

Divine Love

Two Series of Messages
by Pastor Otto Stockmayer

How to Contact Us

Email: rcb@RareChristianBooks.com

Telephone at (573) 336-7316

Mailing address

Rare Christian Books
19275 Highway 28
Dixon, MO 65459 USA

About the Author

The first mention of the name of Otto Stockmayer was made to us by Mrs. Mary McDonough of Brookline, Massachusetts, a Bible teacher and the author of **GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION**, under whose instruction we sat for a number of years. Of no other servant of God did we hear her speak in more glowing terms than she did of Pastor Stockmayer; from personal acquaintance with him she sensed the fragrance of Christ coming through his life and was impelled to admiration of his spiritual stature and knowledge of divine truth. She saw in his messages the impress of a man deeply taught of God.

In the years since that time, bits and pieces of information about Mr. Stockmayer have come our way both from the reading of a number of his books and from other sources. He was born of German parentage in or about 1830 and ordained to the Free Church ministry in 1866 in de Vaud, Switzerland. He pastored churches in Switzerland for some years thereafter. He himself spoke of traveling to England in 1874 to attend the revival meetings in Oxford under D. L. Moody . . . and of entering into a deeper experience of the Lord at that time.

By 1900 Pastor Stockmayer was being led out into a wider sphere of ministry—conferences on the Continent and in England and America. The record shows that he was in New York City in 1904, speaking in the great Tabernacle of A. B. Simpson and in the home of a Mrs. Cortlandt dePeyster Field, wife of an Episcopal clergyman, whose home was a gathering place for many seeking deeper teaching (Presumably it was at these meetings that Mrs. McDonough met the Pastor and profited so richly from his ministry).

In the meantime God had provided Brother Stockmayer with a castle in Hauptweil, Thurgau, Switzerland, for the accommodation of such of God's children as desired to come aside for rest and spiritual instruction. One of Andrew Murray's biographers tells of the immense influence Stockmayer had on the life of the South African pastor and widely read

Printed by
Old Paths Tract Society, Inc.
RR 2 Box 43
Shoals, IN 47581-9664

author. It was from his visit with Stockmayer that Murray came into the light of Scripture on the healing of the body; and out of his personal experience of healing, as a result of that visit, came eventually his classic treatise on divine healing.

Attending a funeral in Bern, Stockmayer caught a cold which weakened him and precipitated his death in 1917.

To Mrs. McDonough's testimony of Pastor Stockmayer's spiritual calibre could be added others. One such came from his daughter. When she was once asked what kind of man he was at home, she replied, "My father is genuine through and through." The narrator of this incident went on to remark that whoever became better acquainted with him saw that this testimony was true. "They realized that here was a holy man." And again: "The first time that I saw and heard him was in the year 1900 at the first Tersteegensruh Conference. Not only what he said made a deep impression on me, but also the man he was."

—Three Brothers

Contents

PART ONE

- I. Forbearing Love with Our Brethren 9
- II. Christ—Forbearing Love in His Childhood 14
- III. Christ—Forbearing Love with His Mother 22
- IV. Christ—Forbearing Love with His Disciples
 . . . Even Judas! 28
- V. The Mind of Christ 37

PART TWO

- I. A Desert Place 47
- II. Heavenly Songs 50
- III. Seeing God 55
- IV. Habitations of God 58
- V. Grace Which Bringeth Salvation 62
- VI. Giving Christ His Place 68
- VII. The Nature of the Bride 71
- VIII. The Reason for *Revelation* 78
- IX. The Remnant and the Firstfruits 86
- X. The Living Sacrifice 94

Part One

TRIUMPH OF FORBEARING LOVE

The little book of which the following chapters are a somewhat condensed and edited version went to a second edition in England in 1907. It was from a xeroxed copy of this 1907 edition, which was discovered, copied, and generously provided by a dear brother in Tulsa, that this revision was produced.

TRIUMPH OF FORBEARING LOVE

I.

Forbearing Love with Our Brethren

“God . . . gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God, seeing ye have purified your souls in obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently” (I Peter i. 21-22).

The whole Christian life is an exercise of faith, that we may learn to walk, in every circumstance, as seeing Him who is invisible.

The great failure in the history of Israel began when the people came to Samuel and said, “Make us a king to judge us like all the nations”—let us have a visible king. They got weary of waiting by faith in the Lord of hosts, who was ever ready to help His people when they humbled themselves, after He had humbled them. They grew weary, and desired a king whom they could see and who would lead their battles, without being obliged on their part to humble themselves before their God. “Let us have a king,” they cried, “that we may be like all the nations, and that he may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

And now also it is just these shameful desires of our wicked hearts which keep us from depending upon God for everything—these desires to have something, or someone, before our eyes upon which, or upon whom, we may lean for help in critical hours; whereas God sends critical hours on purpose that we may be thrown upon Him and give Him His right place in our daily life and work and conflict. If we have learned more deeply to trust our God and not to lean upon man or circumstances—if we have learned better than ever before to walk and serve as seeing Him who is invisible—I should like to bring before you another subject which is as deeply on my heart. It is that we may see the unseen, invisible Christ in our brother, in our sister.

In some recent meetings in Germany in which I was privileged to take part, the subject was, "Christ in you, the Hope of glory" (Colossians i. 27). Today it came to me that the Apostle does not say, Christ in *us*—in a way that is simply general—but, "Christ in you." He turns to his brethren who had been brought out from among the Gentiles through the living God, and to these he says, "Christ in *you*, the Hope of glory."

Let us stop and consider the form of the expression. Of course, so far as we are children of God, Christ is in us. We cannot be born of God without having Christ in us. Christ must indeed be *formed* in us (Galatians iv. 19), but at the very moment we are born again from above He is in us.

Might it not be a very practical test, and a Biblical and Scriptural way of proving that Christ is in us, to get into the holy habit of always seeing Christ in our brother? Even if he were born again but yesterday, or only an hour ago, it is well for us at the very beginning of his Christian life to see in him, through faith, Christ abiding in his heart by the Spirit of God; a being of whom God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—has taken possession,

Let us learn to look at our brother as seeing in him the unseen Christ, and we shall help him in a mighty way to take heed that Christ may shine in his life. By this means he will become conscious of the holy ground on which he stands and moves and walks, by having become a Christian. We who have for years walked with Christ must help the babe, the child, to awake to his high calling as quickly as possible. By recognizing Christ in him, we shall help him to become conscious of the wonderful secret of his new life; and we must prove ourselves to be men in Christ by not stopping short at what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears of the manifestations of the flesh which we may find in the young Christian. We must be able, through Divine love shed abroad in our hearts and free grace in our lives, to look beyond what is seen; we must love our brother through faith in God, that He may bring out the new creation in him in a beautiful way . . . more beautiful, it may be, than in our own lives.

And, further, instead of looking at our own progress in sanctification—measuring how far we have grown up in Christ—let us rather turn our attention to our young brother

in whose life, perhaps, Christ is not clearly seen by the Church and the world: and by thus considering him and exercising Divine love, we shall help him to take his stand as one in whom Christ lives.

And let us never forget to put the shoes from off our feet when dealing thus with a brother or a sister. It is holy ground—holy because we approach a being in whom Christ dwells unseen—and much may depend on the attitude we take towards him in helping to bring forth in our brother the features of Jesus Christ.

In those last days before His decease, the Greeks came to see Jesus (John xii.20-24), and He answered, You have indeed come at the right time. "The hour is come when the Son of Man shall be glorified." And how? By His sinking down, even into the earth. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."

The life of love which the Lord lived was the only true life of love ever lived on earth. But for Him, there would be no life of love seen in the world—no fruit springing out of the corn of wheat which fell into the earth. The moment came in which the Son of Man should be glorified, and that glory—His fruit in them whose faith and hope would be in God—is unfeigned love of the brethren (I Peter i. 22),

Too long we have expected things of our brethren, and so there have been disappointment, grief, and pain . . . because our hopes and expectations have been in our brethren instead of in God. We have failed to look for the unseen Christ in them. And because we have seen the old nature still existing in the brethren, we have forgotten that they are also fruit of the corn of wheat which has fallen to the ground. On that account we must help them; and we *can* help them by putting our hope and faith for them in God in such a way that unfeigned love—or, as it might be translated—intense, fervent love may spring forth; because our ^{love} ~~life~~ for the brethren no more depends upon *their* character, but upon Divine, heavenly glory.

God gave Christ glory; and if Christ is in me, there must be glory to triumph over shame, over the spirit of judgment, over the flesh in my brother. I may see only the flesh, but when my hope—the crown of glory—and my faith rest in God,

I can overlook what is not like Christ, and by seeing Him who is invisible, despite discouraging experiences with the brethren, I can endure and I can love.

The Incorruptible has power over the corruptible. By faith we overcome the old nature by the new nature given us by Jesus Christ. If the brother cannot let Christ's nature triumph over his own nature, let us older ones, who have known Christ so long, set him the example; and when he finds in us unquenchable love, even when we see little of Christ in him, it will help him to let Christ triumph over him.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obedience to the truth," you can now have faith and hope for your brother, so that Christ the Truth may have liberty in your hearts and lives to show forth His glory. Unquenchable, unfeigned love; love from a heart rooted in the love of God, grounded in Christ—the reigning, ruling Christ! Thus we are called to love one another: "having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed."

Do you feel paralyzed in your love by what you meet of the corruptible in your brother? Do you not perceive that what you see to be corruptible in your brother is allowed to come before you that you may triumph over it by the power of the incorruptible in you, and so that you may manifest love and faith and hope in God?

Do you not understand these things? We have power to love—power to abstain from our own flesh, from being provoked—because we have been begotten again by incorruptible seed, and we know it. But our young brother does not yet know this—he does not yet see the power he has in Christ; but we—who for ten, twenty, thirty years have known our Bible and the heart of God—we see and are being exercised not to stop short at the seen world, but through the continual exercise of faith to look deeper, even into the unseen.

"Having been begotten again" and redeemed, not with corruptible things but with the precious blood of Christ; begotten, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible; God's wonderful power has created a new world within—a new way in which we cease to look to earthly things for happiness. It is the world of light, seen through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth.

Today you discover in your brother things from which you shrink, and which might have the effect of freezing your love to him; but you do not need to have these feelings. When the current approaches you, go back to the ground of your standing in Christ; the Word of God, which has power to keep you; Jesus the living Word; also, the written Word; and let what you have learned in this Holy Book go forth and prove its power in its moment of conflict. When some corruptible thing appears in your brother, which has the tendency to call forth that which is corruptible in you, go back to your regeneration in God; you, being born of the incorruptible, are to overcome evil by the glory of God. *That is glory.*

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the grass." Our love (to the brother) must not depend on the aspect and the sweetness of the flower—the lovely character which attracts our admiration—all this is corruption. "The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the Word of the Lord abideth." And whoever is begotten by this Word of God and has a new nature formed in him can stand the falling of the flower, the withering of the grass.

And if tomorrow you see in your brother things quite different from those to which you were accustomed, your love takes fresh power and springs forth to show your heavenly standing, proving that your faith and hope are in God. When your love grows cold, then you feed the flesh in your brother; but when the love of God in you can stand the test, you help forward the Divine Life in your brother.

"This is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you. Putting away, therefore, all guile, all wickedness, hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings . . . as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (I Peter ii. 1). This salvation is a life of love, and he who loves his brother thus will cease from putting stumbling blocks in his way or being an occasion of his falling. "Love one another from a pure heart fervently."

II.

Christ—Forbearing Love in His Childhood

If we would understand more fully the secret of that love which enables us to see Christ in our brother—even when He has not yet appeared in his life and character—if we would know the secret of forbearance and kindly help, washing his feet (John xiii. 14) in tender hope, let us go back to the Pattern of that love, our great High Priest, the Servant of Jehovah, who came from the heights of glory not to rule and to be ministered unto, but to serve and save His lost ones. He came not only to set us free from our sins through His priestly work on Calvary, but also to save us from those sad and shameful depths of self-life which bring forth self-pleasing and complaining about others because they are not as we have expected and desired. From all of this He came to deliver us; and now, through His grace and by the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, we have power to live in our own homes a life of gentle forbearance even as Christ lived on earth.

Let us not forget, however, that we live in an age in which people think they can imitate Christ in His human life without being regenerated and self-condemned; and, therefore, in such a time as this we need to recognize more clearly than ever our place as lost—as condemned ones—incapable of any good, with no possibility of becoming like Christ unless we are born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

If Jesus Christ in His prayer as our great High Priest asked His Father—and none of His prayers ever failed—that the very love with which the Father loved the Son might be in His disciples, does it not follow that only through His life of forbearance—the power of His own character—in us can we meet and overcome the evil tendencies in others? God gave Him glory that His life, through our faith and hope in Him, might be transmitted to us so that the world might believe that the Father had sent the Son (John xvii. 21).

Therefore, if in dependence upon His Spirit we look into that unique and holy human life of our Saviour, let it not be to stir our emotions, but that step by step we may get some idea—even though a very imperfect one—of what the Lord expects us to be: in childhood, in youth, in manhood, in every age, and in every situation. Let us see by the character of Christ manifested in all kind of circumstances what we may become in our human life and what He has a right to expect, since He laid down His life for us. Ministering as a Prophet . . . and then as High Priest . . . He laid down His life that this very life of Christ—and nothing else—should be in us, so that before angels and principalities and powers it might be proved that His death was **not a failure**. In the grain of wheat which falls into the ground and dies (John xii. 24) there is the seed of other grains in which there is no difference from the first grain. The fruit which is produced always corresponds to the seed from which it springs.

And if, dear brethren, many of us have perhaps never fully realized this holy truth, let us understand that every shortcoming and every failure to live like Christ springs from this one great mistake—we have tried to become like Him without having first come to bankruptcy in ourselves and without losing confidence in our own moral goodness, which cannot bring forth Christ. Until we come to that point, Christ can never, through His Spirit, impart to us miserable, proud, detestable ones His character of love and forbearance. The fact is we have failed before God—failed in our own eyes and in the eyes of all around us. How truly have all our surroundings failed to reproduce in us the character—the Divine nature—of our Lord Jesus Christ!

God does not share His glory with us; therefore He is obliged to bring us from failure to failure—not however to end in discouragement, but that we may come to condemn and abhor ourselves. Then when we have found there is no more anything to hope for in ourselves, we learn to come in a new way—perhaps after a long career of Christian profession—as undone ones at His feet; ready now, on the ground of our dreadful experience, to be introduced into the Divine simplicity of a life like Christ by the Holy Spirit, who never ceases to work even when we are halting at the first steps of Christ's redemption. He introduces us, through the Holy

Scriptures, into the simplicity of Divine secrets when we are yielded up to Him in full despair about ourselves and in despair of bringing forth anything worthy of Christ and of God, Then we learn how all must be done by Him in us and that the Holy Ghost waits to show His power to transform us into the image of Christ, even through our very failures. There is, however, a limit to our failures; they must not continue always.

Let me say again, as we dwell upon the holy, precious, unique life of Jesus Christ, it is not to stir up only admiration and emotion. Worship? Yes; but practical worship, which involves ready obedience—not a contemplation which would allow of our living as we have done up to the present time, but a coming to the decision, “Lord, Thou shalt have my life to its very depths: the secret concerns of my life are all for Thee. Take them all and save me by Thy blood. Give me Thy pardon, Thy salvation, Thy free grace . . . that henceforth Thou mayest find in me Thy fruit and not a poor, miserable life lost in self. Hitherto I have been all for self; but now, through Thee, I am all for Thee. Take what is Thine own; I will no more rob Thee of Thy rights.” In robbing Him, we rob ourselves and cherish corruption; in yielding ourselves to Him our life is renewed by Him from day to day.

Well, brethren, God can wait. After the fall, He sought to bring man back to Him by judgment through the flood; but even after the flood man fell deeper still into corruption. God then called forth Abraham, and in him, His friend, God began a new chapter in the history of redemption. Later on He gave the Law through Moses. Then Israel failed—the Law failed—everything failed. At last God found in His own Son the One ready to be sanctified, and He sanctified Him when He sent Him into the world. And in His whole life the Son sanctified Himself to God; i.e., He put Himself at the disposal of His Father and gave God His ear, He was in the world for God. In order to bring man back to Himself, God needed one man who would be at His disposal in everything.

That Man was the Lord Jesus Christ, He was the Servant of Jehovah. He sanctified Himself that we might be sanctified to God (John xvii. 19), and through His broken body and His shed blood the Holy Ghost forms from the very life of Christ a new people, born of God—born from above.

Shall the Lord be disappointed again . . . and that by us? Never. Are we not saved and brought back to God that in every detail of our lives we should live to God? In the lines of the life and work of His Son we behold the lines in which the Holy Ghost will reproduce in us the character and the features of the Person of Christ, and where these lines are emphasized our attention will be awakened to perceive things in the life of Christ which are not reproduced in us. By the lovingkindness of God we are thus awakened to draw from the new life . . . and by His grace and power enabled to go forward and walk in it.

It is a blessed life . . . but it is one of suffering. It is suffering when we do not meet Christ in our brother—it is suffering to be misunderstood by our brother—and to meet in him something that is not Christ. O, may we never bring such suffering to the hearts of our dear brethren and sisters; but rather, when we meet with anything in them that is not Christ which causes us to suffer—let our suffering lead to tender prayer and love, with firm faith and hope for them in God.

That is the point: let the very lack we find in our brother provoke in us a new and deeper manifestation of the love and forbearance which is always to be found in Christ. His was a life of suffering, for a life of love is a life of suffering.

In the early part of my Christian life I became acquainted with the writings of Alex. Vinet, and there was one word of his amongst many others which went deeply into my heart. It was this: “You may gauge the depth of a human life according to its measure of love and suffering.” Your life has eternal value so far as there is in it love and suffering. The two cannot be separated,

When once for all the Lord put His hand on His chosen vessel, Saul of Tarsus, He sent Ananias with this message: “I will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name’s sake” (Acts ix. 16). It is one of the characteristics—the Divine mark—of a man truly filled with the Spirit, that he does not shrink from suffering. Paul was faithful to his first call; and as we trace his life even to his old age (when he wrote the epistle to the Philippians), we find how true he always was to that first call.

When in the present day there are so many who run after more of the power of the Holy Ghost—more of the power of the resurrection—we are constrained to ask, “For what purpose?” Paul also asked, and yearned to know more of the power of Christ’s resurrection, but it was to the end that he might enter more deeply into “the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death” (Philippians iii, 10).

We are fruitful for others only so far as we are able to suffer and to sink deeper into nothingness in fellowship with Christ; and, therefore, all the lack of resemblance to His character in the character of our brethren and sisters should only be, in the hands of God, a means of bringing us to the place of suffering and of death, in order that we may bring forth fruit to eternity in their lives. Let us have a holy jealousy for a deep life—a life of eternal value—no matter how great the suffering; for we have thereby in return for our suffering a deeper knowledge of Divine forbearance—a fuller understanding of our Lord and Christ.

There is a word which Jesus spoke to His disciples, to which a pastor in French Switzerland has called my attention (Matthew xvii. 17): “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you?” Think of these strong words addressed to His disciples! He had to be tried to the uttermost by His own so that we might learn the secret of forbearing love towards those with whom it is often the most difficult to maintain gentle forbearance—those which are nearest to us, members of our own families.

Thus even before Jesus had to bear with His band of twelve disciples, He had to bear with the members of His own family, even with His mother. He was never anything but a tender Son, manifesting . . . even when on the cross suffering for all mankind . . . His most tender care for her—His mother according to the flesh.

But He had to bear with her even in His early childhood. When He was at the age of twelve years, that dear mother could not follow her Son, for she had not followed the Divine lines into which she had been led by the Word of God. She had believed the Divine call to become the mother of Jesus, and it came to pass through faith, “Blessed is she that

believed” (Luke i. 45). She *had* believed, but she did not *continue* to believe.

For instance, after the arrival and worship of the shepherds, those who heard their message went away—and the most glorious things can soon be forgotten—but “Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke ii. 19). For weeks and months she pondered them, but in the current of the years she failed to follow . . . and thus to understand why this Son, unlike any other boy in Nazareth, was always so anxious never to miss an opportunity of hearing the Holy Scripture—the Word of God.

If Mary had followed on in faith, she never would have sought the Boy Jesus among her kinfolks and acquaintances when He was missed (Luke ii. 44). And because she did this, He could and did rebuke her, saying: “How is it that ye sought Me? Did ye not know that I must be in the things of My Father?” Mary and Joseph might have known—they had had twelve years in which to observe this Child,

O, how easy it is to forget the holiest remembrances of childhood, the awakening in manhood, the work of the Holy Spirit! And such will always be forgotten so long as we are not fully awakened and the Holy Ghost is not free in us to glorify Christ. Mary was indeed right in seeking Jesus, but she should have sought Him first in the Temple! She might have known where to find Him. “Wist ye not that I must be about the things of My Father’s House?” He had proved it. It was not the first time He had sat at the feet of teachers; it must have been impossible to draw Him away from the Word of God. And we need to comprehend these things in order to understand the visit of Jesus to Nazareth after His baptism with the Holy Ghost (Luke iv. 16), It was a very solemn moment when He appeared in Nazareth,

Why could He do so very few miracles there? Because these people of Nazareth had been privileged as no other people then on earth. And Mary had been privileged as no other woman . . . to become the mother of Jesus, but she had not always pondered the doings and the sayings of her Son; she had got accustomed to all these things—accustomed to seeing Him at the feet of the Rabbis. And all the population of Nazareth, who had seen this Boy grow up to manhood, had become accustomed to seeing that He was so unlike any-

one else; they did not stop to ponder over His life, though their hearts must have "burned within them" as no others in all Galilee.

And so the Lord Jesus had to tell them that as in the days of Elijah and Elisha God had to seek beyond the frontiers of Palestine for widows to be helped and lepers to be healed, even so had it come to pass in Nazareth. "He could do there no mighty . . . works because of their unbelief" (Mark vi. 5, 6). They had become accustomed to the wonderful things which were going on before their eyes, and thus their hearts were hardened.

O, the suffering of Christ on earth, when even as a Boy He was not understood by His own mother! This passage in Luke ii, is the only record of His boyhood; and, seeing this, it is most important we should dwell on this subject. It is a revelation of His youth, which was indeed a youth of suffering. He had to bear with the unbelief of His own family and of His own city; He was like a stranger in His own land, going through suffering after suffering.

O friends, let *us* learn to be strangers in our own homes, considering it the highest privilege of our life if the Lord permits us to enter into the lines of His life and have fellowship with Him. Let us welcome every opportunity of giving Christ His place in us . . . letting Him live out His life in us through suffering, even from a mother who does not understand why we read our Bibles so much and go so often to meetings in order to study the will of God.

Let us learn to persevere when God *really* calls us, as He did Jesus at the age of twelve when He went up to the Temple at Jerusalem to study His Father's Word without regard to the claims of His earthly relatives . . . although so soon after that He went down with them and came to Nazareth; and He was subject unto them. "And His mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

O that dear mother! How she had neglected (through the twelve years) to keep the sayings of the shepherds and to ponder them in her heart (Luke ii. 19), till she was awakened by her Son, to whom she said, "Why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." "My father? Mother! hast thou forgotten this is no child of Joseph? I am at the feet of My Father—how is it

that ye sought Me? that thou sayest, 'Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing'? Wist ye not that I must be about the things of My Father?"

O, let us learn from this Child to put everything in its right place: obedient to our parents as we should be, but never disobedient to our Lord when we have a call from our heavenly Father. He will undertake every responsibility.

III.

Christ—Forbearing Love with His Mother

Let us look nearer, and closer still, at the life of our blessed Lord on earth, that we may learn more deeply from His childhood, youth, and manhood what He alone can teach—the secret of His forbearing love—that love which looks beyond the visible. With this in view, let us again compare verse 19 with verse 51 in Luke ii., and we shall see how the Child Jesus had no one in His human life upon whom He could lean—not even His own mother. Children always need someone to lean upon, but Jesus had no one, even in His childhood.

For in His own mother He had an object for the exercise of forbearance, instead of one upon whom He could lean. Mary, though blessed among and privileged above women, was still a daughter of the Old Covenant; and He who was her Son according to the flesh had to open the way for her, as well as for every other human being, into the New Covenant for a new abiding, new enduring, such as no one in the Old Covenant had fully expected.

The Old Covenant could not produce the power to abide in Divine lessons—that of “the law written in the heart.” In so far as we are not able to retain Divine lessons, taught us by God alone either in a meeting with other Christians or in secret, when He lays bare the depths of our being . . . so far we prove ourselves to be children of the Old Covenant.

The distinctive characteristic of new Covenant people is this: they have found, through the Holy Ghost, the power to abide in union with Christ and to enter into a deeper knowledge of the Father-heart of God than Old Covenant people had. Not even John the Baptist knew the secret of abiding in the holy revelations he had received,

But the Apostle Paul was one of these abiding people; and so he could say to King Agrippa, “I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision” (Acts xxvi, 19). Whom and what he had seen on that journey to Damascus remained with him;

and from that moment Jesus had become his Master, Lord, and King—the Ruler of his heart and life . . . and in such a way that Paul could write to those at Philippi, after he had summed up the virtues of Christian character, in all simplicity and true humility without in any way glorifying himself: “These things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you” (Philippians iv. 8, 9).

Was he not a man deeply taught in Christ, that he could thus speak? He had so learned to abide in Christ as to lose consciousness of himself, and he could indeed say, writing by the Holy Ghost: “I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and that which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians ii. 20). Thus the life of Christ in him . . . and the power to abide therein . . . was an object-lesson to the Church of the glory of the New Covenant.

And it is this which we need to understand more deeply. We need to cease from crying after the Holy Ghost, after more faith, after more abiding; from going to one conference after another, always with the same cry, weeping over lost time and lost blessings and lost opportunities! Though the power to abide did not exist under the Old Covenant, it is given us in Christ, the loving One, who has given everything we need to make us partakers of His Divine nature and reproductions of the life He lived on earth. He lived this life in order that he might have it reproduced in us through His Spirit. The Spirit cannot but reproduce the life of Christ in those who yield themselves to Him, renouncing their wicked self to sit at His feet and spell such lessons as only the Holy Ghost can teach, bringing into captivity every thought and aspiration to the obedience of Christ.

Mary, the dear mother of Jesus, did not know this—she was still a daughter of the Old Covenant; and though chosen from on high, yet she was still a subject for forbearance—the forbearance of her own Child. For years, even before His first visit to Jerusalem, He must have had many opportunities of bearing with her, with the whole household, and with the city.

Oh! there were moments in a Moses' life and Elijah's life—those blessed representatives of the Old Covenant—

which led to heights to which even the Christian life may attain, but which lacked the power that enabled either to abide or to endure. *This* is the glory of the New Covenant, that provision has been made for all to abide in the presence of God under the most impossible circumstances.

He who opened the way to the New Covenant came down from a place on high and descended so low, even to the lowest parts of the earth, in order that the highest thing—far beyond any human horizon—might be brought forth in His human life by the Holy Ghost. In the human character of Jesus Christ, a way has been opened by which these very things might become ours and shine through us into this dark world, revealing God's love.

O, how Mary had forgotten and neglected to observe the wondrous things which must have happened before her eyes in the life of her Son! The people of Nazareth did not—could not—perceive their meaning, but Mary had the secret of His life . . . and Joseph, too, in part . . . but Mary more particularly.

How, then, did she fail to understand the purpose of His life when He came the first time to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast? How could Mary have said, when she found Him sitting in the midst of the doctors in the Temple: "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing"? She had never before met in Him anything that looked like disobedience or cause for sorrow, but how could she say, "Thy father and I"? No wonder that, as it were, He returns the rebuke: "How is it that ye sought Me?" Mother, did you not know? Wist ye not?

Verily they were guilty; they had had plenty of opportunities to know where this Child was at home, and when you seek after a child you must seek it in the most likely place to find it—in its home. Mary! can you ignore the home of this Child? Before He was born you knew He came from on high, and you could see with your mother-eye, as this Child awakened to consciousness, that He awakened to the consciousness of coming from somewhere else than an earthly home.

No sooner had she weaned Him than she might have seen—for a mother's eye sees as no other—that this Child was not like other children. He sought for other milk than

that which He drank from His mother's breasts; it was the milk of the Word of God. Born of the Spirit, it was His very nature to seek His food in the pure milk of the Word of God,

Mary! did you not know this? Surely, before His twelfth year—before He found His way to the feet of the doctors in the Temple—you must have seen how He longed for . . . and how He used every opportunity of hearing and of learning . . . the Scriptures from the Rabbis in Nazareth. Did you not know?

"Wist ye not that I must be in My Father's House?" Or, more literally—"the things of My Father?" Not the buildings . . . for in later years, when looking at the beauty of the buildings, Jesus said that they must be destroyed. The Boy Jesus was engaged with something more: it was the "things" of His Father which claimed His heart. He had met within the buildings with men who could interpret Scripture, who could open up the Bible, and of whom He could ask questions.

It was the Feast of the Passover when He first came to Jerusalem. As He looked at the lamb slain in remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, may He not have said within Himself, "Does that signify Me? and that twenty-one years hence I shall be called to fulfil Scripture by coming again to Jerusalem, as a lamb led to the slaughter, to be slain for the sin of the world?"

We cannot know if such thoughts crossed His mind, nor how far such horizons had already broken in upon Him; but this we know, that as a Child He knew the Scriptures and that little by little, as "He grew and waxed strong, becoming filled with wisdom," the consciousness of whence He came and for what purpose He came broke through—perhaps at first like distant shadows—into His life.

We cannot judge how quickly the Spirit could reveal to that pure and holy Child—a Child not begotten by a human father, but by the Holy Ghost in a virgin's womb—how soon the Holy Ghost could introduce such a Child into the depths of Scripture. We do not know; but one thing we can know: the Word of God was milk of which He drank more eagerly than that which had come from His mother's breasts.

Why, then, did Mary fail to follow Him into the Temple? She had had hundreds of opportunities of knowing where this Child cared most to spend His time and where He was

most likely to be found when He was lost. "She had (for a time) kept and pondered in her heart" the message of the shepherds; but now she had forgotten!

And among the kinfolks and all the friends who went in and out of Joseph's workshop, were there none to awaken Mary's memory and say to her: "You must seek the Child in the Temple; you know He is always at the feet of the Rabbis. Go back to the Temple." There were none, not even among all her kinfolks and acquaintances—none to point to the Temple! They went backwards and forwards looking for Him—here and there—before going into the Temple, "And when they found Him not, they returned to Jerusalem seeking Him."

So now we perceive how much this dear mother must have been an object for her Son's forbearing love, who by His exceptional birth must have had the most tender and delicate of instincts and who by His Divinely awakened needs was impelled to seek His strength in the Word of God and not in the words of men . . . being taught the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit, through whom He had been begotten. How much He must have had to forbear even with His mother, and therefore much more with Joseph—who was looked upon as His father—and how much He must have had to bear with His brethren and sisters according to the flesh, and with His kinfolks and acquaintances!

Even as a Child He was a stranger in His home on earth; and when at last He found His heavenly home in the Scriptures, and the Rabbis were unable finally to answer His questions, then the poor mother appears with her complaints: "Son, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing!" If anyone in the world should have known, surely she should . . . that Joseph was not His father! "Mother! Wist ye not that I must be in the things of My Father . . . and that He is not Joseph? Mother! Wist ye not?"

It was faithfully, not angrily, spoken. How much He must have had to forbear in this way till He reached the age of twelve years and until Mary awoke to what the Child was saying and saw how wrong she was to rebuke Him for being at home in His Father's House, drinking of the milk of Holy Scripture.

And how beautifully He went down to Nazareth from the place where He had found His true home! However interesting the answers of the Rabbis may have been, still there were questions which they could not meet—questions undoubtedly bearing on the sacrifice; and yet, even through their failure to meet these questions, He received something—some rays of light by which He was strengthened through His first visit to Jerusalem. Thus when He returned to Nazareth, He took the position of an obedient child, returning to His school of forbearing love. "He was subject unto them. . . ."

Jesus loved His mother to the end, even in the sanctuary of His redeeming work. When nailed to His cross, He never forgot His mother; and even through the pangs of death as Redeemer—even then He could not forget her. She, as well as John, must be cared for; His mother, His own mother, must also be baptized in the Spirit of God and enter as well as others into the glory of the New Covenant.

Brethren, whatever failures may have characterized the past, take your stand afresh, alone in the presence of your loving, faithful God; and do not let Him go until you are broken as Jacob was at the brook Jabbok in all your efforts, in all your natural ways of looking at Divine things. He will bless and teach you and give you also a new name, laying hold of the springs of your life; and then, as He thus becomes your Guarantee, henceforth you shall have full guidance and His strength. Do not let Him go till you have met the Living God, eye to eye, in such a way that you cannot but cross the threshold of the two Covenants, and thus be introduced into the Most Holy Place by the hand of your great High Priest, recognizing that He has laid His pure and mighty hand upon you and that He will keep you as His own forevermore.

IV.

Christ—Forbearing Love with His Disciples . . . Even Judas!

We have already looked, in the spirit of worship and adoration, through the page of our Bible which gives a glance into the childhood of our Saviour, and we have seen something of the lessons of forbearance which He learned and lived out in His earthly home in relationship with His mother, brethren, and fellow-citizens.

That was the first part of His life. In every lesson—every class through which our Saviour went—He learned to the utmost all He had to learn . . . no matter what it cost. The Father had prepared beforehand the lessons which Jesus had to learn through suffering in this early part of His life.

We cannot desire to learn heavenly lessons and at the same time desire to be spared suffering. Christ, “though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” He was not baptized by the Holy Ghost until He had learned obedience in the school of His home life.

Thus equipped, He began at the age of thirty a new theme—the establishment of His promised kingdom upon earth. From the time of its rejection by the elders of the Jews, He spoke to the multitudes in parables and taught the hidden kingdom in the hearts and lives of His disciples. Through their first labors as learning ones—learning even as Jesus learned His lessons before His baptism by the Spirit—His disciples also had their preparatory school before Pentecost.

How many dear ones there are today—even children of God—who have never learned, through and through, the lessons of gentle forbearance in their homes! And—it is a dreadful thing to say—there have been even those who fled from home to become missionaries, because they found the lessons of suffering there too hard to learn!

How can God commit to us heavenly things, if we are not faithful first in earthly things? How can we stand the

test? O, do not think there can be one exercise—one opportunity—of forbearance too many with those in our households who do not yet know the Lord. There is not a single lesson unnecessary in order that we may learn to stand more firmly on the battlefield of the Kingdom of God. The powers of darkness are ever ready to bring forth what they can of flesh in us to hinder the advance of God’s Kingdom in and by us; let us then be ever on the watch in the present time.

If it is needful to have people in every department of active life fully trained for their work, how much more is it necessary in the Kingdom of God to have men and women fully equipped—people who have been trained in the preliminary school of daily life at home. *There* invaluable lessons may be learned through the opportunities of forbearing with those whose characters are antagonistic to our ways of life and thought. Before we can convert souls outside our doors, it is necessary that these indoors—in our homes—should see the power of God in us prevailing over the power of darkness in them.

To this end, where there is the power of darkness—of self-will in others—it *must* come to the surface, and we must feel it and be willing to suffer under it in order to overcome it by the power of God. The powers of darkness most be manifested in order that the powers of light and love may withstand and overcome and prevail against them.

Such a school has many grades. First we learn through our failures and our own inability to endure the tests . . . that the Lord cannot clothe us with His power to forbear in love till He has made us naked in our own eyes—that is His preparatory school. Having learned our lessons there, we can be taken further on . . . from strength to strength. But we are never to look upon God’s strength as our own property: “Power belongeth unto God.”

By the grace of God and through His Spirit we will now follow the Lord in His trials and in His sufferings—in His forbearing and enduring love towards His disciples.

Let me first, however, bring before you a passage in Holy Scripture which seems to me to reveal the secret of His power to endure and never to be offended.

“And it came to pass in those days that he went out into the mountain to pray, and he continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles” (Luke vi. 12, 13).

Then follows the names of the twelve chosen.

A whole night in prayer! and *then* He called the twelve. Here we have the clue to many things in our Saviour's life. It is just this: before He came into contact with His disciples—with trials through men and circumstances—He always settled things with His Father first on the mountain top in prayer.

And this is the holy secret into which we . . . slowly, but deeper and deeper, led by Him . . . walk in “newness of life.” Thus we learn always to take our stand in God afresh every morning—before we begin the day, before we meet with others—in such a way that during the day, as we come in contact with friends or enemies, we may have the Lord between them and us.

Then when times of testing come through fellow-Christians, in which questions such as these arise: “Have I not made a mistake in entering into work with such a one, who does not understand me and who cannot bear with me?” you must be able then to call to mind holy hours spent alone with God—hours in which you settled all with God before you offered for the mission field, before you went forth with fellow-workers.

Then you cannot but trust your God and be free to say to Him: “Lord, Thou knowest I did not come out by any impulse of my own; I did not come out with such and such a one because he pleased me or was sympathetic with me, but because Thou didst choose for me. It is Thy care, O Lord.”

And if you find that the fellow-worker from whom you expected something else cannot bear with you, then learn yourself to bear with him and die for him, in the strength and in the love of thy Lord.

This was the secret of our Saviour's life: He trusted in His Father's love and might. Our Lord did nothing of Him-

self; He spoke not His own words; but as the Father taught Him, so He spoke. Therefore He could go through everything without being touched by anything, doing always the things which pleased His Father (John viii. 28, 29). He had found in the secret of His Father's heart—in the will of God, which was His sanctuary—the power to wait and the power to go forward without understanding . . . waiting till His Father opened out the horizons of His life further on. He walked as Man by faith in God.

And thus His Father could tell Him the history of the Samaritan woman and give Him the key to her heart; He could give Him the name of the man hidden in the tree on His way to Jericho. And yet He could remain dependent as Man—Son of Man, a human being—that He might learn obedience . . . learn to wait till His Father opened up the way.

What was the plan of the life of Jesus throughout His three years' ministry? A very simple one: “I came to do the will of him that sent me” (John vi. 38). Take, for instance, the guidance given Him when His disciples returned from their first missionary tour. Naturally they desired to speak to their Lord.

This was a good thing, and it is just what all evangelists should do after they have labored; they should go to the Lord and tell Him all things they have done, so that there may be no exaltation or depression.

And what did Jesus do? He took His disciples and withdrew with them apart. Doubtless they thought to have the Lord to themselves, but the multitudes followed; and He welcomed them and spoke to them of the Kingdom of God and healed them that had need of healing. Then the twelve came and wanted Him to send the multitude away, but Jesus did what the Father had revealed to Him—He taught and healed and fed them all.

And so from day to day, from one opportunity to another, either in personal conversation near Jacob's well or in public preaching—in present or approaching service—He awaited orders . . . standing still for two days even when He knew the sisters were in agony at Bethany about Lazarus—even then He could wait! Waiting . . . waiting till the cloud moved on before Him, whatsoever the Father told Him, that He did.

Let us now return to the calling of the twelve, comparing John vi. 64 with Luke vi. 12-16: "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not and who it was that should betray Him." What "beginning"?

We read in the beginning of the Gospel of John that the Lord "knew what was in man." Since, therefore, the Lord "knew what was in man" and He did "whatever the Father told Him," may we not infer that in that night of prayer on the mountain top, when the Father brought before the Son the names of the twelve whom He should choose as disciples, they were not chosen by Jesus but by the Father? He simply fulfilled the command; He carried out what the Father had told Him on the mount.

And since the Holy Ghost had given Him power to look down into the human heart more deeply than any one else could see, might there not have been a shrinking back . . . or at least a look to the Father which said, "Even Judas"? We do not know. It rests between the Father and the Son. But since the Saviour knew from the beginning who it was that should betray Him, must it not have been suffering of the deepest kind in His heart and life to know that one who should eat bread with Him for three years would lift up his heel against Him?

O, the little needle wounding you from the hand of your nearest friend! How much deeper the wound than the deepest from the hand of an enemy! In His own circle Jesus could bear to have a serpent with Him; the powers of hell were close to Him, so that He might manifest indeed all the powers of heaven!

And what are the powers of heaven? Forbearing love—love for all, without partiality, without exception. Not only was Jesus tried by the person of Judas; but if I understand aright, there was the still greater trial of seeing that all His disciples were in danger of being poisoned by this man and carried off on false lines.

When the Lord Jesus found in Mary, the sister of Martha, one whom He could lead through lesson after lesson because she was ready to lay aside everything to hear His Word, He also found that she had grasped what none of His disciples did—that He should die for sinners. She entered into the very thing which they did not understand; she bowed

down and poured forth all the love of her heart to anoint Him for His burial. And not in vain; for He said, "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached, that which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." She saw that Jesus must go to Calvary, and she anointed Him accordingly.

Then arose Judas! And he said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" And he carried away with him the whole company of the apostles, even John: "When his disciples saw it (the anointing by Mary), they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?" Does it not seem, therefore, that Judas got all the disciples over on his side, and there was not one—not even John—who withstood him! "And they murmured against the woman." Only the Master protected her. She understood His mind.

You see, things come out when they are fully ripe.

But do not think that this was the only time the Lord had to suffer from His disciples. Let us look at John xiii. 31: "When therefore [Judas] had gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." Perhaps this was the supreme test of the whole three years of forbearance with Judas, which the Lord must go through victoriously before He could go through Gethsemane and Calvary. Not once in all that time had He said to Judas, "Go away, leave Me if you will, rather than lead My loved ones astray; you are an enemy, and it does not honor Me to have you in My company. You are a danger to the rest of My disciples."

I wonder with which disciple Judas was associated when Jesus sent forth the two and two. He was a constant danger to them all, not only to His own—those to whom He had given the words of His Father—but also to them who should become disciples when His life had been laid down. For all Judas was a standing danger, and yet Jesus was never put out by him—never offended.

O the more I read John xiii., the more I understand how Peter could not bear to let his Master wash his feet. But Judas! how could he bear it? I am sure this cold water must have been like boiling water on his feet. And Jesus did all carefully; for whatever the Lord did, He did well. Yet Judas had the dreadful courage to endure and allow all this; he could

even bear to take the supper of his Lord. And *then*—and not till then—Satan entered into him, Until that time there might have been hope for him; but the moment came when it was finished and Satan claimed his own. *Then* only, Jesus said, “That thou doest, do quickly”; and he went out!

And in that supreme moment of His life, after three years’ testing, Jesus could say, “Now is the Son of Man glorified!” Never by a look or word had Jesus repulsed him or failed in this test; He bore the cross to the very end, bearing and forbearing up to full consummation, even with Judas.

That is glory, beloved brethren—not to mutilate the hour of trial, but to persevere to the end in love, forbearing even with a Judas . . . and not looking at him as such, however trying he may be—however painful to meet with him.

Let us not see Judas in our brother. Let us rather say: “If my Lord could bear with Judas till the work of patience was consummated in Him (for patience must have its perfect work), I know, whatever test may come to me, He has overcome and will give me grace to bear it. I cannot overcome it, but He has brought forth His love in my heart; and when the love of God is shed forth by the Holy Ghost, then I have the same love with which the Father loved His Son . . . and He in me can overcome. And as our Lord looked not to the measure of His forbearing love, but simply looked to His Father’s love dwelling in Him, so may we depend on Him and prove the sufficiency of His love dwelling in us. “Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help us in every time of need” (Hebrews iv. 6).

Let us pour out our hearts before Him; let us say to Him frankly, “Lord, though it looks as if I had mistaken my field of labor, and my companion, yet I have let Thee go before me; and I know that all will come out right at last—even the very things which now seem a hindrance and not a help. Thou knowest, Lord, what Thou doest. I see now; I had hoped to work *for* Thee, and I need Thy word *in* me. Thou hast first to teach me lessons of Divine love and patience with my brother and my sister. I cannot doubt the rightness of Thy way. Even if Thou dost not call me to work for Thee, I know Thou carest for Thy own and wilt work in me a perfect work of patience. I bow and worship Thee, and I thank Thee that

in my fellow-worker I see now not a hindrance, but a chosen instrument to bring out Thy patience in me. I thought I had it, but now I do not think so.”

For we may think we have patience . . . and yet may have to find it is not that which can overcome human weakness in others. Say to the Lord: “And now I ask Thee to let me go forth with that love with which Thou hast loved me, a poor, undone sinner! Now I worship Thee . . . and will no more hinder Thee from carrying out Thy glory in me; and as Thou hast glorified Thy Son by enabling Him, through the Holy Ghost, to carry out Thy work of patience and forbearing love to the *end*, so let it be even in me. Though I do not understand this way of glory—the mystery, the awful solemnity—in learning patience with my brother and with others whom I have looked upon as poor saints, now I see what a poor saint I myself am, and I praise Thee for Thy patience all the way.”

Well, brethren, now we see what the Lord accepted—took home to His heart—from His Father’s hands in that night spent on the mountain top in prayer! When He received the names of His twelve disciples, He saw what was before Him and what He would have to bear in those three years; and this is only an example of every step He took throughout His life. He listened to His Father; He walked with God: He never took a step without clear and heavenly guidance. He walked in heavenly light through this dark world . . . amid the doubting company of His own disciples. The calls of His beloved ones, Martha and Mary, did not go through His heart before they had gone through His Father’s heart, so that no womanly sympathy might deter or draw Him back from the path of simple obedience. He was in the world for God.

He could forbear because in His eyes no mistakes of others were a hindrance to the Kingdom of God. No Judas could hinder. All things in His eyes were constantly and gloriously working together for good—for the carrying out of God’s purposes. He saw God in everything, even in the attacks of the Pharisees and the powers of darkness which beset His path during His three years’ ministry. Everything was to Him a manifestation of God’s will . . . to bring to the full the things to be overcome by Him through suffering and

through death. He was the Lamb of God, laying down His life through renouncing His will in everything—every plan in His work for the Kingdom—thinking, doing nothing of Himself.

That was the great work which He did in the three years, and it gave its full and true power to the sacrifice on Calvary. There was no spot in His life or in His love—no looking back. He went through every test victoriously. And so He was the Lamb without blemish, proved by God and proved before the eyes of the disciples, Judas included, as One whom the powers of darkness could not keep from accomplishing the work He had been sent to do. Through such a school He lived the life of the Lamb, and it is this which gives to us the full value of His redeeming love.

He carried out the heavenly life, and that is forbearing love. Now then, who will take the heritage of the Lord? I am not now asking you to offer for missionary service; I call you to something higher. Who will enter this life of the Lamb? Who wills that the Lord may bring out in him the character of the Lamb?

If you can trust Him for this, you may be sure there will then be no need for human calls to service. When the call comes from above, you will say to Him:

“Lord, here I am! Thou hast brought before me the heavenly vision; it has taken hold of my heart. Bind me now to Thee, that Thy own life—Thy Lamb-life—may come out in me . . . at home, in the mission field, or wheresoever Thou dost call me, till Thou shalt call me higher up!”

V.

The Mind of Christ

Let me by way of introduction call your attention to a story in the Old Testament—the history of the woman of Shunem and the resurrection of her son (II Kings iv). We get a glimpse into much which may have taken place in this woman’s heart when Elisha opened before her new prospects—new horizons in her life.

We cannot doubt but that she was a true Israelitish woman, and no Israelitish woman could bear to accept as a natural thing that she should be childless. It was a reproach to her. We know how the mother of Samuel, after years of the same reproach, rejoiced at the prospect of having a son whom she might give to the Lord.

And we may well infer that this Shunammite had suffered for years possibly before she could endure the reproach of having no son. At last she had accepted her life under these conditions and had become resigned. No wonder, therefore, that she shrank and feared when the prophet spoke of new prospects which revived her old desires.

“Do not speak of these things,” she seemed to say. And why not? Was it that she dreaded to face possibilities which might again end in disappointment? Such thoughts suggest themselves when the disappointment that she feared really came and her son was dead . . . and we hear her words. Feeling her position more intolerable than before, she reproaches the prophet thus: “Did I desire a son of my lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?”

In referring to this Shunammite, I want to draw your attention to something else. It is this. How many of us have drawn back when in holy seasons of our life new, heavenly horizons began to break in—new possibilities of a deeper life of fellowship with God? And like the Shunammite we have said, “Do not speak to me of such things! I have passed nights before the Lord, longing to come out of a deadened Christian life which I knew could not be according to the will

of God; and yet, do not speak to me of fresh prospects. Let the new horizons fade away, and let me settle down as best I can in the present state of things rather than speak to me of that which my past experience has proved impossible.”

Brethren, we may fear and shrink, as new prospects open up before us, because we fear that we shall never realize them; but remember, God never deceives a human heart when once He sets before it Divine possibilities. And all our shortcomings and yearning cries are but His preparations to bring to judgment our sinful nature, by which we have sought to take Divine things into our hands. God must bring us down until at last He can bless us with heavenly light and life, in which we cannot be deceived; that is eternal life. Therefore let us not doubt and fear; He has never promised anything which He has not guaranteed to perform in all its fullness in your life and mine.

Let us now look at Philippians ii. 1-18, one of the central portions of the New Testament, expressly formulating the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in regard to what He has purposed to produce in us—a life of love. “God is love,” and we have been created in His image. This being the case, there must be some way to bring us back to God’s first thought for us; i.e., we must be brought to know afresh what it is to present to the universe the image of God—which is love.

The Apostle begins: “If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions”—if these are not exhausted—“fulfil ye my joy.” He does not say, If there is *in your heart* any more comfort; but he asks, as it were, “Are there no more comforts in Christ, no more consolations of love, no more fellowship in the Spirit?” Shall we, who have received the Holy Ghost, find in our hearts fellowship of love, tenderness, and compassion for others? O, let us never seek in our hearts these inexhaustible treasures of His grace, but let us learn more and more to take what there is in Christ.

Christ in us, we in Christ . . . not we in ourselves! And the more we advance and grow up in Christ, the less we shall be tempted to seek for anything in ourselves. What is it which characterizes our Holy Bible and proves that these Epistles were written by the Holy Ghost? They always point to Christ; that is the law of the Spirit.

Therefore, whenever we find in the writings of the apostles messages which concern our calling as saints, or which condemn us in our walk, we also find that the possibility of attainment or renewal is provided in Christ and not in us. O, brethren, it is by these elementary lessons that we shall grow to be men in Christ, ceasing all our efforts to find anything in ourselves—learning to live simply in Him.

“If there is, therefore, any comfort in Christ, any consolation of love, any fellowship of the Spirit, any tender mercies and compassions—fulfil ye my joy”: show before the churches that we have learned to take things by the Spirit of God—obeying the Spirit by taking out of Christ all we need. He is the secret Source of all the tenderness, patience, and forbearance we need in us as instruments in the building up of the Body of Christ. He is the Head, and from the Head the members draw their life. No member receives for itself alone; the life must circulate. The holy oil of life and love descends from the Head down even to the last extremity for the little ones—for the babes in Christ.

O, these things lead on to heavenly glory far beyond our thoughts, and they are, therefore, apprehended through lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself . . . “not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.” How ashamed we then become of ourselves! How precious to look off and see all we have in Christ!

There is boundless love in Him; and as we find that “even to look on others as better than ourselves” is beyond our reach, so we find that the secret . . . and the obedience to this command . . . is also in Christ. As we lose sight of our sinful self and are lost in the consciousness of His love, lowliness of mind is produced . . . and with it tender mercies and forbearing love. Our hearts are opened and we breathe heavenly air; the air of heaven is love.

“Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” What mind? To get low down: “He descended, even to the lowest parts of the earth, that He might fill all things” and subject all things to His light and love.

“And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself—He emptied Himself—becoming obedient unto death . . . yea, the death of the cross,” Thus far He went,

and thus far can the Holy Ghost carry us that we may be one with Him—crucified and buried, disappearing from the eyes of men. The way to this has been opened by the Holy Ghost.

“Wherefore God also highly exalted Him.” All comes from God; all goes to God. At the bidding of the Father Jesus came, obedient to the Father’s call, God so loved the world that He could give His only begotten Son. He was the Father’s gift; and because the Son had been well-pleasing to the Father, not shrinking back even from the shame of the cross, and “made His grave with the wicked,” God, therefore, highly exalted Him and gave unto Him the Name which is above every name . . . “that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”—but that is not the last word; the last word is—“to the glory of God the Father.”

Every exaltation, every power, given to the Son by the Father will be used by the Son in ages to come with one definite anticipation of the time when He shall bring to His Father’s feet everything which has been subjected unto Him. “Then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to the Father, that God may be all in all.”

And this brings before us another prospect. We cannot enter into fellowship with the mind of Christ, forbearing one another in love, without also entering into fellowship with Him in His glorious ministry to exalt the Father’s work. Whatever glory, whatever power, has been given to the Son by the Father, the Father knows it will be used by Him with this distinct end in view—to bring back the universe to the feet of God the Father that *He* may be all in all.

Oh! it is good sometimes to have an outlook, to scan the distant horizons, and not to be absorbed with the present moment and its present sufferings. It gives us fresh power to descend . . . and new power to ascend into the pure, free air of heaven.

“So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God—not the Father, God the Holy Ghost which worketh in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” O, how blessed! First we are taught there is noth-

ing in us—everything is in Christ; then we learn how to take all we need from Christ. But is even this *our* doing? Not at all. All is the work of the Spirit.

For this purpose was He given—that He might declare the things of Christ and show them unto us, and then work out these things in us. It is all His work. It is He who shows us the Crucified and Risen Christ; and as He went to heaven with His hands outstretched in blessing, even so the Holy Ghost shows Him unto us now. He has never withdrawn His hands—He is still blessing His flock, His own. It is through the Holy Ghost we are brought into constant fellowship with Christ, and therefore we should never disobey the Holy Ghost. “As ye have always obeyed,” so now continue to obey by working out your own salvation.

What is sanctification but the life of love? Forbearing love, worked out in daily life—not thinking of ourselves and our sufferings . . . but that our sufferings may turn to account in help to those around us. The whole Christian life is one of forbearance, a sinking of self through the power of the Holy Ghost.

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you.” If it is my work, well, it belongs to me to take it up in the morning and lay it down in the evening when I am tired. But it is His work, and my part is to obey—to give Him room—and always to remember we are on holy ground. He is working that He may reveal in us the love of Jesus Christ so that we may show to the world that we are really in fellowship with Christ and that we may take from Christ the treasures of His love . . . and reveal this love to others.

But in all these things we go forward only as we are obedient . . . never interrupting the Holy Ghost with our thoughts, never grieving Him; for by Him we have been “sealed unto the Day of Redemption.” Let us then obey the Holy Ghost and honor the Holy Ghost by trusting Him so to work in us the character of Christ that we may disappear behind Him. The Holy Ghost is given to show forth Christ, the Living One, and is He not able to bring to pass all these high things—possibilities of reflecting Christ—from which we have hitherto shrunk as impossibilities?

Now a closing word on Romans viii, 28-30:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”

First, “they that love God” and those “whom He foreknew and foreordained” are one and the same; they have been called according to a Divine plan for something which God has purposed. It is not their purpose; it is God’s.

And what is this purpose? “That they may be conformed to the image of His Son.” Now can we not understand what unspeakable rest it brings to our poor human mind to hear that God has a purpose from all eternity for us? O, no human aspirations nor ambitions could have dreamt of such a purpose. What rest! Since God has really purposed this for me, He must surely know how to carry out His purpose. Remember the Shunammite.

In society in this world, with its ambitions and its competitions, man’s purpose is to supersede his fellows; he lives by treading down the interests of others under his feet, and in human purposes there are hindrances on every side. But with God all is different. When He purposes, then He works for highest ends; and with this in view He surely knows how to prepare every step for us.

Then what have we to do? We have seen that they who are called and they who love God are identically the same persons. Well! the very moment that I recognize this and realize that God has a purpose in my life, I take my stand on God’s side, and I trust Him to carry out His purposes in everything He permits in my life.

That is practical love toward God. Recognizing His purpose, I make the first token of this love my glad consent that God shall at all costs fulfil His purpose in my life: and with this in view I am content to let every ambition, high or low, be swept away. Here is the purpose and the promise for those who love God, who identify themselves with Jesus and stand

on God’s side that He may carry out His purpose with them—conformity to the image of His Son.

What is this image of His Son? Love . . . always love. It is the vision of the Lamb of God—that image which offends the natural heart of man which is always saying in word, thought, or deed: “Away with Him . . . not this Man of shame and sorrow!” He was not according to men’s ideas. We turned our backs upon Him; and “as One from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.”

People speak of predestination! We can easily know if we are predestinated to be conformed to this image of the Son . . . very simply, very practically. If we are willing to be conformed to the life of the Lamb, then in His own time—in God’s time—through the reading or the preaching of the Gospel, the Holy Ghost will open up before us the glory of the Lamb.

We shall meet this figure of the Man of Sorrows; before this Man of Sorrows we shall feel ashamed, to the depths of our hearts, of all our ambitions, tendencies, aspirations after earthly glory and fleshly satisfaction. Before this Man of Sorrows all such things fall to pieces—they come to naught; and if we are predestinated to be conformed to His image, though at first there may be a drawing back, yet the vision of the Lamb will conquer us and bring us to brokenness at His feet.

But look again! The Holy Ghost now brings us nearer; He shows again the Man of Sorrows—this time more distinctly than before. And if we are predestinated, or preordained, we shall now begin to see from our place in the dust that it is the highest glory in our life to become at last like this Man of Sorrows—a man who loved His enemies even to the end.

And we shall know it is God’s purpose, not ours, to bring forth such glory. God does not ask it from us. How could He expect such things from us poor, fallen creatures? It is the Holy Ghost who stands in the gap and who undertakes to bring to pass, even in such as we are, whatever Christ has carried out in His life and thus made possible for us.

This is the purpose of the Father, and it is founded on His love. He has pledged it, He has guaranteed the execution of His purpose; and as surely as our Lord could end His

earthly career with "It is finished," so surely will the day come when the Holy Ghost speaks His "It is finished"; and His work of producing this image of Christ in His members will be completed.

In the eyes of the world, the finished work of the Son appeared a failure; but in the mind of God it was true success. It was not according to the thoughts of man's mind—it was a Divine purpose; and as such it was carried out on Divine lines. And only those who are preordained can understand such a way of glory and fall down before the beauty of the Lamb.

They speak no more of what they can do or speak or think; but they trust the Holy Ghost to show through the Word the beauty of Christ as He leads on from victory unto victory. Thus every natural resistance will be overcome, and there will be true union with God in all His purposes.

And though yesterday all around may have been dark and difficult, today there will be clearer understanding of God's purpose—to make us lamb-like. The very things which seemed contrary will prove to be working together to that end. Thus are we taught to bring into captivity all our thoughts and ways . . . and, as little children, learn to know Christ in the school of the Holy Ghost.

Overcome and conquered, we are carried captive "to the obedience of Christ," and, thus, one thought permeates our hearts:

"Lord God, Thou wouldst not have revealed Thy purpose of conforming me to the image of Thy Son—Thou wouldst not have shown me the beauty of His life—if it were not Thy will that the Holy Ghost, whom Thou hast given, should work in me to will and to do that which is beyond my reach. I trust Him then to produce in me the character of Christ as I learn step by step, by the shortcomings in others and in myself, what I do not know as yet, And I obey Thy call to a life of forbearing love."