," the spiritual man, one who has all his senses exercised, not only to discern both good and evil, but to distinguish the character of the inward voices that speak to him from the recesses of his unconscious mind.

Growth in  
grace.

It is all a matter of practice; it is all a question of spiritual education.

I would suggest to those Christians who are interested in the invisible world and in spirit investigation, whether to be able to distinguish between the voices that speak to us from within is not a very worthy subject for study.

There is no doubt that the one who thus knows and understands these wonderful mysteries of which I have spoken so imperfectly in this book, carries a stamp, even on the poor outward body, that to those who have eyes to see is unmistakable. There is a quietness, there is a dignity, there is a self-possession, there is a steadiness, a fixed purpose in his life and actions that speak of a strong Hand at the helm, a Divine Captain of life's ship, — the Presence of Almighty God in that Inner Shrine.

But we require the eye of faith to see these glories! These lovely and pathetic verses of Francis Thompson's, written, I doubt not, when he used to hold the cabmen's horses at Charing Cross, express what we miss for want of this spiritual vision :

"The angels keep their ancient places: —  
Touch but a stone, you start a wing!  
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces  
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst no sadder)  
Cry: — and upon thy so sore loss  
Shall shine the traffic upon Jacob's ladder  
Pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my soul, my daughter,  
Cry, — clutching Heaven by the hems;  
Lo! Christ is walking on the water,  
Not of Gennesareth — but Thames!"

As the spirit life that flows from the Presence is a subject of such deep interest and raises so many questions, I will defer its consideration until our next Study in the Highest Thought.



“THE SPIRIT LIFE”





## FOURTH STUDY

### THE SPIRIT LIFE

WE have now arrived at the fourth of a very closely connected series of studies in the Highest Thought. We have now to consider what is the result in practical life of our past studies, and I hope in the closing study to consider the future outlook, which depends also upon the position reached in the first three lectures. We have seen to what a height the Highest Thought soars; and I would beg of you carefully to compare it with the goal at which any other degree of thought aims, and to ask yourselves whether I am not right in using the superlative in these studies.

Does not our subject lead us higher, deeper, to more marvellous thought regions, to further spiritual insight than any other class of thought known to us? Some may object that it is all but a speculation, or a phantasy, or an unproved theory. To such, of course,

The practical result.

Height of thought.

the obvious reply is that those to whom this class of thought is the power and energy of their lives are numbered by thousands. Let us briefly recall what we have discussed so far.

Recapitulation.

We have before us as a fact that one of us may be sitting and reading this book who is in touch and close relationship with the Father of spirits.

We saw next that to gain this position he reached God, by means of the Way, across the trackless morass and the impenetrable forests that stretch between the human and the Divine. Christ, who is called the Way, has opened up a path which all who will may tread; and all those who know the Father of spirits with this wonderful first-hand knowledge have trodden this Way.

The third point was that the central being of this one of whom I speak has thus become a Shrine, — a Shrine of such inconceivable splendour and glory; a Shrine of such infinite holiness that, were it not placed beyond the limits of our own consciousness, the sight, like that of the bush that burnt and was not consumed, would be too great for us to bear.

All true to faith alone.

All this is invisible and grasped by faith

alone. Our bodily eyes have never seen the Father of spirits; but He is revealed to the eye of faith. Our bodily eyes have never seen the Way, but our spiritual eyes see Him now. The Inner Shrine has never been seen by mortal vision, but it is apprehended by faith at this moment. There can be no doubt, therefore, that Christians are true mystics, since all the realities of which I speak, connected with the highest thought, are necessarily invisible to our consciousness.

No word has been more dragged through the mud and more absolutely abused than the word "mysticism"; but rightly used the true <sup>Mysticism.</sup> Christian is a true mystic. He walks and lives and moves in an invisible world. And what is so remarkable is that the outside of these people, like that of the butterfly, is humble and prosaic enough.

These mystics are seen in every rank and <sup>Mystics  
are in</sup> walk of life. You will find them amongst day <sup>every rank.</sup> labourers and the lowest classes in the slums: you will find them in every rank and grade in our army and navy; you will find them in every position in society in the west end of London; you will find them sitting at

their cottage doors in the country, or working in the fields; behind the counter, and in the kitchen.

True  
mystics are  
clairvoy-  
ants.

There is no grade, no position, no class amongst men where these true mystics are not found, carrying within them this sacred Shrine, and in daily touch with the Father of spirits by means of the one true and only Way. They are indeed the true clairvoyants, for they see Jesus; the real clairsaudients, for they hear the voice of God.

The two-  
fold posi-  
tion.

Let us, then, bear this fact in mind, that those who have grasped the Highest Thought are the true mystics. All their deepest realities lie in a world that cannot be seen. Not only so, but another thing characterises them which they had never realised before, and that is, they are always finding themselves in two places at once. I mention that again, because it is of such supreme importance.

No one can enjoy the Highest Thought or true Christianity who has not really learned the practical, simple secret of being spiritually in two places at once. I appeal again to those prosaic, small townsmen of Colosse (I might of course appeal to many others) who, walking about the streets of that small Asi-

atic town, were all the time, as regards their hidden life, their mystic life, in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.

Their spirits were at Home in a scene of unspeakable glory; one with the Maker of the universe, one with the great Father of spirits, Who had become in very deed and truth their own Father; and they walked up and down the streets and lanes of Colosse, living at peace with God in their spirits, while in their earthly lives, as I<sup>Heaven and Colosse.</sup> said, they passed through all the trials and persecutions of the early Christians.

When one's inner life thus becomes mystic and Divine, many will bear me witness that we make great discoveries; we begin to understand many things that were obscure; because living on such a lofty plane, we can naturally see more from the heights than we can from the bottom of the valley where we formerly lived.

From this lofty position, then, knowing and living in this Divine atmosphere which I have described, we begin to find that the Unseen world is the *cause* of everything; that the Seen world is the *effect*, — that all things that are seen and temporal are merely the result of what is unseen and eternal.

We begin to be impressed with the increasing unreality of all things visible; it is not only that they are temporal, but that they are unreal; and we begin to live more and more in realities and in eternity.

The un-  
reality of  
the  
material.

Many schools of thought, both in the eastern mysticism and amongst western sages, and in our own church, have insisted, in theory, that things that are seen are unreal and illusory; but when a Christian lives in the eternal world he begins to treat them as such more and more, and to turn to practical account what has hitherto only been a theory. Take a simple illustration.

At the Holy Sacrament we see the bread and wine. Every time we communicate the material becomes less to us, and the soul increasingly grasps at the Reality that lies behind the sacred elements, which becomes everything to us. The actual bread, however substantial, is thus a vision, a figure; the literal wine, however real its presence may be in the cup, is after all the unreal thing. The real substance, the Divine, is what lies behind.

The Quest  
of the  
Holy  
Grail.

You remember the beautiful mediæval story of King Arthur and the quest of the

Holy Grail. I am told by those who have studied the subject that the quest of the Holy Grail is just that mystery which every Christian seeks at the Holy Communion, and that is the endeavour to grasp the substance behind the figure. The man who sees only the bread and wine sees nothing.

We have to see the Invisible to see the Real, these elements being but figures of the True; and we come at last to find that shadows, figures, and images are natural and visible and material; whereas substances, realities, originals are spiritual and invisible and immaterial.

I propose now in this study that we should consider together some points in the spirit life as thus lived — the mystic life; and I shall speak very briefly upon seven characteristics that mark it out distinctly: so that if you observe a person with these characteristics you may be pretty sure and certain you have got hold of a true mystic; in other words, a true Christian.

The first characteristic that I will speak of with extreme brevity is that these mystics are SATISFIED people. You must not think this is such a common thing; that there is nothing

The invisible is the real.

Seven characteristics of true mystics.

i. They are satisfied.

remarkable about it. As a matter of fact, one of the most uncommon things to find in this world is a satisfied man or woman.

Some time ago I placed a trained nurse with a patient. The patient was a young girl who had met with a most deplorable accident, which would probably render it necessary for her never more to mix in the world, but to spend the rest of her days in suffering.

The nurse came to me after two weeks and said, "I thought I would like to speak to you."

I said, "What is it?"

An agnos-  
tic nurse.

"Well," she said, "a fortnight ago I was an agnostic, but I am not one now. When I was a little child I used to believe, but then I became sceptical, and for a long time I have not thought much about religious matters, but I can say now that I have become a true believer."

I said, "That is good news; how did it come about?"

She replied, "It is your patient."

I said, "What has my patient done?"

She answered, "She has done nothing."

"Has she spoken to you?" I asked.

"Not a word."



"Then what has made the change?"

She said, "It is the first time in my life I <sup>And a satisfied patient.</sup> have seen a really satisfied girl, and I could not stand it. I thought, if Christ can satisfy her He will satisfy me."

In Psalm xc. 14 you read these words written by a mystic — it was not David, — a man who had such communion with the Invisible that when he came amongst men he had to put a veil over his face; for the brightness of even the reflection of the Almighty was too much for the eyes of common men.

Moses, the man of God, prayed this <sup>Prayer of Moses</sup> prayer: "*Oh! satisfy us early* (or in the morning of our life) *with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*" Satisfy us, saturate us, fill us that we can hold no more!

The man who occupies the position described in the last three Studies *is* satisfied, but how few Christian people are! One of the greatest things that warns people off from Christianity is the fact that the Christians <sup>Dissatisfied Christians.</sup> they meet are not satisfied men and women. They are like poor Jacob.

No man ever had such a chance as he had when he was called up to the court of

Jacob's  
testimony.

Pharaoh, the monarch of the then world, to talk about his God. But all he could do was to whine and grumble; because he was not satisfied:— "*Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers.*" "If that is all your God can do for you," I can hear Pharaoh saying, "I will stick to my idols; they can do just as much as that."

An unsatisfied believer is the greatest advertisement against Christianity. If we enjoy what we have got, and show it, we are witnessing for God, and one satisfied Christian does more for Christianity than fifty sermons. There can be no doubt at all about the rarity of a man who wants nothing for himself!

Skating on  
the lake.

When I was a boy, I remember that my brother and I used to skate a good deal on a small lake near where we lived. We, of course, knew exactly when the ice would bear. Sometimes when we put our skates on there would be two or three hundred people standing round the side of the lake, not daring to go on, thinking it would let them through. But we had no fear, and skated all over it.

Then, when they saw us enjoying ourselves, cutting figures on the ice and having a very good time, — that made them resolve to enjoy themselves too! We had no need to go to the bank and speak to them; we had no need to write a book like this for them on the delights of skating; exhortation was not necessary. All we had to do was to enjoy ourselves, and once they saw us happy they could not stand it. Down they stooped and buckled on their skates, and the lake was soon covered with them. Satisfaction and enjoyment.

What made the change? Satisfied people. My brother and I were satisfied, and we showed it, and *that* made them want to come on the ice too. And what wins doubters now is a satisfied Christian, if only they can find one. The first trait, or stamp, of the true mystic, therefore, is a satisfied heart.

Just look for a moment how it works out through the day, as described in the beginning of Psalm xcii. "*It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,*" — this means a good thing for us, not for God. It does *us* good to give thanks, and it does us harm to grumble. It is a good thing to give thanks.  
*"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,*

*and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High*"; and then follow these words, "*to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.*" Note the words "*to show.*" Here we come upon something practical.

Showing is  
not  
talking.

It is no use vapouring on in high-flown language, describing the blessings of a Christian. Men are tired of words, but they are not tired of looking at people. Look at the number of illustrated papers there are nowadays. People want more pictures, and they want more pictures of Christianity. They are tired of reading about it; they are tired of hearing it talked about. It is little use going to a man and talking to him about the loving kindness of God. What we have to do is to show it every morning.

"But," you say, "what is the difference between talking and showing?"

It lies in this: we can talk about things that we have not got, but we cannot show anything we don't possess. If I asked some ladies to show me their diamond rings, only those who possessed them could show the rings, but all could describe them.

Talking is easy; but showing requires

possession. If I am to show the loving kindness of God every morning when I come downstairs to breakfast and all through the day, I must possess it. Show  
God's  
loving  
kindness.

Therefore, what I say is this, — “Never turn the handle of your bedroom door and face the world day by day until your heart is saturated, satisfied with the loving kindness of God. Then you will go out and be a credit to your Father all the day, otherwise you will probably be a disgrace. You may be cross at breakfast, and you may fail to show that you are a Christian and a son or daughter of the Lord God Almighty through the whole day. All through  
the day.

With regard to nerve patients, I find that one of the finest things for them is to have their breakfast in bed, and the reason of this Breakfast  
in bed. is because it means a satisfied physique before facing a cold world. In the same way we need a satisfied spirit before facing the day's work, a heart full of the loving kindness of the Lord. Then we shall be a credit instead of a disgrace to our Heavenly Father.

Then, when we go to bed at the end of the day — “*Thy faithfulness every night.*” What a delightful thing! What a lovely

sleeping draught! What a pleasure to lay one's head upon one's pillow and be able to recall God's faithfulness all through the day, — thus showing forth His loving kindness in the morning, and His faithfulness every night. Satisfaction with his new Home and life is therefore the first mark of the mystic.

2. They  
are free-  
men.

The second characteristic is that we are FREEMEN. That is another point that very many of us miss. I will just refer you to the text: "*So speak ye and so do as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty.*" We are free men and free women once we have got hold of this Highest Thought in our souls, for this reason — the control of our lives is now from within, and not from without. In ordinary society men and women are controlled from within by their own wills.

People who have to be controlled from without, by force, are convicts and evil characters, and have to be shut up within four walls with spikes at the top. In there alone they are safe, because they have no inner principle to guide them aright. Herein is all the difference, — a good man requires no outward control; but a convict does. The former is always free; the latter never.

I illustrated this point in our second Study by the story of my dog with a chain round its neck. That is outward control; he cannot run about, he can do nothing. But the moment he has learned to love his master, the moment he has learned his relationship to him, there is a spiritual link formed between that poor dog's heart and his master's, and outward restraints are no longer needed; he is controlled from within. The steel chain is gone, but the dog follows at his master's heels with unswerving obedience, because he is now chained by the law of love; a slave and yet free.

The reason the Christian is free is because God has got his heart, and if God has not got his heart, he had far better stop between four walls and be shut up there to be kept safe. But once he has been brought to this Father of spirits, once the Divine influence has come into his heart so that God's Will is done on earth by that man as it is done in Heaven, *i.e.* as a delight and a pleasure, — that man is a free man.

*"Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."* *"Stand fast, therefore,"* in this liberty, we are told. *"So speak ye and so*

*do, as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty;*" and this law of liberty is the law of love. The second point, then, is that these mystics are not only satisfied, but free.

Christians  
and Jews.

I beg of you as Christians to remember this. The Jews were not free. They were hedged in with a wall round them, and shut in there with laws to keep them in on the right hand and on the left. The Christian is in a different position; he is a free man. He is not to be like a horse with a bit, or a mule with a bridle; he is to be guided by God's eye. Love is to be the ruling passion of his life, and the only fetter that he knows.

3. They  
are  
sincere.

The third point that marks the mystic is that he is SINCERE and real; there is no sham. We read in Romans xii. 2: "*Be not fashioned according to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" That word, "fashioned," means "cut out from a pattern" as a dress is cut out. Do not be cut out from the old pattern. But instead of reading "be ye transformed," which is a different thought altogether, we often render it "be conformed, or cut out on a new pattern." This is a real denial of Christianity, and yet



it represents perhaps the most common and popular idea of what it is.

We think when we are Christians we must have a different type of face, a different style of dress, a different set of habits, a different circle of friends. That may sometimes be the result of the inward change; but if these are used to advertise our Christianity, they are the denial of Romans xii. 2. For the apostle there points out, that whereas with regard to the world there was this outward conformity, in Christianity it is not to be replaced by an outward conformity to religion, but that the change is now to be on a new principle, an inward transformation from the centre of our being.

All that is of value in God's sight, in any change that takes place, must be the result of this power, flowing from the Inner Shrine which He has set up in the heart. The transformation should come from there; but sometimes it does not. People lay down laws as to certain things Christians must do and certain things they must not do; so that believers are often as alike as a row of peas, or a street of suburban villas; whereas if "*we are transformed by the renewing of our minds,*" it is

The change  
must be  
inward.

Trans-  
formation  
is not  
artificial.

a real thing; no two of us attain to exactly the same level or are precisely the same.

Christians  
not all  
alike.

Each one of us walks before God, and there is no settled rule that can apply to all, because our life is the result of living growth. Some have shot up an inch, some two inches, some are a foot high, according to the measure to which each of us has attained from the inward transformation of the soul.

Fictitious  
graces  
easy.

The other method, however, is very specious. It is so easy to put on fictitious graces; it is so easy to compound for a proud heart by putting on a humble face. It is so easy to shield a turbulent spirit under a quiet dress. This is not Christianity. Christianity, to be of the slightest value to God, or I will add to man, must spring from the centre of the being, from where God Himself lives in that human being; and because it is so often otherwise, great reproach has fallen upon Christians.

Unreality  
despised.

I do believe that half the contempt that is showered by men of the world upon so many of us is because they have a feeling that all is not genuine. They see in the actions of Christians a want of reality somewhere;

whereas the basis, the essence of a Christian is that he should be sincere, that he should pretend to no virtue that he has not got, that nothing about him should be put on from without, but should be the result of a transformation from within.

I have in mind an illustration of this that is connected with flowers. A gardener preparing chrysanthemums for a Flower Show has his greenhouse full, and each plant apparently bears three perfect blooms on one stalk. Story of the chrysanthemum show. The master goes round the greenhouse the day before the Show, and sees a fine display, and congratulates his gardener. The man replies, "Yes, but I have had a good deal of trouble with them."

Then when the master begins to look closely at some of the plants and happens to touch a bloom, he has a great surprise. Lo and behold, on examination he finds a paper flower, a paper chrysanthemum, fastened on to the stalk. Paper flowers. He says, "What on earth is this?"

The gardener says, "I have been obliged to make flowers for some of them. Each stalk is supposed to have three blooms on it. Some only had one, and others two, so that I was obliged to make the number up with paper."

Imitation  
virtues.

It is the same with us. We imagine we are obliged to display a certain number of virtues as Christians, and if we do not possess them, then they have to be assumed. There can be no doubt that this is, not only a short-sighted policy, but it has nothing to do with the Highest Thought, it has nothing to do with God. It is wrong merely to assume a good outward appearance before men. Let us be real at all costs, natural or rather spiritual, and never artificial; and if we have not progressed so far as other Christians, if we do not see eye to eye with our friends, let us at least be genuine in what we do, and let us not pretend to be virtuous beyond the measure to which we have attained. The three points we have emphasised so far then are that the true Christian is SATISFIED, FREE, and SINCERE.

4. They  
are sym-  
pathetic.

The next point is that this man is deeply SYMPATHETIC. You might very well get the idea from looking at one side of the picture that you had to do with a selfish character, but so far from that being true, there is no man who should be so sympathetic, and thoughtful for others, as the true Christian.

He has every need, every desire, as I have

already said, so satisfied, so saturated, that he has nothing to think of, or ask for, or care about with regard to himself. His whole heart and energies are not only thus set free for others, but the love wherewith <sup>The</sup> he is loved, flowing through his heart, causes <sup>Christian</sup> loves all. a warm spring of Divine sympathy and love to issue forth to every human creature. He thus gives out what God has given him; and so he becomes a source of blessing to others.

The next point is that the Christian is described in Scripture as salt, that is to say, he is a strong ANTISEPTIC. Wherever he goes <sup>5. They</sup> he kills germs; wherever he goes he stops the <sup>are anti-</sup> plague. I do not think that as we sit here we have the slightest idea of how the whole mass of London and other great cities would go to corruption if it were not for the salt of Christianity that is scattered everywhere amongst the poor and criminal classes.

We must not imagine that the hordes of the East End of London, and the Socialists <sup>Socialists</sup> and anarchists around Leicester Square and <sup>and police.</sup> elsewhere are kept quiet and in order by the constable alone. The police themselves would be the first to testify that they would be powerless in numbers and in every other

way, were it not that the whole of the lowest parts of London is honeycombed, saturated, with Christian work, which so softens and humanises the spirit that the germs of evil are killed, and vast numbers of this lowest section of the population are sweetened; and become aseptic, and purified, even if they do not become actual Christians themselves.

Power of  
Chris-  
tianity.

The work of all these agencies (I need not name them, though I am immensely struck with the work that the Salvation Army is doing in the very lowest quarters\*) is of such an antiseptic nature that no word so well describes a truly working Christian as salt.

There is another beautiful characteristic about salt which we are all acquainted with, and that is it makes us thirsty. If a person takes enough salt, nothing will satisfy him but a long draught of water. If you want people to take water, give them plenty of salt. They will crave for it. Salt makes water a necessity.

Salt gives  
thirst.

That is another reason why these mystical people are compared to salt, because they make others take a draught of the Water

\* See especially "Broken Earthenware," by H. Begbie, as to this.

of Life, and this Water of Life is none else than the One Whom I have brought before you as the Way, leading straight to the Father of spirits.

Now the sixth point is that Christians are LUMINOUS. You must not imagine that this Inner Shrine can exist in the recesses of our spirits without shining through our mortal bodies. The God who dwells within is "*the health of my countenance*." So even the face, the poor marred face, often scarred with indelible lines of sin, is transfigured.

I shall never forget looking at the battered face of an old prize-fighter in whom this Inner Shrine had been illumined. Although the marks of sin and the scars of the fight were absolutely indelible, his face was transfigured from within by this Divine light shining through.

Christian men and women should be luminous; they are lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Light, the Great Light, the Centre of Light, of which they are the light-bearers. Through and through them shines the light to this dark world. When I come to speak on this and on things beyond the Veil, in our last Study, we shall

see then what an extraordinary position Christians occupy in Heaven with regard to this question of light; but even now they are Divinely luminous.

Two causes  
of lumi-  
nosity.

Luminosity may depend upon two factors: the intensity of the light, or the transparency of the walls. Men in health and strength going about this world earnestly doing the great Master's work with heart and soul are on fire with zeal; they are luminous on account of the intensity of the flame that burns within them.

Value of  
sickness.

But there are others, sufferers laid aside known to us all, who are luminous on account of the transparency of the walls of their earthly tabernacle. The body is frail; the tent is about to be taken down; but the nearer it comes to that point, the more luminous and powerful and bright does the light shine through the thin walls, until in the sick-room we seem sometimes to be in the very presence of the Invisible itself.

Lessons in  
suffering.

I am one who, in these days of great dispute, am perfectly clear that suffering and sickness are amongst the most valuable teachers in the School of God. I have no hesitation whatever in saying it, and I believe I can amply prove it from the Word of God. At



any rate, to prove it one has not got to go far, because one finds it demonstrated everywhere.

Not only are lessons taught by suffering and sickness that are never learned in health, but the expression that is used in Romans v is used nowhere else — for it is in suffering and crushing down that the love of God is not only possessed as it is by all of us in health, but is said to be “*shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.*” What does “*shed abroad*” mean? Spread out like a fan, as in the rainbow.

Light is white, but when it is shed abroad and split up it becomes seven colours, and you get every shade. So I believe it is in the heart of the sufferer under the hand of God — there His love is seen in such variety and in such beauty as nowhere else.

It is a very remarkable thing that at the head of many of the greatest Christian works in this country there has been a weak and suffering woman, a person apparently too frail to undertake such a task, and yet so energised by the Divine Spirit that she has accomplished it. All this I just say in passing, to prove that I believe in the great place that suffering has in the School of God.

Cannot be  
learnt  
elsewhere.

A rainbow  
in the  
heart.

7. They  
are loving.

Last of all, these people are LOVING. Lest you forget the seven points let me repeat them again: they are SATISFIED, they are FREE, they are SINCERE, they are SYMPATHETIC, they are ANTISEPTIC like salt, they are LUMINOUS, and, last of all, they are LOVING.

Washing  
the feet.

In connection with this allow me to refer just for one moment to St. John xiii, where we get the most beautiful description about the washing of the disciples' feet, familiar to you all. What may not be familiar is the deeper meaning of the introduction given in the 3d verse. "*Jesus knowing that . . . He came forth from God and goeth unto God riseth from supper and layeth aside His garment.*" This is taken to mean, knowing how august He was, what a great Person He was, that He had come from God and was soon going back to God, and that, in spite of this grandeur of His position, He was humble enough to take a towel and gird Himself. I submit that, though that is the only meaning we generally attach to it, there may be a deeper thought in the verse.

The further point I think is that God is love. I would put it then in this way: "Jesus knowing that He came from love,

love ineffable, love Divine, and was going back to love, love ineffable, love Divine — what could He do but take a towel and gird Himself and wash their feet?" It is the impulse of love, knowing that love was His source, love was His goal. Therefore <sup>The impulse of love.</sup> He loved His disciples unto death, and loved them enough to wash their feet.

And if we know we have come from God and are going to God, we will take a towel too, and wash the feet of the poorest of London. We can do nothing else, because we have come from love. We are loved with an everlasting love and nothing shall ever separate us from it: What then can we do but love? We are bound to love, if that is our source, our being, our power, our end.

It is beautiful to read this chapter in that light. Knowing He was come from a God of love and that He went to a God of love, Christ took a towel and girded Himself. When we realise how much we are loved, what can we do but love everybody else? I am reminded of a Christian girl who wrote <sup>Letter on love.</sup> a letter to me once about a poor woman who had a drunken husband. She writes, in her homely way, "All I can say to her

is, 'Cheer up, missus, keep on loving him, and if you love him long enough perhaps it will be all right,' as *God loves us till we get like Him at last.*" Love never wearies. It forgives seventy times seven. It is never vexed, never tired, is not puffed up; you can read all about it in the 1 Cor. xiii. Love is also kind. This seems a poor small thing to say about a Divine attribute, about a power which led God to give His Son for us, which led Christ to die for us! But love which begins with the Cross can end in common kindness.

On the shore the other day after a storm I saw little ripples dying at my feet on the sand, the last expression of a mighty upheaval out at sea. So—"love is kind." The Christian, then, who has been himself so loved cannot help showing it if we realise what our Lord realised at the supper, that we come from God and are going back to God.

May I, before I close this study, be allowed to quote a poem by Gerhard Terstegen of the sixteenth century, which may be new to some, and which greatly bears upon our mystic Study. It is called "The Secret of His Pavilion."

## THE SECRET OF HIS PAVILION

Hos. xi. 14

Allured into the Desert, with God alone apart,  
There Spirit meeteth spirit, there speaketh heart to  
heart.

Far far on that untrodden shore, God's secret place I  
find,  
Alone I pass the golden door, the dearest left  
behind.

There God and I — none other; oh, far from  
men to be!

Nay, midst the crowd and tumult, still,  
Lord, alone with Thee.

Still folded close upon Thy breast, in field and  
mart and street.

Untroubled in that perfect rest, that isolation sweet.

O God! Thou art far other than men have dreamed  
and taught,

Unspoken in all language, unpictured in all thought.

Thou God art God — he only learns what that great  
Name must be,

Whose raptured heart within him glows because he walks  
with Thee.

Stilled by that wondrous Presence, that tenderest  
embrace,

The years of longing over, do we behold Thy Face;

We seek no more than Thou hast given, we ask no  
vision fair;

Thy precious Blood has opened Heaven, and we have  
found Thee there.

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O weary souls, draw near to Him; to you I can but  
bring  
One drop of that great ocean, one blossom of that  
spring;  
Sealed with His kiss, my lips are dumb, my soul with  
awe is still;  
Let him that is athirst but come and freely drink his fill.

G. T. S.

# BEYOND THE VEIL





## FIFTH STUDY

### BEYOND THE VEIL

BEFORE entering, to-day, upon our subject, "Beyond the Veil," I should like to make one remark on what I said in our Third Study. You remember that I dwelt very strongly on the fact that, however glorious the shrine was within these temples of our bodies, nevertheless we could not by any consciousness or introspection be cognisant of the dwelling of God within ourselves. In our last Study, however, I alluded to the fact that especially in affliction the Love of God was "shed abroad" or "spread out" in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

My attention has since been called to the fact that by putting the two together you really see God within. The idea to me is very beautiful, and I thankfully pass it on to you. It is this, that although by no effort of looking inside ourselves can we see God, we nevertheless can see the Divine attributes or qualities.

The Inner Shrine is beyond consciousness.

We know God by His attributes.

In the same way, when we look at the sun we never can see it, but if we get its rays broken up by a prism we can discern all its several glories. So we expect to find in our hearts, from the inspiration of God within us, power, faith, patience, love, kindness, gentleness, meekness, in a measure that surprises ourselves, and all of which we have the power to reproduce in our lives, because the Source of them all dwells within.

Divine  
power  
within us.

This, to my mind, is a most inspiring and invigorating thought. It gives power to the weak, and it supplies us with whichever of these virtues we feel we lack. We simply call upon the power within us to give us the patience we need at the time, to give us the gentleness, to give us the faith, to give us the courage; and so although we do not see God within us we can be cognisant of the graces He gives; and in this way, as it were, through a prism, we discern His glories and His powers.

Which we  
can count  
upon.

I trust this is fully understood, because the thought is not only beautiful but of such infinite practical value in each of our lives every day that we live. We can count upon these virtues; for having God

within us, we have all that He is and can give. Therefore we confidently expect that we shall have patience for every event, that we shall have power for every undertaking, and we look to God in this way to supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ.

Now, coming to our present subject to-day, "Beyond the Veil," we ask, first of all, is there a "Beyond," or does all life end at death? Is man immortal or not? The three authorities that I invoke in reply, as I did in regard to the question of whether there was a way to the Father of spirits, are the three voices of our instinct, of our experience, and of authority.

Is there or is there not anything "Beyond the Veil?" *Instinct* replies, Yes. The whole of the instincts of the human race, civilised and savage, have always considered that life does not end at death, but somehow or somewhere it is carried on Beyond the Veil. The reply of instinct therefore is in the affirmative.

The nature of *experience* is the same. Not only in those who have, after having died, returned from the dead, of whom Jesus Christ is the great Example; but in the domain

of science experiments without end have been conducted showing undoubtedly that manifestations have been seen, not in one but in thousands of authenticated cases, of those whose bodies are in the churchyard. There is, therefore, quite apart from Holy Writ, a scientific experience that there is a life or an existence beyond the grave.

Authority  
replies  
"Yes." I invoke last of all the Bible as the voice of *authority*. The inspired voice of the word of God speaks unhesitatingly, not only to the fact of there being a Beyond, but of what happens to us when we have "crossed the bar." That is my subject in this study. We therefore need have no hesitation whatever — of course I need hardly say that no one of my readers probably has — in believing that there is a "Beyond the Veil."

No scientific proof  
of resurrection. But when we come to speak of resurrection we must understand that the resurrection of man is not proved by scientific investigation; it is a matter of pure faith. There is nothing in the scientific world to establish it. There is evidence for the existence of a spirit after death; but there is no scientific testimony to say that the body shall again clothe the

immortal spirit. Nevertheless, this is the sure word of testimony of the Living God; and it is so sure that the bodies of all who believe this Word are sown in hope of a glorious resurrection.

It so happens that nearly every week I have to travel down to Brookwood where there is a very great cemetery. I see there the earth covered with tombstones, labelled with the names of the deceased. Before I come to Brookwood I pass a series of nursery gardens. There I see the earth covered with pieces of wood in rows, labelled with the names of the seeds that are sown beneath. Both the bodies and the seeds are sown in hope of a glorious resurrection.

The little seed is put into the ground in confident expectation. The man who sows it never wants to see that seed again, and nothing would upset him more than if that seed came up again in a resurrection. "*That which thou sowest is not that body that shall be, but a bare grain, perchance of wheat or some other grain.*"

Is it not the same at Brookwood? The bodies that are sown there may be, and very frequently are, aged and withered and bereft

of all natural beauty; they may be crippled and diseased, but, whatever they are, they are but the seed. They are not that body that shall be, and if any man think otherwise, St. Paul says, "*Thou fool.*"

Seed is ]  
sown in  
hope.

So that, comparing the nursery gardens with that great cemetery, we see, in each, labels placed above the seed with the name of the seed on them, the idea in both cases being the same; that there is going to be a glorious resurrection. How glorious it is you have only to go down that line of rail in May or June to see. The bare earth is gone. The labels are all vanished; and there, covering the earth with many-coloured starry splendour, are the flowers, the glorified bodies of those poor little seeds.

Flowers  
and seeds.

Let us take in one hand a few seeds, in the other a glorious bunch of flowers that have sprung from those seeds; and then, perhaps, for the first time we shall be able to fully apprehend the difference between the body that is planted and that glorious house from Heaven with which God will clothe the immortal spirit on the Resurrection morning.

This difference is very important — and the certainty of it is proved.

I do not know any more glorious words in Scripture than the opening words in the beginning of 2 Corinthians v. "*For we KNOW.*" "*We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.*" Surely men and women with such certain knowledge as this should walk the earth in a different fashion from those who know it not. They may well lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. "*We KNOW*"—a matter of assured, solid, quiet conviction and certainty, founded on the Divine word. Such is what the Highest Thought leads us to, and we feel that there is no room for speculation here, it being to all who believe the Divine revelation an absolute fact, as certain as any law of nature. "*We know.*"

Now between the sowing of the seed and this glorious Resurrection morning we have something to which the nursery garden can offer no analogy, and that is the disembodied state. Books without end have been written about this mysterious condition; some, of which no doubt you have studied, are of

singular merit and interest; but respecting them all we must first consider this fact.

Ignorance  
as to the  
unclothed  
spirit.

We know everything that can be known about the condition of a body without a spirit in it. Bodies which the spirit has left have, for medical reasons, been closely examined and every part of them analysed. Everything is known about what a body is like without a spirit in it. On the other hand, absolutely nothing is known of what a spirit is like when the body ceases to clothe it — nothing at all. We cannot say anything about it.

We have no knowledge of an unclothed spirit, beyond what the Word of Revelation may have brought to us; but scientifically we know nothing of such a condition. It is very curious — the perfection of our knowledge on the one side as regards the body; the absolute thick darkness on the other as regards the disembodied spirit. We have no real knowledge of what it consists, what its qualities are, what it can do, and what it cannot do.

Can a  
spirit see,  
hear,  
think, or  
act?

When there are no longer eyes to see, ears to hear, a tongue to speak, brain cells by which to conduct the processes of thought,



we have nothing to guide us as to whether a spirit in such a state can see, hear, think, or act. We know nothing about it, I repeat, <sup>No guide but the Bible.</sup> beyond the revelation in the Word of God. I consider the extent of our knowledge with regard to the body, and the utter absence of knowledge as regards the spirit, a very striking fact. We are, therefore, here absolutely thrown back upon what the Bible has told us of this disembodied state, and it is singularly little.

Of course we understand, as already pointed out, especially in the West, in Christian countries, that man is divided into three parts: spirit, which has no extension in space; body, which is absolutely material; and between the two the soul, which partakes of the attributes of spirit and of the body.

Great discussions have arisen upon the question as to whether the spirit is asleep or awake in this disembodied state. It is <sup>Does the spirit sleep?</sup> well to remember here that the words "asleep" and "awake" are words that apply to a bodily condition. There is no evidence that when we are asleep at night in bed our spirit is then asleep. We may not be conscious, but this is no proof the spirit sleeps; in

fact we have many evidences that the spirit, in some sections of its being, is very much awake while we are asleep.

Sleep is a physical condition.

Therefore the words "asleep" and "awake" do not properly refer to spirit, and to press them literally is as foolish as to press the word "person" literally with regard to the Deity. We know what we mean, and it is the nearest human word to convey our idea, but we cannot express Divine realities in human words. All we know from Scripture is that we "depart and are with Christ which is far better." We are therefore in bliss; we are happy; we are at rest.

Prayers for the departed.

It does not appear, if we are to take the parable of Dives and Lazarus of our Lord's own telling about this disembodied state as representing what occurs in Hades, that there is any use or warrant for us to pray for departed spirits, as is customary in a sister Church and to some slight extent has obtained in our own. There appears to be no possible sanction for it in Holy Writ.

But, on the other hand, a very remarkable fact comes to light, that there is some basis for believing that departed spirits may pray for us. That is a very different thing; and

surely it is we that need prayer rather than they. The rich man prayed for five brethren that he had left behind him on earth; and I should be very sorry to say that it was a wrong or foolish thought to believe that, even in this disembodied state, those who have gone before may not be able to care for those who are left behind.

The  
departed  
pray for us.

So that we see the idea of the sister Church is absolutely reversed, so far as their prayers for the dead are concerned, the living praying for the dead; for it appears to be the dead who should pray for the living. For this statement, of course, my basis is this parable of our Lord's, as far as we may take it literally.

Now passing on to Resurrection, as I have said, it is a matter of pure faith in God's Word. It cannot be proved at present scientifically. Those who shall rise in the glorious Resurrection are defined as all who are "in Christ." *"The dead in Christ shall rise first."* All in Christ rise. Those who are Christ's at His coming; that is to say, however humble their condition, whatever station or nation they may belong to, all to whom He is the Way, and by Whose loving

We shall  
rise in  
Christ's  
likeness.

Hand have been led to the Father of spirits, not only rise, but rise in His Likeness.

His trans-  
forming  
power.

The process appears to be this, that Christ is not only beautiful, but He beautifies; He is not only glorious, but He glorifies; He is not only living, but He infuses new life into every one that sees Him. So much so that, according to the last two verses of 2 Corinthians iii., we are even now changed spiritually into His Likeness in proportion to the extent that our spirits behold Him. As we see Him with the spiritual eye, so He changes us into His own likeness from glory to glory.

We shall be  
like Christ  
in body.

It will be the same exactly when the material eye sees Him. We shall be like Him then, physically, for we shall see Him as He is.

Amongst those who will be like Him will be thousands who have suffered martyrdom for His Name, but there will be this wonderful distinction, as far as we know, between the martyrs and the Christ; that while He will bear in His glorified Body the marks of His Cross and Passion, those who suffered for Him will be without stain or mark of any sort on the glorified body.

We shall then see Him for the first time

Who has for so long dwelt within us here. <sup>We shall see Him for the first time!</sup>  
 That is a wonderful thought. As we read this book, that Inner Shrine is tenanted by One whom we shall then see, Whom, as I pointed out in the opening of this address, we only know now by the power He gives us and the attributes He shows.

Then will be the apotheosis of humanity — *Christus Consummator* — that glorious phrase <sup>Christus Consummator.</sup> of which Bishop Westcott was so fond — Christ the Consummation of all, will then raise us to the summit of humanity; for He is not only the effulgence of the Divine Glory and the express Image of God's Person, but He is the Head of every creature, of all creation. We, therefore, who rise in His likeness shall then reach the utmost limit of glory to which the human race will ever be raised.

When God introduced the first speck of life into this globe He had before Him the raising of that life and the never ceasing to raise it until it became the Likeness of His Son in Heaven. Long before the foundation of the world we were chosen in Christ Jesus. Of course such thoughts as these far transcend our capacities for understand-

ing them; we can only accept them as they stand.

Head of  
the animal  
creation.

Suffice it to say we have been placed by the power of God at our present level as human beings. We are the head of the animal creation, and yet separated from all animals by an impassable gulf, by having had breathed into our nostrils the Breath of Life, so as to have that spark of the Divine which, though it does not make us gods as some have asserted, makes us human, which makes us rational, which makes us beings like God in having a will, a free will, subject to no known law.

Once this will is captured by God, once we are obedient to the Father of spirits, we then, as I have said in the first lecture, begin to live in the fullest sense of the word. We do not get less human; but we become truly partakers then of the Divine Nature.

The  
apotheosis  
of human-  
ity.

Still we wait for something more. There is yet a more glorified state to which the human race has got to be raised in Christ. One cannot but wonder, when one sees so many scientific men around us, and humanitarians and philanthropists, all engaged in bettering the race, that there should not be

on the part of many of them a more earnest enquiry as to whether there may not be yet a further lifting up of the race to another height, to another level, as spoken of in the Bible, and as consummated in Christ.

When we are like the Second Man and have lost the image of the first, then indeed shall we have reached the highest limit, as far as we know, to which humanity in Christ will ever be raised, the "last of life for which the first was made" — *Christus Consummator* — all things summed up in Christ.

It appears probable that in the glory we shall know each other, but that the value of that knowledge must entirely depend upon the spiritual links formed with one another while we are down here. Those who have passed through any spiritual experiences together will have links in eternity which they could not have without those experiences.

Personally I may tell you—you may think it rather strange—my endeavour is to know as many Christian people as I possibly can during this present life, so that I may have more spiritual friends in the other world.

Not only so, but our lives down here will undoubtedly determine our position in the

Christ the  
Head over  
all.

Spiritual  
links are  
eternal.

The  
insipid  
conven-  
tional  
Heaven.

coming Divine Kingdom. I firmly believe that the true Heaven is as different from our conventional ideas as one thing can well be from another. I doubt whether anything could be more absolutely vapid and insipid and unreal than the conventional Heaven presented to our thoughts in many of our hymns; in fact I may go so far as this, and say that were it not for the Presence of Christ, none of us would care to go to such a Heaven. Having our Lord there, and being in His presence, everything else seems small.

Happiness  
and  
Heaven.

With regard to Heaven, or shall I say the future state, scripture speaks very much less about it than we do. It hardly ever speaks of our going to Heaven; it speaks about our going to be with Christ. But what is before the minds of the inspired writers is much more of a personal interest and a sharing in Christ's glory than a question of our own joy and happiness. And it is well that it is so, because there is no doubt that no one ever gets happiness by seeking for it.

It appears that when we reach the glorious morning of the Resurrection, not very long



will elapse before Christ takes unto Him His great power and reigns over this whole world, and those who are accounted worthy will doubtless share that reign with Him in proportion to the way in which they have shown themselves fitted to be entrusted with power; so that our lives, the faithfulness of our lives, the devotedness of our lives, and the consistency of our lives are all being quietly taken into account day by day.

They are all noted down in the Divine records, and when we all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, we shall receive the things (as Christians in Heaven) done in our bodies, whether they are good or whether they are bad. If they are good we shall have an abundant entry into the joy of our Lord, and we shall be appointed to certain dignities as rulers consistent with our position. If they are bad we shall suffer loss.

Perhaps our twenty or thirty years of Christian life down here will be found so barren, so empty that there is no opportunity for praise and reward connected with it. We ourselves shall be saved, thank God, for our entrance into Heaven depends upon no works that we have done, but upon the

Sharing  
Christ's  
reign. †

The  
Judgment  
Seat of  
Christ.

Position  
hereafter  
depends  
on life now.

grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But our position in Heaven, the place that He will exalt us to, entirely depends upon our life down here. Such in general is the teaching of scripture to which I have not time to refer in detail.

School  
time and  
lessons  
now.

But I must pass on. We must picture all Christians as now in Heaven. We must imagine this wonderful thousand years' reign of Christ about to begin over the redeemed world. We must understand that we have been at school on earth, but are now at home. I consider our life here is a school life: and by and by we are going home for the holidays. Now we are being educated, for though this world makes a very bad home, it makes an uncommonly good school. We are promoted from class to class here in this school, as we learn our lessons.

All is pre-  
paration  
for the  
future  
eternity.

Then in the millennial reign of Christ, as I have pointed out, we enter on more exalted service; we shall have further practice in serving Him in order to prepare us by this course of discipline, of the life before death and the life after death and this thousand years of reigning with Christ, for the wonderful future that will then open

before us. But you say, "I thought that was the future. The utmost bounds of my thoughts have never stretched beyond sharing the glory of the millennial reign of Christ." But the truth is we have not so far really begun the future eternity. We only even then stand at the threshold of the marvels that are opened to us in the Bible.

I may pause, however, here for one moment <sup>The mil-</sup> to consider this millennial time. All Chris-<sup>lennium.</sup> tians are described as forming then a sort of a luminous cube. Picture a solid, like a cube of glass, luminous and transparent in every direction, the centre of it a blaze of light, that light being the Godhead. God Himself shall dwell in the midst; there shall be no sun; there shall be no light there because the Light of God in the centre illuminates this cube.

Now what is the idea before the Apostle when he gives such a marvellous figure? It is this. No ray of God's light, no Divine quality, can ever reach the redeemed earth but through this transparent cube, the light <sup>The trans-</sup> being in the centre. And what is the trans-<sup>parent</sup> parent cube? Ourselves. <sup>cube.</sup>

That is to say, it is the pleasure of

Almighty God not to reveal Himself to the earth save through us, for we are to be the sole medium for the transmission of the glories of God to the humanity that will dwell on this earth during this wonderful reign of Christ.

But I must pass on now, to take a glimpse at what lies beyond. I say, when these thousand years of Christ's reign which we share in our glorified bodies has reached its close, we then bid farewell to this old planet, with this heaven, the envelope surrounding it, and this earth and sky then passes away. A new heaven and a new earth appears, and our vista is then immensely widened.

The furthest glimpse of what lies "Beyond the Veil" is given us in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The Epistle to the Ephesians where I shall refer to three passages. In this epistle human language is taxed and human thought is strained to its very last limits. Adam Clark, the old commentator, says of Ephesians, "St. Paul's nervous language seems here to bend and break under the weight of the divine ideas which he endeavours to express."

The fact is the vistas are so endless, so tremendous, the outlook is so transcendent

that it seems impossible to convey it, or even an idea of it, in words. Astronomers will tell you that at times they turn their telescopes to black patches in the heavens where there are no stars, and they look into these black patches, and they see the universe stretching on to infinity.

Tremendous star depths.

There is apparently nothing there, and yet, with a more powerful glass directed to one of these dark pits in the most empty part of the heavens, where there seems nothing but blackness, some distinct twinkling will be discerned from stars at such inconceivable distances that all the planets that we see with unassisted sight might be in the next street compared with the distance of these mighty orbs.

Such are the vistas that stretch their illimitable expanse before us in Ephesians. This millennial reign is, as it were, not in the next street, but it might be happening to-morrow compared with the expanses of time that we must just look at for one moment before we close.

The further eternity.

As I said, there are three verses I want to read. The first is Ephesians i. 3: "*Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus*

The past  
eternity.

*Christ who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ: even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.*" We are able to discuss this matter together in these pages, my friends, because before this world ever consolidated from the nebulous mist which we suppose was its origin—back, back, back, when there was no time, when God was All, when there was no Creation, He then chose that we who believe His Word should be His children in Christ Jesus. It is an amazing thought, an impossible thought for our minds really to conceive. It is a past infinity of time, so that our history stretches right back, back, back to the ages of a by-gone eternity.

The near  
eternity.

Then again, as regards what I may call the nearer future, look at Ephesians ii. 7: "*He hath made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*" The riches of God's grace will be manifested to all creation by our presence in Heaven. If we can be brought there, it shows what His grace can do, for

all of us who are living here are conscious that in ourselves we are less than nothing. That is the near future.

Now we pass on, last of all, to Ephesians <sup>The far eternity.</sup> iii. 20: "*Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us*" — that is the Divine will in us, the Divine in man, — "*the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the Church*" — that is, in all Christian men and women — "*and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever,*" or, as the margin reads, "*unto all the generations of the age of the ages.*" <sup>The age of the ages.</sup>

What does this mean? That throughout this period, that is, throughout all eternity, the glory of God will be seen through Christ Jesus, through Christians and the Church. For ever shall we be associated with Him, who is the Way. He who first brought us to the Father of spirits will be associated with us for ever and for ever. We know not what inhabitants there may be in other worlds than ours, but we know that to all intelligences we shall display the glory of God. This is the prospect in the far future, in the limitless eternity.

Philosophers sometimes think they will be able to communicate with Mars, but it seems difficult to understand how thoughts can be interchanged where there is no common basis. But in this glorious far future all created intelligences throughout the universe, not on this little planet only—and there is no reason to doubt that God has intelligences far beyond we have any conception of now—will know that to us is given the wonderful place of being associated with Christ in displaying His glory for ever and for ever. At such a distance of time the thousand years of His reign will seem but a past though never-to-be-forgotten moment.

And here we live to-day, considering no cunning fable devised by men, but spending a little time in reverent search as to what is our destiny Beyond the Veil. I ask you to sift and test what I have laid before you by the light of Holy Writ, and as you re-read Ephesians iii. 21, to ask yourselves whether human language has ever been stretched to such lengths before.

All human language is here inadequate.

I think Adam Clark's description of St. Paul's language is wonderful; it seems "to



bend and break under the weight of the Divine ideas which are there." At any rate the result is this, — never to all eternity will any one who has found the Way be separated "*from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord.*"

I close with this beautiful description of the uplifting of the Veil that still hides the future from our vision.

This world I deem  
But a beautiful dream  
Of things that are not what they seem,  
Where shadows arise,  
Giving dim surmise  
Of the glories that shall meet our waking eyes.

Arm of the Lord!  
Creating Word  
Whose glories the silent skies record,  
Where stands Thy name  
In scrolls of flame,  
On the firmament's high o'er-shadowing frame.

I gaze o'erhead  
Where Thy hand hath spread  
For the waters of heaven, their crystal bed;  
And stored the dew  
In its depths of blue,  
Which the fires of the sun come tempered through.

Soft they shine  
Through that pure shrine,

As beneath the veil of Thy flesh divine  
 Streamed forth the light,  
 That were else too bright  
 For the feebleness of a sinner's sight.

And such I deem  
 This world will seem  
 When we waken from life's uncertain dream,  
 And break the shell  
 Where our spirit's dwell  
 In this wondrous anti-natal cell.

I gaze aloof  
 At the tissued roof  
 Where time and space are the warp and woof;  
 Which the King of Kings  
 As a curtain flings  
 O'er the mystery of eternal things.

As a tapestried tent,  
 To shade us meant,  
 From the bare everlasting firmament;  
 Where the blaze of the skies  
 Comes soft to our eyes  
 Through a veil of mystical imageries.

But could I see  
 As in truth they be,  
 The glories of Heaven that encompass me,  
 I should lightly hold  
 The tissued fold  
 Of this marvellous curtain of blue and gold.

And soon the whole,  
 Like a parchèd scroll,

Shall to my amazed sight uproll;  
And without a screen  
At one burst be seen,  
The Presence in which I have ever been.

Oh! who shall bear  
The blinding glare  
Of the Majesty that shall meet us there?  
What eye can gaze  
On the unveiled blaze  
Of the light-girdled throne of the Ancient of days?

Yet there I shall see  
From sin set free  
The face of the One who died for me;  
In robes of white,  
I shall bear the sight  
Of the Glory of God in Heaven's light.

ANON.



# VALEDICTORY



## VALEDICTORY

### THE PRACTICAL OUTCOME

It is remarkable that no letter of St. Paul's closes when it reaches its supreme height; that is, with the climax of the Highest Thought it contains; but that, on the contrary, this climax is generally reached about the middle of the epistle. In Ephesians it is at the close of the third chapter out of six; in Romans at the close of the eighth out of sixteen; in Colossians in the first few verses of the third chapter out of four.

Such method is not without meaning, and it may be of profit to us, if, instead of closing this book with the overwhelming visions of Ephesians, considered very briefly in our last Study, we add here a few words of practical import.

It will be found that in each of St. Paul's letters that I have named he continues with exhortations prefixed with the one word "*Therefore.*"

Remark-  
able fact in  
St. Paul's  
epistles.

Exhorta-  
tions based  
on  
privilege.

In Ephe-  
sians,  
Romans,  
and  
Colossians.

In Ephesians we read these touching words, "*I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace.*"

In Romans, after a parenthesis of three chapters descriptive of God's dealings with Israel, the apostle writes (xii. 1): "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service, and be not fashioned according to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*"

In Colossians the Apostle writes (iii. 5): "*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. . . . Put on therefore as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.*"

Humility  
and love  
unfeigned.

All these breathe an unmistakable spirit of deep humility and unfeigned love; and I



may say, if these be not the outcome of our brief Studies, they are of little worth.

We read in St. Luke ix. 37: "*When they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him;*" and then, on Christ healing the sick boy, "*They were all astonished at the majesty of God.*"

"*Then came the disciples*" (who had not come down from the mountain) "*to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast it out? And he saith unto them, Because of your little faith.*" We have been witnesses of heavenly glories with Christ in these Studies, and when we come down, a great multitude full of sickness and need is seen to meet us, and our power lies in our position as having been on the mount. We may be true disciples, but if we have not been up there with Christ, we cannot be healers of men, nor are we clothed with Divine power.

Position is power.

To descend we must first ascend.

The practical outcome of all such Studies should therefore be a character clean cut, of a sweet odour and all pervading force, in harmony and constant touch with the Divine.

It will be, as described by Emerson, that "When a man lives with God his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook, and the

The Christian character.

rustle of the corn. He will weave no longer a spotted life of shreds and patches, but he will live with a Divine unity. He will cease from what is base and frivolous in his life, and be content with all places and any service he can render. He will calmly face the morrow in the negligency of that trust which carries God with it and so has the whole future in the bottom of his heart."

What I would here maintain is that no other studies can produce lives and characters as lofty as those that are formed by the Highest Thought.

Highest  
Thought  
gives the  
best  
products.

High Thought gives culture and knowledge, both wide and deep, and is of great value. The ranges of the investigation of the Higher Thought are wider and deeper still, and comprehend all that throws light on humanity, and seeks to lead it to its noblest end.

Human  
and  
Divine  
brought  
into con-  
tact.

But I contend that the Highest Thought supplies the missing power by bringing, through faith and trust, the human at last in contact with the Divine. So that redeemed humanity possessed by the Spirit of God finds a new joy in doing the Divine will, and from contact with a God of love does good hoping for nothing again, and "coming down

from the mountain" is <sup>↓</sup>equipped with the power as well as the will to bless others, to bring the sunshine into dark lives, the good Physician to the mentally diseased, the opening of eyes to the blind, the loosening of chains to the prisoners, freedom to the slave, and <sup>Doing good to all.</sup> good to all.

I know the aim is high, but our reach must be higher than our grasp, or what is Heaven for? As Mr. Haldane, our minister of war, <sup>Haldane on the Christian ideal.</sup> has so nobly said in this connection: "Let me admit without qualification that the Christian ideal is not lived up to anywhere in the world; let me admit that the facts of Christians everywhere fall below the conception of life presented by the life and leadings of the Man of Galilee, and still I will contend that he who follows Christ ever afar off, with faltering step and many a fall, may live a nobler life than the perfect disciple of Confucius. No ideal is high that is fully realised. The man who claims for himself that, instead of being above him, it is per- <sup>Not as though I had already attained.</sup> fectly embodied in his life confesses that he has no aspirations for improvements. It is the glory of the Christian ideal that, while it is within the reach of the weakest and the

lowliest, it is high enough to keep the best  
and the purest with their faces ever upward."

Lofty  
failure  
surpasses  
low suc-  
cess.

"That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it:  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.  
That low man goes on adding one to one,  
His hundred's soon hit;  
This high man, aiming at a million  
Misses one unit.  
That has the world here — should he need the next,  
Let the world mind him!  
This throws himself on God, and unperplexed  
Seeking shall find Him."



# DATE DUE

MAR 10 '65

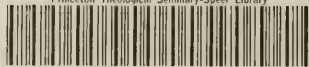
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