

REMARKS ON JOHN XVII.

What strikes one in reading this chapter is this, that man is taken no account of, except in the way of grace, and power, infinite goodness, and infinite love on God's part—the counsels of Divine love. Human energy, the mind of man, the capacity of man, the heart of man are not taken into consideration here—they have indeed no place. What is taken into consideration here is God the Father and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and those who in the fulness of the Father's love have been given to the Son, and are loved of Him. This is the way man is looked at here.

Most know that this chapter does not give us open public ministry, but the intimacy of intercourse between the Son and the Father, that which remains amid all the confusion, all the strivings and effort of man, and of the enemy. It is outside all these, because, here, we are inside, in the Divine circle of Divine affections. It is intimacy here between the Father and the Son—the Son's desire and prayer for those whom the Father had given Him, and the Father's power to keep in His own name.

In the previous chapter the Lord shews His disciples the end of everything down here. "Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me."

"Ye shall be scattered." In the first place, He is speaking of the Jewish enclosure, the Jewish company of His followers; scattered therefore as sheep without a shepherd, by His being taken out of this world by the power of God, and they here and without anything left to look upon. What is so marked here, in the ways of God, is that, when everything fails that is of man, what is of God

remains. God works through this very failure of man, to the accomplishment of His own counsels. All indeed had failed as regards the nation, but all that order of things, too, as regards His disciples, was to come to an end, and scattering to be the only outward result. Yet, to faith, how bright the prospect! How real the word! "I have overcome the world." To be realised by faith alone. One great lesson for us to learn is, that all really of God, eternally established for the glory of Christ by God Himself, is done, established entirely apart from man. Man has no hand in it, no part in it at all, and yet he enjoys the blessing of it. Man has no hand in the blessing that He is speaking of here, and yet he is the object of it. I speak of this chapter as a whole, to show the circumstances in which these words of the Lord Jesus were spoken to the Father, and the reason why this wonderful prayer has been placed on record by God Himself.

At the end of ch. xvi. we have the end of everything brought out. Then, in the very next chapter, He begins with an entirely new order of things. If we can comprehend that, and begin with God on the ground of ruin, the ruin of man, as man, the ruin of the nation, the corporate thing down here on earth, we shall see clearly how God's counsels and purposes, His mind and will stand out to be fulfilled unfailingly in Christ, and in Him alone. We do not get the day of Pentecost here, but we find them brought together, held together, kept together by God the Father Himself for His own special purposes. The nation had lost the sense of being kept, had lost the sense of the blessing, still they had been kept, that God's purposes as to Messiah might be fulfilled; see Acts iv., 28. Now, even the faithful Remnant, His few disciples were to be scattered, those who had been authorized by God to take the place of sons of God, "born not of the will of man, but of God." "You shall be scattered, and shall leave Me alone, and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me."

Having thus, as it were, laid the foundation, and presented the circumstances to them, He adds "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace." He tells them that in the world they should

“have tribulation,” but; “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” How many true believers in the Lord Jesus who know the forgiveness of their sins, are in distress and dismay as they find that everything they believed in, and thought was right, down here is breaking up and giving way! Yet that is precisely the state of things we find ourselves in, in this present day. All that has not already succumbed is fast giving way, and souls look in vain for something lasting and sure upon which to depend. But the reply to all, His own Word, is “In Me ye shall have peace”—in the world, tribulation—in Me, peace.

This xvii. of John is not public ministry, it is not speaking in the synagogue, nor to the elders of the people, nor even to His nearest disciples, He is alone with the Father, speaking alone to Him. But the Spirit, so to speak, overhears it all, and places it all on record for His people’s hearts, in abiding power and grace while here in the world where He was cast out—the help, the strength, the guidance, the comfort, the joy of His people’s hearts until He comes. And, in passing, let me add that we need go no further than this chapter for evidence of the inspiration of the Blessed Word; for here is a prayer spoken to the Father alone, for what would never have entered into man’s mind to ask for, placed on record in all its fullest detail. Man could never have invented such a prayer as this—it is, indeed, meaningless to the natural mind. Man’s intellect, let it be ever so refined and cultivated, cannot understand it. Yet see how full it is—the world set aside and not prayed for—His own in the world, a feeble but blessed few, the object of His desires—the Father revealed to the world, but the world in total ignorance of it—the present unity of blessing and grace—the future unity of glory and power—ah! more, far more than our souls take in of His love, and His glory, His ineffable grace and power! The only beings in this world who can understand it, are those who alone are capable of tasting the joy of it themselves, the blessed objects of it, the children of God, and they only by the Holy Spirit, able thus to enter into the Divine thoughts, and to taste something of Divine affections.

I do not propose to go through the chapter in detail, but

merely to look at certain heads of it. First, see how He begins. We are brought to a special moment, "Father, the hour is come." It is not merely the hour that He should be offered up upon the Cross. His earthly ministry to the people was complete, the revelation of the Father likewise—His own people had both seen and hated both Him and His Father, and the world did not know the Father. No! the hour was come when it had been fully manifested that there was no help, no hope for man in man, no help in God for man as man save in the Son, the Blessed Son Himself. For the Father's glory too, there was no way in which He could be glorified save in and through the Son, "The hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." Here is the resource, the one, holy, blessed, eternal resource. Here in the midst of all the distress, the rejection, the contradiction of sinners, the Father's glory was secured, and that through the glory of the Son. But what a prayer! What a request! What a character it has! Not seeking His own glory, His own profit, but the Father's glory only, and naming His own glory merely in view of that! "Glorify Thy Son in order that Thy Son may glorify Thee." Ah! what a tale that tells us of the object before His soul as Man down here! How it opens our own thoughts and hearts to ourselves, and leads us to self judgment and confession, true humility and dependence upon Him!

We are privileged thus to listen to Him, not in any imaginative way, and not according to our own thoughts, but in all the reality and blessed confidence of the Father's presence. There is no question of sin here. The Cross is anticipated and looked at as past. It is Jesus Himself, as Man in this world, pouring out His heart into the heart of Him whose delight He was, the one blessed infinite Resource of God in this world of sin. "Ye shall be scattered, and shall leave Me alone, and yet I am not alone for the Father is with Me." Having, in perfect love, and grace, and knowledge too, warned His disciples as to what was before them here below, He permits them, He permits us, in sovereign power and infinite grace to listen to Him in His intimate intercourse with the Father, presenting His own to Him as the objects of His care, His power, and His

love. If we read this chapter, and understand but feebly its wonderful contents, and then come to the Cross, we cannot but bow the heart and knee in adoration and praises to Him who hung there. We have come to His heart, to His thoughts of grace and care and love, and at the Cross we see the full display of that love in giving Himself for us. Here He spreads out His heart to the Father—there He lays it open to us. What a place we are set in! On His heart before the Father in prayer, on His heart before God when on the Cross!

How the energy of man, of nature, of the flesh, appears here in its true colours, and how revolting it is! See Peter in the garden as the expression of it. Natural energy, human love, however well intended, what could he do? He draws his sword, man's idea of force, he smites—but what a word meets him! Far more than rebuke, it shows him where he was intruding. The intention might be of the very best, the object most perfect and worthy, but human energy here could but mar, were such a thing possible, the communion of the Son with the Father. This, blessed be God, could not be. Jesus Himself removes the sword from where man had tried to intrude it, with words that spoke to the heart and soul of His poor disciple. "Put up the sword into its sheath, the cup which the Father hath given me shall I not drink it." If the enemy could not get in between the Son and the Father through the grief, the sorrows and woes of the Son Himself, he would at least try to do so through the poor, feeble, disciple. And who could discern, who could feel, who could meet this, but Jesus only? And we, how often do we not err by acting upon our own apprehension of things, instead of humbly and dependently waiting upon Him. There is no surer ground of erring, or of missing His mind, than taking our own apprehension of the truth, or the effect produced by what God has revealed or done, as the measure or indeed the reality of it. The act of Peter here before us, is a plain case, but he had not then the Spirit as we now have. Take the revelation of the Father, eternal life, the gospel, the present glory of Christ, His near coming, it is over the same thing. The truth revealed, and the effect produced are like light and darkness, in contrast. Our

privilege, our blessing, aye, and our power too, lie in holding fast through grace to the truth as revealed from God's side of it, and not measuring it by, or considering it even from our feeble apprehension of it.

But to return to our chapter. "Glorify Thy Son that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." He knew what a desert this world was before He came into it—He Himself, One in heart, in spirit, in thought, in object, desire, in every detail, One with the Father. What a wilderness it was for Him when He came into it! But at this supreme moment, it was not the world that was before Him. It would be no use to speak of that now. His heart had felt it all—God had so loved the world as to give Him, the only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It was not the moment to present all this before the Father. Man had derided the glory of God from the very commencement of this world's history. Look at the way the glory was removed from the Temple in Israel's day, and look at the way man has since derided everything God has done. But here He speaks of His Father and to His Father—the Father's glory dear to Him, the object before His soul—what would be accomplished in spite of everything. All might fail down here, men might deride and scoff, but the Father would be glorified nevertheless. But there was only one way in which this could be accomplished, and that was through the Son. Therefore He says, "Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." To us this is strange, marvellous indeed, for we think so much from our selves and of ourselves, and we are so much the object of our own thoughts and feelings. Thus we feel, as it were, in a strange atmosphere when we are in the presence of One who has no thought but the glory of His Father. When coming into the world, it was the Father's glory, the will of God, He had before Him. In His walk down here amongst those He loved, and who through grace followed Him, the Father's glory was ever His object. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God;" chap. xi. And when all was over and done, as regards man's heart and will—his hatred of and opposition to God fully shewn—what remained untouched and untouchable by

man, the glory of the Father, was still, as ever, the object before Him, sure of accomplishment because beyond the reach of man, and placed in His hands to accomplish.

Thus it is all God, God the Father, the Son whom He had sent. "This is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." 'This is not the gospel of the grace of God that brings salvation, nor is it the gospel of the kingdom. It is the declaration of Eternal Life, not merely a thing that will last for ever. Of course Eternal Life lasts for ever—it would not be eternal if it did not. But that is not the view of it presented here, though men may so look at it according to their own apprehension, and seek so to grasp it. He says "That they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." This was set before man. It might be spat upon, ignored, refused, despised, argued about and reasoned over, but there it was in all its fulness, in all its simplicity and reality, and power—not an object for man's mind to work upon, and explain to suit his own thoughts, but the knowledge of the only true God, the Father, and of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ sent by Him. There it was, and there it is, to be known, had, possessed by man in this wilderness of sin and selfwill, in the Person of the Son. "This is the record: that God has given us eternal life; and this life is in His Son." In the midst of death, in the midst of ruin, of all that was evil, unholy and vile—the success of Satan, and poor man, his tool, the enemy of his Maker, and the hater of his God—here is what remains eternally, and the eternal portion of the believer in Jesus, the knowledge of the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

Light, the True Light, had come into the world, lighting every man in all its blessed, burning brilliancy, sent by God Himself, but hated, shunned, refused, and, so far as he could do so, put out by man.

We now come to a very important but very awful word, a reality, indeed, and declared by the Lord Himself, "O, righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee." The Father had been fully revealed in the world, and to the world, but the world had not known Him. Here was the

end and the judgment of this world. Man is alienated from God, an enemy to God, by wicked works. Man knows there is a God. The fool alone says in his heart "There is no God;" it does not say he thinks so in his heart, but he says it to himself in his folly. Man has gone so far away from God that the knowledge of Him, and what He is, is entirely lost through sin. Man knows there is a God, yet the knowledge of who and what that God is, sin has entirely blotted out. Here, however, we have more than that—the Father had been revealed in the Son, and yet the world had not known Him. But "This is life eternal that they might know Thee" (the Father) "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Not merely know that Thou art, but know Thee, and Jesus Christ Thy Sent One.

It is a question for each one, as to how he regards the life of the Lord Jesus here in this world. There are those who are not saved at all, and yet who have been aroused and charmed with the life, the self-denying ways and beautiful character of the Lord Jesus as a Man here in this world. Indeed, one can defy any one to read that life, and to conclude 'That man is nothing above the brightest and the best I ever heard of here.' One may defy him to read that life and not say, 'It is a most beautiful, nay, it is a wonderful life.' Yet, for all that, there is nothing in man capable thereby of appreciating what God is. Man may be charmed with the life thus studied, and yet not believe in Him as sent of the Father. Some commence with this, and alas! end there, say, "That is my great example." Ah! poor soul, you will never be like Him thus. You can never make a sinful creature like the sinless One. We must begin with His death for us. "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." We must have a nature like His. We must be born of God, before we can have the object before us that He had. For here is One who has no thought before Him but the glory of God—this was the one object of His life here. People may talk of being like Him, but where are they to begin? They begin with sin in themselves, which He never had. They may make good resolutions, they may strive and strive, but they only find themselves

further and further off from Him, and the more in earnest they are the more conscious they are of this. If we are saved, it is surely He that has saved us, but the great point here is "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." In the midst of all the confusion, all the difficulties by the way here, this remains, and it is rest and joy to our souls to turn to it. It is of the most vital importance for us to apprehend it. The Lord Jesus Christ has wholly and entirely glorified God in this world, in respect of sin—our nature as children of Adam—yea, He has glorified God in such a fashion that God would be unjust to Him, if He did not glorify Him with Himself. No element of grace enters into this—it is justice, it is righteousness. The heart of God speaks to our hearts here, as His children. The basis of it all is this. He has glorified God on the earth, He has finished the work God gave Him to do, and in response God has glorified Him at His own right hand in heaven. The work that God gave Him to do, it will take us all eternity in the Father's house to enter into. It will be ever the occupation of our souls to enter into it, to praise Him, and to praise the Father on account of it. First, the perfect revelation of God the Father, the heart of the Father laid bare, the heart of man shown up, what it was known to be from the beginning, full of enmity to God. All is laid open, fully manifested here. The heart of God the Father laid open, all His resources, infinite and blessed resources (the only hope for man was there) are set forth for man in the One who was the very and only means by which these resources could come to man. The counsels of God, the glory of God, made good, His purposes all fulfilled on the ground of this work. That work is not limited to our salvation. Our salvation is part of it, thank God, but not nearly all of it. But which is the dearer to the soul—our salvation or the glory of God? It is a question that touches us very closely. We have salvation—we should not be the children of God without it—a salvation secured and eternally accomplished. Paul could say, "I could have wished myself even cut off for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." This was not an ebullition of mere human feeling ;

it flowed from the one sole object of his life being to live Christ.

Thus we have here the Lord Himself. "I have glorified Thee on the earth. I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do"—not "the work I took up," but "the work entrusted by Thee to me to perform"—"I have finished it." And yet with the simple meaning so plain and evident before us, there are hardly any two verses in the whole Bible that people put so often such an outrageous construction upon, to suit their own views, unless it be ch. xix. 28, where they limit the meaning of the "all things," reasoning in their own minds as to their extent, or verse 30, "It is finished." People discuss what it is that is finished, and limit it to what they themselves apprehend. There is no greater folly or mistake that judging of things from our own point of view merely, our own apprehension, or indeed from ourselves at all. When Jesus says "All things," He means *all* things—not the things you and I can see and apprehend according to our own necessity or capacity. He means everything was perfectly done, nothing left undone of what He came to do—and then "He bowed His head, and gave up the Ghost." All was done—man fully exposed—God the Father perfectly manifested—God glorified—God justified—God's heart satisfied—everything that is in God Himself fully, eternally glorified and satisfied, and every purpose and counsel of His fulfilled. It is not merely our salvation; it is that God is glorified, what He is in Himself revealed. Thus He says "Now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me, and they have kept Thy word." If we do not understand the meaning of this verse, it is impossible to understand the unity He here speaks of, for here is the basis of that unity, "I have manifested Thy Name"—the name of the Father.

There are various ways in which we may speak of unity and of walking together in it. The unity of the members of the Body of Christ. The unity of the Body in view of the members. But the unity here

is that of the family. To begin with, it is knowing the name of the Father—not only that God is a Father. It is not, as some say, that God is the universal Father. He is not that; He is the One True God. He is not the universal Father, for all are not the children of God, “Ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” He says “I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me.” It is the name of the Father known and understood through the Son by those whom the Father had given to Him. “They have kept Thy word”—the expression of Thy mind—“and they have known that all things which Thou has given me are of Thee.” He is not taking up the words that fell from the lips of His poor disciples—“who should be the greatest,” “I will lay down my life for Thy sake,” and the like—He is presenting to the Father the thoughts that flow from His own heart, “Thine they were and Thou gavest them me.” Have you ever looked at yourself in that light—you, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ—or have you looked at and depended upon your own faith? If so, what a poor and scanty foundation do you find it? Many believe, and then, alas! they depend upon their own faith—something to be found they think in themselves—some fancied change in themselves. One said to me lately, “God printed Christ on my heart years ago, but I cannot now find the least mark of Him there.” He was, of course, in great distress, and no wonder! Rest and joy is not in what we find in our hearts but in His. Read this part of John’s Gospel, and ask yourself if there is anything in His heart. Ah! there is a deep, unchanging, unfailing spring of love there, that nothing in the whole universe can touch, or change, or check. Do not speak of your love, do not think of it. Let it come out in living. Look at Him in His love, and His grace—in the depth of His sorrow thinking of us—in the calm and glory of His present place on high occupied with us, and our needs, and our feebleness, our joys, and our prospects—and the power and reality of this will show itself in practical life in love to Him.

He tells them how scattered they would be, and that none but He could keep them, but He was going from them, going to be left alone as far as they were

concerned, and they would be without His personal presence here, and scattered each to his own. Man's thought would be, a beautiful life had been led, a beautiful tale told, and all was now over—the sepulchre, and the stone rolled to its mouth shut it all away for ever from mortal eye. But no! He says there still remains the heart of God the Father, and of the Son too. Here is eternal thought, eternal counsel. “I have given them the words that Thou hast given Me, and they have received them, and have known that I came forth from Thee, and have believed that Thou didst send Me.” Now that is true of us if we are children of God. We have known, we do know that Jesus came forth from the Father. And, let me ask, what knowledge have you of the Father's love? Some speak of it with reference to their temporal mercies, their experiences, their emotions, the goodness of God to them in their families, their business, their affairs in life here, and that is about the limit of their knowledge of the Father's love. Fruit of the Father's love it is, but it is not the knowledge of that love in itself. Our first knowledge of Him is this, that He gave His Son to die for us. Our introduction to the Father is through the Son. You may say you know Jesus as your Saviour, and it is well indeed if you do so, but do you know Him as the One who came out from God? Not merely as an Object regarding which you have faith, but as a reality—a real, living Person, come out from God? “They have believed that Thou didst send Me.” Thus we know the Father on a basis that is infinitely better than our feelings and our thoughts. We know Him simply in this way, that He has revealed Himself in a manner that leads us to confide in Him without one shadow of doubt as to what that Father's feelings are towards us. We cannot talk of disbelieving those feelings, we cannot doubt those feelings of Divine, infinite, eternal love, with such a proof of it before us. Unasked, unthought of, aye, uncared for, He sent Him forth into such a world as this, to make known to us the love of His own heart towards us. This is indeed something to rest upon. We can always repose in this, without the slightest breath of misgiving or doubt. That love is unchanging because of Him whose love it is. We are the objects of it. Thank

God that love depends on Him, and is made known to us by Him who was sent of God for that purpose. He gave His Son to die for me, and I know His love, His heart by that.

“I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me out of the world, for they are Thine, and all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine, and I am glorified in them” And then He confides them to His Father. “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me.” He looks at His disciples here as being helpless and feeble in themselves, in this world, and He confides them to His Father. How wonderful and how blessed this is! We are given of the Father to the Son, and the Son on leaving the world, dying, confides His disciples to His Father. Does it not make the heart go out in thanksgiving. Given of the Father to the Son, confided by the Son to the Father, who can talk or think of doubt? Has it then so little winning power over the heart—so little power to lead the heart out to God? What heart is it that is not led out to Him in thanksgiving and praise? A heart that is distressed, annoyed, grieved to find there is nothing in itself, that shrinks from this perfect dependence on another, and that has not tasted the sweetness nor known the depths of Divine and perfect love.

To understand, in any measure, this chapter, we must begin at the beginning with Jesus Himself, not begin, as some do, at the end, and seek for a unity that comes from man, but follow on with Himself until we come to the truth of the unity as presented by Him. And thus we come to responsibility. And here again another principle is before us, invariable in the ways of God—before speaking to us of our responsibility, He feeds us and helps us, strengthens and encourages us, ministers to us the power to discharge that responsibility, by telling us of the place in which He has put us before Himself, and of our absolute and invariable dependence upon Himself. And this is an immense blessing and help to the soul. He looks upon us and treats us as having no power but what comes from Himself. He gives, but He not only gives, He also causes us to receive. This indeed brings in respon-

sibility, and it is responsibility without excuse, or possibility of avoidance—all being of Him, none can plead inability. Some get disheartened at finding the children of God so powerless, and talk of giving them up as hopeless. But this is not His way. He gives the capacity to receive, the power too, and He exercises heart and conscience both. When men talk of “giving up,” what is it but that they have had some hope in man after all? Jesus does not give us up, He confides us to the Father. He had no hope, no trust in man, for He “Himself knew what was in man.”

In ch. iii. He says, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son”—here, in full unison with the Father’s thoughts, He says “I do not pray for the world.” It is the same world, but He does not say, “The world does not know Me,” but “O righteous Father, the world has not known Thee.” God in the largeness of His heart—“So loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing trespasses,” but the world would not have Him. Now, Jesus, at the end of His ministry, and perfectly One with the Father in saying it, says, “I pray not for the world”—that is over and past—but there is a treasure that is in the world—the pearl of great price—those that are mine, those whom Thou hast given me—for it, for them I pray—the one blessed, spotless thing. And who could look at us, or speak of us as blessed, spotless, holy, but He who came to die for us, to shed His own precious blood for us? He who looks upon us as the fruit of His own blessed work. Thus He does not pray for them to be taken out of the world but that “Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” He had a purpose, the Father had a purpose in keeping them in the world—to testify of the Father and the Son, in wondrous and blessed unity, and that through this the world might know that the Father had sent the Son, and that the Father loved them as He loved the Son. This was not to be accomplished by the children of God walking through this world as individuals, each seeking to do the best he could according to his own apprehension, but a company, a family, with family affections, family ties, family thoughts

and objects, and a family home before them—the Father's house on high. And that goes on to the end. It is in that family sphere that the Holy Ghost makes His thoughts, His mind known and realised. He brings home to the family what nourishes the family as such. Until the Lord comes, and takes them up to be with Him for ever in the Father's house, they are kept together around the Father, around Him, kept from the evil, kept blessed, and holy, and spotless—what they really are in His sight, as being of Him.

But some will say, "This is not realised now—where is it to be found now?" Surely if we look at ourselves, and start from the thoughts of our own hearts, and the feeble apprehension we have of the wonderful truths of this one chapter alone, we should never speak of the people of God, His children, as holy, blessed and spotless. But in what other terms are we to speak of the family of God? Is His family other than blessed and spotless? Any other thought than that is very unfitting surely. The characteristics of the family are those of the Father. According to what the father is, so is the family. "Be ye therefore holy, even as I am holy." Put into practice what is really true of you, characteristic of you, as being of the Father. Thus, He says: "Keep them from the evil"—a wonderful, blessed testimony, in this world of sin, to the Father and the Son. Where then is this to be found? You may look around far and wide, you may go high and low, and yet not see it. But if really, in heart with Him, you seek His family, and to walk according to the Spirit of the family, not taking man's thoughts, nor objects, nor seeking general approval, but seeking the blessed realisation of the prayer of His heart, He will give you to know, and will bring you into association with those who have the same blessed object before them. He causes His truth to work in the soul, the conscience, He makes good His truth to it, "Set them apart by the truth—Thy word is truth"—the expression of Thy mind is truth—and that truth comes in and separates from the world.

The whole spirit of the chapter rests then on this: The Father's will is accomplished, the Father's heart is satisfied, and the Son's likewise. And now He says, "Father I will that those also whom Thou hast given me, be with Me

where I am that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me, for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." His last desire for His own! Every knee shall bow before Him, every eye shall see Him, but His own are to be with Him where He is, in the secret of His own blessed presence, to behold His glory, and to know that it all flows from the love of the Father's heart before the foundation of the world. What a prospect! What a place! There is nothing in all the universe of God that will delight our hearts like beholding His glory, to see Him fully, eternally glorified, and to know behind all that glory, that infinite heart of love that gave Him for us. This is His prayer, His closing desire for His own. This may well engross the soul, and absorb the heart, the being. And it acts now in blessing, and in searching power over the heart, too, for it leads us to ask ourselves in His presence whether what we have before us, be it in walk or practice, or be it in doctrine or interpretation of the Word, or in any new or fancied new line of thought, has His glory for its object, and His heart for its source. Man loves something new, his mind ever seeks it, his heart ever craves it, but if the thoughts of the Father's heart towards us, and of the Son's heart regarding us will not warm our hearts, and draw them away from all around, to the one bright and blessed Object before Him, and through grace before us too, nothing else will. The same sweetness, the same blessed, refreshing reality remains as at the beginning, and He keeps it ever before us to be the joy and delight of our hearts for ever. The Lord preserve us in simplicity—so easily lost, so seldom regained—and yet ever according to His mind, simplicity, and dependence upon Himself.

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