

1 Corinthians - Commentaries by Hugh Henry Snell

Crumbs for the Lord's Little Ones: Volume 2 (1854), Joined unto the Lord. (6:17)

1 Cor. 6:17.

NOTHING so comforts, elevates, and humbles the soul as the grace of God. It is the spring of peace, holiness, and praise. Its depth—meeting us “when we were dead in sins” its length and breadth— removing “our transgressions from us,” as far as the east is from the west: and its height—raising us up and making us “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,” proclaim the “perfect love” of God, which passeth knowledge. Blessed, indeed it is, in any measure, to appreciate Immanuel’s love; unspeakably sweet to taste that rich mercy which brought Christ down to die for the ungodly; very consoling to enter into the divine mind concerning the full and free forgiveness of all our sins; but, it is the spiritual understanding of that grace which has “joined” us unto the Lord, and made us one spirit with Him who is at the right hand of God, that fills our souls with settled peace, and strengthens and stablishes our faith and hope in God.

How rich and plenteous the mercy of the Lord is! It is high even as the heaven is above the earth (Psalm 103:11). It is sovereign, “therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy” (Rom. 9:18). It is eternal, “for the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him,” &c. (Psalm 103:17). It is fixed “according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Tim. 1:9). It is secure, for “your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). It is safe, because “God abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself” (2 Tim. 2:13). It is both present and effectual, for, it is written, “there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1), “now are we the sons of God” (1 John 3:2), “ye are complete in Him” (Col. 2:10); and such as receive this grace are objects of the Lord’s affection and delight, for “He taketh pleasure In them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy” (Psalm 147:11).

It is in this new and heavenly relationship and standing, into which the believer is brought, that the grace of God is so richly displayed; though the enjoyment of it is known only to faith: — “we have access, by faith, into this grace wherein we stand” (Rom. 5:2). By nature we were all “children of wrath even as others:” we “were all dead,” on account of union with the first Adam; we were children of the wicked one, born in sin, and had a carnal mind which was enmity against God. But the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, took us out of that old standing, and brought us into a new one—He “hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son (Col. 1:13); we have passed from death unto life (John 5:24). We are not now dead in sins, but alive unto God, “joined unto the Lord” by His quickening Spirit, and “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph. 5:30), so that He dwelleth in us, and we in Him (John 6:56). Thus God hath made Christ “unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:30, 31).

It is because of this union with Christ, that the believer is spoken of in the Scriptures as having died and risen again—as having been crucified with Christ, and that Christ liveth in him; for He, who never could have died on His own account, “died for us,” the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. By drinking all the cup of wrath which our sins deserved, by being made sin and a curse for us, by fulfilling every jot and tittle of the law; “that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,” and by giving us LIFE by His own quickening Spirit, we are united to Him who is raised from the dead; and “he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” Therefore, the Holy Ghost thus exhorts us, “Let not sin reign in your mortal body;” having in the preceding verse directed our souls into the true position of faith, saying, “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:11). Christ, having died unto sin once, dieth no more; and His people, having died in Him, now live unto God.

It is also on this account that the believer has new relationships, new responsibilities, and a new experience—he is a new creature in Christ Jesus. The risen Son a God is his Life, Righteousness, Strength, Hiding-place, Deliverer, Husband, Friend, Master, Way to God, Joy, Hope, Glory, &c. &c. He lives by the faith of Jesus, and walks in Him, knowing that all His springs are in Him. He has no happiness apart from Jesus; and peace and consolation, at all times, in the light of His gracious countenance; and his spirit is sustained and his goings are established by the unchangeable love and faithfulness of God his Saviour. How sweet to think that —

The believer’s contemplation of the sufferings and death of Christ increases his hatred of sin, for in that cross he sees the just judgment of it in the light of divine holiness; and the apprehension that he himself has been crucified and slain with Him, not only teaches him the utterly corrupt character of the flesh, but gives him power practically over it, and casts him with confidence upon that fullness which is treasured up for us in our risen and glorified Head.

Further, it is being “joined unto the Lord” that is the power of all fruit-bearing, by which we can do all things through Christ strengthening us, though without Him we can do nothing. Hence the need of practically living in communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and drawing new supplies by prayer and faith. Nothing can compensate for a lack of personal communion with God. The object of all ministry of the Word is to lead our souls into deeper and more abiding fellowship and walk with God. Our greatest danger is to imagine we can do without it, and thus be weak as others. There may be fleshly energy of a religions form, but it is not Christ-like—not spiritual. Our high and holy calling and standing in Christ Jesus, believably known, inspires us with dictate for that which is carnal, and strengthens us to mortify our earthly and sensual propensities—to put off the old man, and to put on the new.

It is also as “risen with Christ,” that we are exhorted to exhibit this new life in every family relationship. The spiritual husband and wife are to represent Christ and the Church, both as regards love and subjection: parents are to train their children as Christ does: children to honor and obey their parents as “the holy child” did His Father: masters are to rule as knowing they have a Master in heaven, and servants to obey after the pattern of Him who did not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him.

The same truth applies to our walk toward them that are without. We are exhorted to walk wisely, according to the example of Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and who said of us, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). It is because we are united to Him, whom the world crucified and the Father glorified, that we should be imitators of Him who died for the ungodly, but had no fellowship with them; and as we follow the steps of this Faithful Witness, our new life will freely flow forth to the glory of God. We are to walk in Him, who was "separate from sinners."

It is also as the Church of the Living God that we are specially responsible for manifesting that we are "joined unto the Lord," and "one spirit." We are to remember our common salvation, our life, our union and standing in Christ Jesus; that there is one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, &c. (Eph. 4:4-6.) As members of His body we are to know no man after the flesh, for Christ is all and in all; and never to let slip the truth, that because there is one spirit and one body, there is not only the Lord's unceasing sympathy with us, but that there is also such sympathy between all those that are Christ's, that "if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it," &c. (1 Cor. 12:26); so that the daily walk and conduct of each member necessarily affects the whole body. We are, therefore, to maintain our family character as holy and elect brethren; to love one another as Christ has loved us; to forgive as Christ forgave us; to be holy as He is holy; to suffer for His sake, walk together in His steps, assemble together in His name, and so to show forth that we are truly and really one in Christ, that the world may believe that the Father sent Jesus (John 17:21). It is quite true, as we have already seen, that we are spiritually one in Christ risen, but it is the will of God that this living unity should be so realized, cherished, and manifested by us, that we should condemn all contention, strife, and division, be of one heart and one soul, and aim at being "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). Let us beware of saying this cannot be, but rather let us trust in Him with whom all things are possible, and receive the Spirit's admonition to be of "the same mind in the Lord" (Phil. 4:2), that with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God (Rom. 15:6). True it is, that in the day of Christ the unity of the Church will be manifested in perfect and eternal beauty, and the world will then know that the Father has loved us, even as He loved Jesus; but the opportunity for the world to believe unto salvation will then be past; and the thought is very solemn.

How little we exemplify that we are "joined unto the Lord" and "one spirit!" Yet, for any little measure of it, let us thank God, and "strengthen the things which remain." We may rest assured that any scriptural efforts thus to glorify God are very precious to Him who says, "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you" (Phil. 3:15). Let us, beloved, seek to cultivate it! Let us diligently promote, according to the Scriptures, fellowship in the spirit with all saints, and "whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Phil. 3:16).

Lastly, it is because we are bound in "the bundle of life," that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). Every member of His body shall then be manifested without spot and blameless, whether they have slept in Jesus, or are alive and remain (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). How perfect the scene will then be! Not a little one shall be absent or marred, for not a bone of Him was broken. How exceeding rich will be the testimony in that day, that "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit!"

DISCIPLINE.—Whilst the Church of God should have no place for sin, it should have a place for, and should set a value upon, every member of Christ's body. We should remember it is God's Church, carry all difficulties to God and to Christ, and manage them not ourselves.

The Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, The: No. 6 (3:16-17)

The Dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

Whatever intercourse God was pleased to hold with Abraham and others, we never read of God dwelling among people till they had been under the shelter and blessing of the blood of the lamb. When the people of Israel had been redeemed out of Egypt, and the tabernacle was set up, with its altar and priesthood, then Jehovah said, "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." (Exod. 29:44-46.) Thus God took His place among His redeemed people.

Again we read, that when Solomon had built the temple, "the cloud filled the house of Jehovah; so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of Jehovah. Then spake Solomon... I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide forever." (1 Kings 8:10-13.)

In the days of our Lord, He Himself was the temple. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up... He spake of the temple of his body." (John 2:19, 21.) The Holy Spirit had come down in bodily shape as a dove, and abode upon Him, so that Jesus was then the temple of God.

But when Jesus was raised from the dead, He taught His disciples to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, by whom they would be baptized and receive power. Therefore, on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down, as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the house where they were sitting, and filled all the waiting believers. Then the believers were, and still are, God's dwelling place—His habitation. The appearance of cloven tongues like as of fire sitting upon each of them, plainly showed that the ministry of the word, with power, would be the special character of their testimony.

Two things, we find, then took place. The body was formed by all the believers being united to Christ and to one another, and thus became "members of his body," and "members one of another;" there was also then a vessel on earth set in responsibility to the Lord. Both the church, or assembly, looked at as the body of Christ, and the assembly looked at as in the place of corporate responsibility to the Lord—the house, were identical at first; but it soon became otherwise.

"The body" then is formed by the Holy Spirit, and composed only of true believers: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." It is the assembly in its true sense, that which Christ builds. We do not read in scripture of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the body, but dwelling in each

individual child of God that forms the body, and energizing every activity of it, as well as dwelling in the church on earth.

But when sin came into the assembly, did the Holy Spirit leave it? Certainly not; instead of leaving it, He gave power to judge the evil and put it away. (Acts 5) And when men brought in, as at Corinth, the greatest disorder, false people, and flagrant sins, both moral and doctrinal, did the Holy Spirit leave the assembly on earth? Certainly not. For in 1 Cor. 3 the Apostle says to these very people, when looking at the assembly on earth in the place of responsibility, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? " And then he solemnly adds, " If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." (Vers. 16, 17.) It is obvious that this responsible assembly on earth is a widely different aspect from "the assembly which is his body, the fullness of him which filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:23.)

We find then in scripture two aspects of the church: one as God's workmanship living members of Christ's body, always perfect before God, which no power of evil can sever or destroy; the other, the assembly in man's hands, into which he has brought wood, hay, and stubble, and much that denies. This is evidently the house, which is already being judged, for "judgment must first begin at the house of God; it is Christ's witness on earth, which has proved so unfaithful that He will spew it out of His mouth. There is an important and wide difference between "the body" and "the house"—" the habitation of God through the Spirit."

It is interesting to notice that while Peter speaks of " the house of God" as where judgment begins, he also speaks of the house in a good sense, as composed of living stones and built up " a spiritual house/ a holy priesthood and a royal priesthood. Paul also, who is the only inspired writer on "the body," not only speaks of the temple in a bad sense, and capable of being defiled as we have seen, but he also uses the figure of a temple for the assembly in a good sense, as growing into an holy temple in the Lord. (1 Pet. 4:17; 2:5; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:21.) In this paper, however, we shall confine our remarks on the house as profession, or the assembly on earth in the aspect of what it is in man's hands; and "the body" as God's workmanship.

The house, as we have seen, good at first and identical with the body, is the habitation of God through the Spirit. It is not correct then to say that the Spirit is only with us when gathered together in the Lord's name, for He is always dwelling in the whole church; but it is quite true that the Lord, who loved us and gave Himself for us, is specially present when so gathered in His name. Neither is it scriptural to say that when thus gathered we wait on the Spirit; but it would be truer to say that we wait on the Lord who acts among us and in us by the Spirit. Of this we have examples in scripture. In the epistles to the seven churches in the Revelation, the Lord is the speaker, and the One who gave John authority to write to the different assemblies, and yet they were all enjoined to hearken to what the Spirit was saying to every one of the assemblies. Seven times it is said, " He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches' or assemblies. Again, in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, we find saints who were before the Lord, looking to Him, for we are told that they "ministered to the Lord and fasted/" and then and there " the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." May we not then, if waiting on the Lord, expect the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

Scripture speaks of each believer in the Lord Jesus Christ having the Holy Spirit, and a member of the body of Christ; but when we consider the indwelling of the Holy Spirit collectively, we have a sphere wider now than the " one body," for a state is contemplated where there are bad materials as well as good, such as wood, hay, and stubble, as well as gold, silver, and precious stones. It is that too which man is capable of defiling, and which is going to be judged—the house. We find these two aspects of the church constantly recognized in the epistles. 1. What it is in the Lord's hands, what He has formed for His glory, called ' the church," or assembly, " which is His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22.) Here there is no failure, and can be no separation, it is always intact before God, and by faith to us also. 2. What the church is in man's hands as God's laborers and workmen who have brought in bad materials, and much that is for the Lord's dishonor. This is what we understand by the house. Those who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit and thus united to Christ are in the "one body;" but those who are merely professors belong to the house. We are all in a the house," and are called, at the discovery of being associated with vessels to dishonor, not to leave the house (how can we till Christ comes?) but to purge ourselves from such vessels by separating from them.

It has been sometimes said, Can it be possible that the Holy Spirit dwells where there is evil? It is not an unreasonable question, and one which is easily answered. Going back to the time of God's dwelling among the people of Israel, did He leave them when evil came in? He might rebuke it, as He surely did, and execute discipline; but notwithstanding all this unbelief, their lustings, murmurings, and rebellions, the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day remained "with them throughout all the journey." We read, " Thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest, them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withholdest not Thy name from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness." (Exod. 40:38; Neh. 9:19-21.) Even after ten tribes had been given into their enemies' hands, and a handful of the two tribes who had been in captivity returned in Ezra's time, the word of the prophet Haggai to them was, " I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not." Again. Look at an individual believer; does the Spirit leave him who has, like the Galatians, got away from the ground of divine grace, and who is practically manifesting the works of the flesh? On the contrary, did not Paul appeal to their consciences by this very truth, saying, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? " That the Spirit may be so grieved and quenched, that there may be little consciousness of His indwelling and power, no one doubts; but the clear teaching of scripture is that each believer is sealed with the holy Spirit of promise until he is brought home to glory. (See Eph. 1:14; 4:30.) Even when a believer sins, does the Holy Spirit leave him? Though we are enjoined not to sin, yet where is there an idea in scripture that the Holy Spirit leaves the believer because he sins? Are we not told that " If any man [child of God] sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"? And in connection with His gracious Advocacy, does not the Holy Spirit in the believer lead him to self-judgment, and confession of his sins? No doubt the Spirit of God is " holy," and cannot look on evil with any allowance, yet, as born of the Spirit, and cleansed and perfected forever by the one offering of the body of Christ, the child of God must ever be an object of His gracious ministry and care.

And if so with the individual believer, why should we expect Him to leave God's church on earth because of its evil associations and dishonor to the Lord? On the contrary, does He not rebuke the evil, enable the faithful soul to discern it, and to purge himself from vessels to dishonor by separating from them? All through the dark ages, His power was seen every now and then put forth. His habitation on earth is His habitation still. That the Holy Spirit remains among us is a most cheering and encouraging truth. Having been given consequent upon the

accomplished work and glorification of Jesus, He abides, and will do so until the members of the body are taken to glory at the coming of the Lord. Then that which remains behind will be judicially dealt with. H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, The: No. 4 (12:13)

The Holy Spirit having taken up His abode in the believer, he is thus united to Christ, who is at the right hand of God. And what a wonderful thing for every child of God on earth now to know, that he is actually united to Christ in heaven, as a divinely-wrought fact! Present union with Christ! One spirit with the Lord, for we are told that "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." How amazing the grace of God, who beheld us in our vile and loathsome state as sinners of the Gentiles, and cleansed us, quickened us, and united us by His Holy Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ! We have this marvelous union, not by faith, as is sometimes stated, though we are believers; nor even in life, though Christ is our life; but by the coming of the Holy Spirit into our hearts, in consequence of our being washed from our sins in the blood of Jesus. We surely do well to ponder carefully in God's presence this amazing truth; so true is it, that Jesus in the glory speaks of us as part of Himself—"Me"—and the Holy Spirit says that "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." It is the consciousness of the reality of this union that necessarily attracts us to the Lord, keeps us clinging to Him, to find our all in Him, and therefore detaches us from a thousand things which many esteem to be good, because they are unsuited to Him with whom we are forever joined by "one Spirit."

Has the Christian reader received this divine truth, that "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body"?—that you yourself are now so one with Christ, that if you are persecuted, lie could say to your persecutor, "Why persecutest thou me?" Have you, beloved reader, the consciousness in your own soul that because you have been washed from your sins in the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit has taken up His abode in your heart forever, and united you to Christ in heaven? It may be possible that you have never heard of this great truth before, or, even if you have known it, you may have little consciousness of its reality, because of your fleshly and worldly walk so grieving the Spirit; still, it is even then blessed to come before God in self-examination, self-judgment, and, it may be, self-loathing, and thus have soul-restoration; and, believing God's testimony, and walking in His presence, have the precious comfort, not only that "as Christ is, so are we in this world" (a most blessed truth), but that you are now on earth forever united to the Lord in heaven by His Spirit which He hath given us. That every Christian reader of these pages may have the certainty and unspeakable enjoyment of being one with the Lord Jesus, is our heart's desire and earnest prayer to the Father of mercies and God of all comfort! (1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 9:4.)

It is because we have the Spirit that we "know the things that are freely given to us of God" that we have to do with an ascended, glorified Savior, consciously stand in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and intelligently worship and give thanks. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." In this way the believer knows that he is not now in his sins, not in the flesh, not of the world, not under law, but justified from all things, has eternal life, is a child of God, has received the Holy Spirit, and is a member of the body of Christ, thus able to serve acceptably, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Thus the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer is connected with knowledge, liberty, communion, enjoyment, worship, and power. The difference is strikingly seen in comparing the state of believers in the first chapter of the Acts with their state in the second and fourth chapters.

Among other operations of the Holy Spirit, we may notice that He bears witness to the Son of God—"He shall testify of me." (John 15:26.) Thus the Holy Spirit brings before our souls the personal glory and perfections of the Son, His moral excellencies, His finished work on the cross, the various offices which He now sustains, and the ranges of glory yet to be revealed to His eternal praise and honor. He may direct our thoughts back to consider His eternal Sonship, and lead us to contemplate Him by whom the worlds were made. He may recall to our memories His God-glorifying work of redemption in the past, or direct the eye of our heart to Jesus at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honor, where we see Him for the present. Or, He may lead us to contemplate Him in the future, when He will come forth as the rightful Heir of all things to establish His kingdom in righteousness, wearing His many crowns. The Holy Spirit may testify of Him as the One in heaven, to whom angels, authorities, and powers are made subject; He may at one time lead our thoughts back to His perfections in this world as the rejected One, and then to Him as the reigning One, to whom every knee must bow. He may minister to us the marvelous relationship He holds as the Head of His body the church, the offices He sustains as our great High Priest, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, and our Advocate with the Father, and give us also to contemplate the time of blessing yet to come, when He shall be welcomed and honored on earth as King of Israel and Governor among the nations. At one time the Holy Spirit may give us to delight in Him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and at another to look forward to our reigning with Him, and to His executing the most solemn judgments on the living and on the dead. So that, whether the Holy Spirit occupy us with the past, present, or future, things heavenly or earthly, He is the Testifier of the Son, who is the central object of all God's counsels, grace, and glory! We may be certain, therefore, that no ministry can be characterized as of the Holy Spirit, if the Lord Jesus Christ be not the pre-eminent subject and object of its testimony. How blessed, then, it is to know this, and to experience in our souls this grand effect of the Spirit dwelling in us, that He testifies to us of the Son! In no other way can we account for that untold blessedness which we enjoy when our minds and hearts are taken up with Him, and when His perfectness, accomplished work, His offices and His fullness, are brought home to our hearts!

The Holy Spirit is also the Glorifier of the Son, as He said, "He shall glorify me." (John 16:14.) He presents Him as worthy of all praise. His excellencies make everything else seem poor. His worthiness will by-and-by call forth the praises of every creature in heaven, in earth, and under the earth. But even now, in this sin-blighted world, the Holy Spirit so reveals Him, that hearts are attuned to sing His praise. To many now on earth His name is above every name, and to their hearts He has the pre-eminence in all things, because the Holy Spirit has revealed to them something of His surpassing excellencies and worth. Yes, He is the Glorifier of the Son of God, the Spirit of truth, who guides into all the truth. He tells us of Him as God's only-begotten Son, as the Creator of the world, that Eternal Life which was with the Father, the Object of the worship of all the angels, the Light of men, the Savior of all that believe in His name, the One to whom all judgment is committed, at whose name every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. Thus is He ever to be adored and praised, for He is worthy.

The Holy Spirit does not speak from Himself, but "whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak.... He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show unto you." It is because all that the Father hath the Son hath also, that the Holy Spirit reveals the most precious things of the Father and of the Son to

us.

The Holy Spirit also reveals the truth to us as to coming events—" He will show you things to come." To shut out, therefore, from our minds the testimony of scripture as to prophetic events, would be to resist this blessed ministry of the Holy Spirit. And observe, that it is the Spirit who shows us the future. No power of the natural intellect, apart from divine teaching, is sufficient for this. One thing is certain—that the same Spirit which is given to us, and cries, Abba, Father, also says, Come, Lord Jesus. " The Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is, then, a most serious matter when souls, even if they do not oppose the doctrine of the Lord's coming as the believer's hope, yet, if they do not accept it as the divinely-given hope, they are clearly shown to be not in the mind of the Holy Spirit. (Rev. 22:17.)

We read, too, of " joy in the Holy Spirit;" for if He be here to testify of the Son, to glorify Him, and to show us things to come, He must surely be thus keeping our hearts near the never-failing springs of divine grace. We know that the Father Himself loves us—yea, that He loves us as He has loved His Son. Thus, being objects of divine favor, brought to Him in Christ, and through His precious blood, accepted in the Beloved, and His co-heirs, and all kept fresh in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit, we know such a deep, calm joy, as makes us look for the coming of our Lord to introduce us into that fullness of joy which His presence only can give.

When we are enjoined to "be filled with the Spirit," it is clear that it is not having more of the Spirit given to us; for, as we have seen, God does not give the Spirit by measure, but He gives us the Holy Spirit Himself. We read, therefore, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. As long as a Christian is encouraging fleshly and worldly lusts, he cannot be filled with the Spirit, for the Spirit is grieved; but when the believer is self-judged, and holds himself dead with Christ, instead of being occupied with self and worldly lusts, he becomes wholly occupied with Christ. Every faculty of his heart and mind is taken up with the Lord Jesus Christ; he is filled with the Spirit. The admonition of scripture, therefore, is, " Be not drunk with wane, wherein is excess"—fleshly lusts—" but be filled with the Spirit."

H. H. S.

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