Colossians - Commentaries by John Nelson Darby

The Christian Shepherd: 1997, Will of God, The

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“That ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col. 1:9).

The first principle of this practical, heavenly life was the knowledge of the will of God to be filled with it, not to run after it as a thing without us, nor in indecision, in uncertainty, as to what it was, but to be filled with it by a principle of intelligence which comes from Him and which forms the understanding and the wisdom of the Christian himself. The character of God was livingly translated in the appreciation of everything that the Christian did. And remark here that the knowledge of God’s will is based on the spiritual state of the soul wisdom and spiritual understanding. And this is of all practical importance. No particular direction by man as to conduct meets this at all rather saves us from the need of spiritual understanding. No doubt a more spiritual mind may help me in the discernment of God’s will, but God has connected the discovery of the path of His will, His way, with the inward state of the soul and causes us to pass through circumstances human life here below to test and to discover to ourselves what that state is and to exercise us therein. The Christian has by his spiritual state to know God’s ways. The Word is the means. (Compare John 17:17, 19.) God has a way of His own which the vulture’s eye has not seen, known only to the spiritual man, connected with, flowing from, and to, the knowledge of God. (Compare Exodus 33:13.) Thus the Christian walks worthy of the Lord; he knows what becomes Him, and walks accordingly, that he may please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing by the knowledge of God.

J. N. Darby (from Synopsis Colossians)

Christian Truth: Volume 14, Unto All Pleasing

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Col. 1:10. Here I am called today and tomorrow to walk worthy of the Lord-nothing that I do, say, or think, which should not be worthy of Christ Himself. Here it is all growth; I have got the life. I say to a child, You go and walk worthy of your family; but if he has no sense of what his family is, it is no use telling him to walk worthy of it. But if he has the sense of the integrity and standing of his family, then he knows how to walk worthy of it. "In everything commending ourselves as God's ministers" (2 Cor. 6:4; J.N.D. Trans.).

You get the word worthy in three ways. In Thessalonians, "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." In Ephesians, it is the same thing practically: "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."

Here in Colossians it is, "Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Did He ever do His own will in anything? No; He did. His Father's. Are you content never to do your own will, but to take Christ's will as that which is to be the spring and motive of all you do? Then communion is not interrupted; and it is joy and blessing beyond all human thought. You say, Am I never to do what I like? Like! Do you not like to be always with Christ? This detects the workings of the flesh.

Then comes the activity, the growing acquaintance with God, "increasing in [or rather, by] the knowledge of God." The full joy of heaven is the knowledge of God. If I am going after the world, will this be increasing by the knowledge of God? It tests what I like. Do you like to be away from God, and do your own will sometimes? But He says, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. Do you delight to do it? Oh, what a thought it is, that in this dark world God has perfectly revealed Himself in Christ; nay more, that He dwells in us! "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 1 John 4:15. There is God by His Spirit.

Now mark how this works. "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power." I shall find plenty of difficulties in the way, and temptations of all kinds-possibly death, as has often been the case in some countries- but I am strengthened with all might. There is the strength. I have been brought into close relationship with God, and there I get this power. Unto what? "Unto all patience." This sounds like a poor thing, but you will find it is just what tries you. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Jas. 1:4. And again, "The signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience." 2 Cor. 12:12. Are you always patient? do you not need divine power for it? I may want setting right in the

Church of God, or in the Lord's work, or in a thousand things; but I must have patience. I must wait on God. Supposing my will is not at work, there comes meekness and gentleness. I can take things gently and meekly and quietly with others; and, then he adds, if that is the case, my life is in full display before God, and there is the enjoyment of God. I enter into all this blessedness, and am not merely "made meet," but "giving thanks," because I am in the positive and blessed enjoyment of all. When I am walking in patience of heart and longsuffering, my soul is with God. I get the blessed enjoyment of what He is, and I grow by the knowledge of Him; "Unto every one which hath shall be given." If I am honest, I say, I do not know what His will is-perhaps there is something in myself that I have not yet detected. Here I have all these exercises; but it is in the sense of the divine favor resting on me with consciousness of my being a child of God. The more a child is with his father, and delights in him, of course the better he will grow up, understanding what his father likes. It is so with us before God.

Christian Truth: Volume 33, Colossians 1:28

Paul labored that he might present every man in a spiritual state answering to this revelation of Christ. He knew that union with Christ, realized in the heart, was a safeguard from the wiles of the enemy to which the Colossians were exposed. He knew the unutterable value of this union, and of its realization by faith. He labored, he wrestled in prayer-for it is indeed a conflict- in order that the full sense of this union with the glorified Head might be wrought in their hearts, so that the Christ on high should be in them by faith.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Critical 1, Colossians 1:19, On

EVERY correction of scripture is of moment. I beg to suggest one, the occasion for which it appears to me exceedingly mars the sense. I refer to the expression " It pleased [the Father] that in him should all fullness dwell." The English reader may see upon the face of it, that the word " Father " is put in by our translators. This is extremely bad theology, depriving us of the development of glory in the Person of our most blessed Lord. "All the fullness was pleased to dwell in him." In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of that in which to me Christianity consists-a revelation of the Trinity known in the relationship in which we are brought by faith to it. In the second chapter we have the fact, "All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily; " that is, in the incarnation of the Son. While He was the Son in personal union with flesh as Jesus, there could be no separation of the Son from the Father or the Spirit, though most distinct in their relationship. Therefore the Lord says, though He wrought Himself the miracles, " The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works "; and again, " If I cast out devils, by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." That He was the Son, however, is the direct object of faith, but revealing the Father; and therefore " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In a word, the fullness of the Godhead (as is declared by the Spirit concerning Him) " dwelt in him bodily." These things may be difficult as to human explanation, but not as to communion, where the Spirit of God is; for He reveals in communion, according to the power of truth, and no way else. And I believe that, while the human intellect will break itself to pieces against the glory of the divine revelation, the fullness of our joy and hope, and the soundness of our Christianity, and, consequently christian strength and energy, chiefly depends upon the distinctness with which we are cognizant of the unity and trinity, withal made known to us in the Incarnation, which is the revelation of it. " God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble." I believe it to be a revelation, and known, where only it can be known, in communion, by those made partakers of the Spirit by faith in Christ Jesus: all else will stumble somewhere, and these too, if they be not humble.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Expository 6, Colossians, Notes on the Beginning of

I DESIRE to send you a few remarks from time to time, as the Lord may enable me, on the Epistle to the Colossians, chiefly for the help of the young who have recently been brought, in His great mercy, to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Two things in this epistle make it specially precious to such. The first is the way in which it so fully reveals the glory of Christ's Person, whether as Son of the Father's love, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells, or as Creator, and Redeemer, and Head of His body, the church. The second thing is the way in which it unfolds " the mystery " for joy and consolation of the saints-even Christ in them the hope of glory.

These are the two great subjects set before our hearts by the Holy Ghost in this precious epistle; and what can be more strengthening or gladdening than to have the eye and heart filled with the glory of Jesus, and to have the joy and assurance of our intimate union with Him made good in our souls by the Holy Ghost? To walk in the light of His risen glory, and in the consciousness of our individual interest in His love is tile great requirement in these evil days. Nothing else will give courage to confess Him before men; and this alone will deliver from all the snares of Satan, whether of worldliness on the one hand, or of religion on the other, which is not after Christ.

These things will come before us, if the Lord will, by-and-by: meantime, let us follow the course of the epistle from the beginning.

In the first two verses we have the salutation of the apostle, and in the next three his thanksgiving on their behalf. He addresses them as Christ's apostle, clothed with the authority of His name, and charged them with the communication of His grace. Moreover, God had set him apart to this service. In the end of the chapter the apostle tells of a double ministry entrusted to him as the vessel of the grace of God: first, a ministry for the proclamation of the gospel to sinners; and second, a ministry for the church, to make known to the saints the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is in the exercise of this latter ministry that he writes this epistle. It is to bring the hearts of the saints into the assured knowledge and enjoyment of their place and portion in Christ so as to walk in peaceful communion with Him until He shall appear. This ministry he fulfills in the name, and as the apostle, of Jesus Christ. Thus the whole epistle flows directly from Christ through His chosen apostle.

It is to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ he writes, and, as we have seen, on the part of Christ. They were " in Christ," the grand center of the new creation; holy and faithful brethren in Him. Then he ministers the sweet stream of grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus was parted from His disciples in the act of blessing them, so here the apostle of Christ begins his epistle to the Colossians, before entering on anything else, by saluting them with the grace or unmingled favor of the Father and the Son, of which they were ever the objects, being in Christ, and with the peace which is the fruit of this favor.

Next we get his thanksgiving. He thanked God, even the Father of " our Lord Jesus Christ," praying always for them, for the hope laid up for them in heaven. Here we see how Paul identified himself with the interests of heaven. He had heard of the faith and love of these Colossians, and his heart at once turned to God in thanksgiving and prayers; thanksgiving that He had linked with heaven this fresh company of believers, and that He had done it. And note well, that it was not what they were delivered from that here occupies him, though he does not forget that, as we see lower down; nor is it what was wrought in them, blessed as that was; but it is what they were called to-that bright and blessed portion in heaven-the hope laid up for them there. Thus he would evidently fill their minds with what they were going to; and in his own sense of its exceeding excellency and glory he thanks God on their behalf as heirs of such an inheritance.

This is a very important point. For there is a great tendency, in the first joy of faith and fervor of feeling, to be occupied with the joy and with the feeling; and when afterward trials and exercises of heart and conscience have to be passed through, to be occupied with them, or with what will give present deliverance and help, and to forget the bright and blessed hope laid up for us in heaven-the place of rest and glory with Himself, which Jesus is gone to prepare. But how can I journey on to Canaan through the trials and exercises of the wilderness if my heart has lost the sense of the blessedness of the Canaan I am going to? We are redeemed, not for the wilderness, but for Canaan; we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And when the glory of God is indeed our joy, we can add, " Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." For then we know and experience that these very tribulations are all made to work for our good, and to further us on our way. For " tribulation worketh patience." It free us from the restlessness of our own will, which would turn aside, and delivers us, besides, from the fear of what man can do to us. We learn to trust in God. We learn, moreover, how little we can be the authors of our own blessing, and we count more and more on the constant watchfulness and love, and care of a Father in heaven. His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. We know that we are in these tribulations because the objects of His love, the ransomed ones of His grace from the fire that shall never be quenched. And then, besides, we are on our way to God. Thus having the end in view enables us to confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and it brightens with hope every step of the way. Otherwise we get weary, becoming faint in our minds. But if living in the midst of things that are unseen and eternal, the inward man is renewed day by day, and that, too, at the very time that the outward world is perishing and falling into decay.

But we now come to a third point, and that is-the ground of this thanksgiving on behalf of these Colossians. How could the apostle give thanks so assuredly on their behalf, having never seen them? Verse 4 tells us. It was because he had heard of their faith in the Lord Jesus, and of their love to all the saints. These were the grand distinguishing features and characteristics of the divine life in man. And these being of God, he well knew that all who possessed them were bound up forever in the bundle of life with the Lord Jesus Christ, and that where He was there should they be also. These were the essentials. In Christ Jesus nothing avails but " faith which worketh by love." First, faith, which came to Jesus with all its load of sin and unworthiness because it had nowhere else to go, and because it saw a love and a holiness in Him which received sinners and made Him their companion and their friend; and then love which, having Him for its object, necessarily had all who were His. Faith not only thus comes to Jesus at the first, but it binds the soul to Him as risen, and is ever receiving of His fullness. And love, having seen the saints as the precious ones of His heart, enfolds them forever in its bosom with a most tender affection. They are dear to Him. This is the motive of love, and it never fails. It clothes with divine comeliness all the objects of His grace. And what it does to them. it does as unto Him; and great is its reward.

In the previous verses we had three points brought before us. First, is the apostle's salutation, in which he regards the saints as the objects of the present favor of the Father, and of the peace which He gives. Happy position! secured to us forever in Christ. And sweet it is thus to be able to view the saints at all times, whatever their practical condition may be, as dear to God, the excellent of the earth, whose present peace and blessing He seeks, even as He has secured it for us forever in Christ. In fellowship with these thoughts of God, the apostle greets them with grace and peace from God their Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, secondly, we had his thanksgiving for the hope laid up for them in heaven. Heaven was near to his thoughts. Jesus was there. He had entered in, and He was preparing a place for them. He is to come again to take us to Himself, that we may be forever with Him. And when He shall be manifested then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory. This latter, perhaps, was more especially the hope here before him; Christ in them " the hope of glory." What rest of heart the apostle had in contemplating this issue of Christ's travail on their behalf, their being with Him forever in heaven! Many an exercise he had on their behalf even as to the very condition they were in at the time he was writing to them; they had lost the sense of their place with their risen Head; at any rate it had become much enfeebled, and with the enfeebling of this all else became enfeebled too. He had great agony for them; and this was Christ's Spirit yearning in him over them for their deliverance, and for their entrance in living power into the joy and comfort of the mystery. But when he turned to heaven all was peace; he could give thanks to the Father for the portion He had laid up for them there. Christ was there. The Head was there, and with Him everyone of the members should appear in glory.

Then, thirdly, in verse 4 we had the ground of this thanksgiving as far as they were concerned-even their faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints. Grace had wrought in them already, and he at once connects it with glory.

In the close of verse 5, and in the next, a new subject comes before him-the gospel, " the word of the truth of the gospel." In connection with this he makes three statements, each of them weighty and important, as indeed every word of God is.

First, he connects the hope laid up for them in heaven with the word of the truth of the gospel. The gospel, the good tidings of grace, had wrapped up in it also good tidings of glory. It was in the word of the truth of the gospel that they had heard of the hope laid up for them in heaven. Such was the range and scope of the gospel, at least which they had heard; it was God's good news not only of the forgiveness of sins through the blood of His Son, but of eternal blessedness with Him in heaven.

How could it be otherwise? Christ was in heaven, and we are redeemed to be with Him. The cross put Him in glory, and it puts all there who trust in Him too. Blessed is it to know what we are delivered from-the wages of sin-eternal separation from God, who is love, the fountain of all goodness and joy; and this, too, as the expression of His everlasting displeasure. But how much more blessed to know that His perfect love did not spare His own Son, not only that I might not perish, but that I might know Him and be with Himself forever! Jesus was forsaken for us, that we might be forever brought nigh. This gives the heart an object as well as perfect peace to the conscience. It delivers also from this present evil world; the brightness and blessedness of that One discovering the true condition of this world-far from God and in bondage of Satan, and under wrath because of having rejected Jesus. The word of the truth of the gospel reveals all this-the true condition of man and his world; and the perfect grace of God which has wrought in the cross for us, and which has wrought in them by the gospel, giving them a place even now with Him who bore it for them, and the hope of being with Him forever in heaven. It was the word of the truth of the gospel, and on it they might rely with confidence. Man and his glory was passing away, but the word of the Lord should endure forever. And this was the word which by the gospel was preached unto them.

What firmness of step, and what buoyancy of spirit this heavenly hope gives to him who has it in passing through this world! Then we realize that we are not of it, and that we are on our way to God.

A second characteristic of the gospel was its universality. It had reached them, and was among them, as indeed it was in the world. It was no mere Jewish tidings; it was for man. Offenses abounded among the Jews; but where " sin " abounded, a far wider thing, there grace did much more abound.

Then, thirdly, it was bringing forth fruit in all the world and amongst them too. It was gathering souls to God through Christ wherever it went, but besides, it was bringing forth fruit in those who were gathered. This last point is plainly implied in the clause which follows: " Since the day ye heard it, and knew the grace of God in truth." Ever since it was the power of fruit-bearing, as at the first it was the seed of eternal life. This is a very important point, and one we are apt often to forget. The seed that fell into the good ground brought forth fruit; some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold. We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. This is the simple natural result of union with Jesus risen. And the grace of God, when known in truth, sets us thus before God in Christ, the fruits of which union we are to manifest down here upon the earth. We are to walk in newness of life, that is, of response Godward. In order to do this, we must abide in Him. But when simply holding the Head, everything is fruit, fruit unto God.

What a place of honor and glory this is-of being here in this world the living channels of the affections and virtues of Christ hid in God. Oh! that we esteemed it more. Thus it is we adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, by manifesting in this world of sin and in the trying circumstances of daily life, not what flesh is, but what Christ is; our hearts feeding upon His love, whilst we lean upon His arm and are guided by His eye. What interest He takes in our being fruitful, that His Father may be glorified! Will He fail us in the hour of need? He lets us come into it just that we may prove how abundant are His resources to make us victors over all the power of the enemy.

May He keep us near to Himself that we may be happy in His love, and so be strong to live for Him.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Expository 6, Colossians 1: Reconciliation

IN a certain aspect, the Epistle to the Colossians does not take us up so far as the Ephesians does. The latter takes up very distinctly the purpose and counsels of God and the new creation. Hence the contrast of it with man in the old is presented in a very remarkable way.

In Ephesians we read that God has made us " sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and the Holy Ghost as the seal of our state whilst in Colossians we are " risen with Christ," and that life and its place are largely developed, but yet we are upon earth ourselves, and are to " seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Hence in Ephesians man is not looked at as a responsible person, to see what can be got out of him, and his responsibility met in grace as in the Romans; it begins with him as dead in sins. It is an entirely new thing. We are created in Christ Jesus. Even as to Christ Himself, it begins with Him as dead-as a man that is raised from the dead-and with man as " dead in trespasses and sins." It is not that man is a living sinner, as we have it in Romans, where the whole question of responsibility is looked at; but the man is dead in trespasses and sins, Christ has come down into the death that he is in. Christ is quickened out of it, and we are quickened together with Him, and raised up together, and seated together in heavenly places. Now Colossians does not go so far as this.

In the Epistle to the Romans man is always looked upon as living in the world; he is alive in his sins; and it takes him up in his responsibility, and brings fully home to Jew and Gentile their state. It does not speak of man being dead in sins, but he is to die because of being alive in sins. And when he is a Christian, he is still a living man in this world, Christ his life, and justified, and in Christ, but alive here though dead to sin, and exhorted to present his body a living sacrifice.

In Colossians you get man dead to sin through the cross of Christ, and then, though in this world, risen with Christ, as in Ephesians (which you do not get in Romans), but not, as there, carried on to sit in heavenly places. Here man is a risen man-not physically so, of course; his hope is laid up for him in heaven; he is not sitting there, but walking in this world as a risen man-risen in Christ; thus, being alive, he is connected with Christ; he is " quickened together with him," and therefore it is " having forgiven you all trespasses." Christ has come down to where we were lying dead in our sins, has borne and put them away by His death, and then we were quickened and raised up along with Him, all sins forgiven. Thus, when we were raised up with Him, we came clean out of the whole thing in which we were.

Still in Colossians we get far more of what Christ is in us, than of what we are in Christ. It is " Christ in you," not you in Christ; it is Christ in us down here. And this is what makes the epistle exceedingly precious; you have in it the fullest development of life here, in the Christian in his tried condition on the earth. It is " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." And then it is, " When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." He first puts the man as risen with Christ, and then his heart and affections all go up after Him to where He is at the right hand of God. There is no mention of the Holy Ghost in Colossians. It is the fullest bringing out of the life of a person in Christ still walking in this world.

In chapter 1 we see the condition and standing of the Christian, and the bearing of this on his walk. How blessedly he puts the Christian in his place through grace!

In the first place I read verse 14: " In whom we have redemption [through his blood], even the forgiveness of sins." I take this as the very starting-point-the forgiveness of sins. We get the blessed truth-this first truth, if you please-of grace, and joy, and peace; complete forgiveness through Christ. He has come down to us and redeemed us out of the condition we were in.

I am sure, the more we go on from day to day, the more important we see it is to get hold of this, though it be an elementary truth, now that there is so much seeking for an unfinished forgiveness. When I am brought into God's presence, that which I have upon my conscience is the sins I have committed; of course I cannot have those I have not. And therefore when persons are brought to the knowledge of saving forgiveness, the sins of which they have a sense of forgiveness are those that they have committed. But when it comes to those they have not, then comes the question, " What about the future? " And then arise in men's minds various ways of getting rid of them, from the gross form of absolution to the more subtle form of the Eucharist.

If you take a person who is upon Calvin's ground, he tells you to look back to your baptism; while the ordinary evangelical teaches you to look to a perpetual sprinkling again with the blood of Christ, a thing unknown to Scripture, and you will find he is never settled. But it is settled, and so completely that, if all my sins are not now set aside to all eternity, they never can be. Christ must otherwise take the cross and have the sins laid upon Him now, which is impossible, for He is in glory. " By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." That word " forever " there means not only eternally, but uninterruptedly; there is permanency in it before God, no discontinuance. It is not the word that speaks of eternity, though, of course, it is that too; but it is permanently perfect before God. As Christ is always (" forever " here is the same word) sitting at the right hand of God, our conscience is forever perfect; it is used in Heb. 10:12, to show He has nothing more to do.

In these days it is really important to get clear on the point of our sins being put away-I mean as to justification before God, and to see that I am before God always upon that ground, because Christ has borne all my sins. That is the first thing given here-the first elementary thing, though not the first thing named. It is an eternal redemption; it is never discontinued or interrupted, for God can never overlook that which has so perfectly glorified Himself.

Then we see another point which the apostle here speaks of. The whole state of things in heaven and in earth-they will all be reconciled-all things made new. And then he adds, " And you, who were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." The creation has got ruined, corrupted, defiled by sin, though, of course, it could not be guilty as active in it; and it will all be reconciled. But he begins now with those who were active in this ruin-who were " enemies in their minds." I am reconciled to God, brought back to Him in a divine righteousness that has been worked out for me; there is not a question between me and God. Here is infinite divine love. We are brought to God-reconciled to God; and it is a great point to be consciously before God, to enjoy His love, knowing that He has nothing against us, and so our hearts in entire confidence, able to think of Him and His favor, not of ourselves.

I am made the righteousness of God in Him, if I look at righteousness. There is not a single thing left; nothing but God to be enjoyed. There cannot be any unpleasant feeling between two people if they are thoroughly reconciled; so I am at home with God. All His gracious feelings are towards me, and I know it, and my heart is brought back to Him, and when He looks at me, I can say He looks at His own righteousness-at His Son, who is mine; I am loved as He loves Him. My heart believes it, and I come back to Him. I am reconciled to God.

This epistle especially insists on life-the divine nature which is born of God, and is capable of delighting in Him, and of understanding His righteousness. Having this life I know, through the gift of Christ, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, the divine favor resting upon me: and I can rest there, and that is a great thing. It is not merely that I am forgiven-that my sins are all blotted out, but that God has wrought-even for His own glory-wrought a work in which He Himself is perfectly glorified. By Him I believe in God. And what do I believe? Why, that He has brought me, associated with Christ, into His own presence; sin is gone, and I am made the righteousness of God in Him. I get to the very secret and spring of God's nature; I get the very source of what He is in Himself, and am able to enjoy it. I have not a word to say for myself; I was totally lost, and now I am totally saved, not according to what man ought to be, but according to what God is. If it were according to what man ought to be, there would be no salvation needed; but that is not it.

What put it into God's heart to give His Son? Why, nothing, of course! It was out of His own heart. And is not God righteous in the way He has saved us? Yes, I am " made the righteousness of God in him." He has " made peace through the blood of his cross," and thus reconciled us to Himself. This reconciliation is that in which God has perfectly glorified Himself, and it is to Himself that I am reconciled. The only part that we had in what has saved us was our sins. Imperfect in every sense, how was I reconciled? As redeemed, and quickened, and brought back to God according to that work that He has wrought. And I am not come halfway to God: " Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation." " I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself." He has brought me to Himself consistently with Himself.

Thus has the love of God to us been shown out in this reconciliation, Christ giving Himself for it; and it is a blessed thing for us that we are reconciled to God, according to what He is; and God is glorified in it. " If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." A wonderful thing it is! The enmity of the human heart against God showed itself to the uttermost at the cross where that work was wrought out, in virtue of which God has put Christ into glory at His own right hand, and God Himself is glorified. It is like the prodigal, most blessedly true, that, when you get the young man back to his home, you do not hear a word about him; it is all the joy of the Father; it is the Father who does everything; it is the display of what God is; and my heart is in consonance with Him.

Thus. I get reconciled to God. Things here are not reconciled yet-our poor bodies are not, as we know. " We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." It is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and never any labor on our part, because who did it? We? Not a bit of it, but God Himself!

Then I get another thing, which gives clearness and distinctness to this. " Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Here I get this blessed truth, that, though I am here in this poor body, compassed about with infirmity, and sin dwelling in me, so that if I am not walking in the presence of God, the flesh comes up, yet I get this-" Who hath made us meet? " It is not that there is no progress; there ought to be, and there is, because the Lord will make us make progress by chastening if we will not in any other way. At any rate progress is insisted on continuously: " He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." But you never find it mixed up with being meet. Progress is mixed up with experience, and divine government: meetness with Christ's work and our being with Him. There is the constant government of God with respect to our walk. He looks for progress in it; but here, where it is a question of reconciling us to Himself, there is no progress. There is no progress in the value of Christ's blood-shedding; there is no progress in the life that I have got-that is not in its nature- though there ought to be in the development of it. There must be daily progress in our walk; but, as to our meetness, it is the work of God; it is, " What hath God wrought? " The poor thief on the cross goes straight to paradise, made in one moment a fit companion for Jesus throughout eternity.

The world will not have this; many Christians will not have it, because they want their own righteousness. It is not here holiness-which you cannot insist on too much-but it is a question of righteousness. We are " accepted in the Beloved." Of course no fault is there, and no progress; and it injures holiness bringing it in here, because it confounds righteousness with holiness. When you talk of holiness, which is intimately connected with walk, there ought to be progress; but that is not righteousness. Holiness is abhorrence of evil. There is no holiness really developed in us, though a holy nature be there, till we understand we are the righteousness of God, because till then I cannot help mixing it up with my acceptance. Till then the question with me is, what the effect of sin will be as regards my acceptance before God. But

when I am settled as to my acceptance, and in the light as God is in the light, then it comes to be a detestation of sin for its own sake; not the evil act so much as sin-the root itself. And that is holiness.

I get then another truth, and this is, that I am delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. That may come in before the other if you will. I have changed my whole place. Darkness is the absence of the knowledge of God. The light shone in the darkness, " and the darkness comprehended it not." " If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another." " If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." People are in light or in darkness. It does not say according to light, or according to darkness. God is light, and if I am walking in darkness I do not know Him at all. Christ said, " This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Dreadful word for man! He is a slave of Satan. He does not say they are reprobate criminals, but that they are without God, and in darkness, though they may be amiable natures or unamiable.

In Christ, of course, the light was perfect. He went through this world with the consciousness that all the people He met with, of course, excepting the converted ones, were without God.

In all there is a consciousness-a sense-that man is a responsible being. Though he may try every kind of effort to get right with God, yet, if he has been committing sins, he knows he has been committing sins. There is conscience in everybody, but people confound the rule for conscience with the conscience itself. Man feels this is right, and that is wrong. Now Satan totally hides God from the conscience. I do not believe he can destroy the conscience, but he hides Him from it. Christ says, " I am the light of the world," and then He opens the man's eyes and he sees. All the rest were under the power of darkness. There it was all openly so. The world is utterly without God; there is not one common thought between God and their souls.

Well, we are " delivered from the power of darkness," but is that all? No; we are " translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." That is where we are brought to. Truth could not come by itself. As truth came in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, there could not but love come too. He does not say " translated into the light," though that is true; but translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." The power of darkness is the rule of Satan over this world; and by vanity, money, knowledge even-by all that is going-he blinds the eyes of men and maintains his power over them; he uses all these various things to keep man without God. Just like Cain, he embellishes his city, and sets it all up and makes everything as pleasant as he can without God. And we are delivered from all that, and brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

It is the kingdom-the place where Christ has the rule. It is the effect of redemption. The power of love has come in and has delivered us, and has brought us into the kingdom that He has set up. In the cross the full power of Satan was destroyed; there Satan brought everything to bear. The apostles ran away, and Satan bad everybody against the Son of God. For it was Satan's hour and the power of darkness.

He carried the world with him against the Son of God. So the Spirit " will convince the world of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Satan came against the Son of God as the prince of this world, now he is cast out. The cross was the full enmity of man against God, under Satan's power; but he has been met; his power has been judged-it is all destroyed. If we go and listen to him in the flesh, he can ensnare us; but he has no power; if we only resist the devil, he will flee from us; it is not said we shall overcome. As to this, the cross was the very thing that God allowed, so that in it his power might be destroyed. At the cross Satan governed the whole world; there the exercise of his power came to a crisis; he pushed men on to crucify the Son of God; and then all his power was destroyed. So now it is, " Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations "-not sins, of course; we have only to resist the devil in them, and he will flee from us. We are delivered from the power of darkness, and passed over to the place where Christ is, and spoken of as only here; not only into light out of darkness, but associated in the kingdom with the only-begotten object of His special love- the kingdom of God's dear Son-brought into that. We have got this place into which grace has brought us; we are " made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

But then we have it all in these poor earthen vessels, though " risen with Christ." And therefore we are to " seek those things which are above." It is, " Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead "-dead to the law, dead to sin, quickened together with Christ, and, " When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." The risen Christ at God's right hand is our life, and yet we are not taken out of this world.

And then I get, " Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." I get three " worthies " in the epistles. " Worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory," in Thessalonians. " Worthy of the vocation," in Ephesians; practically the same thing, the Holy Ghost having us for His habitation, the habitation of God through the Spirit as a present thing. And here, it is " Worthy of the Lord." My path through this world is to be worthy of Him. My life should be the expression of Christ; my life, ways, everything that Christ expressed.

" Fruitful unto every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Here I get growth. I get no growth in reconciliation: there is no growth in the value of Christ's blood; but the moment I get life, there is " increasing " or " growing by the knowledge of God." I know God, and can say, That is not fit for God. I purify myself. It does not say he is as pure as Christ, but that he is to " purify himself as he is pure." As I get my eye purified, I see better; I get my " senses exercised to discern good and evil," and the more I get on, the more I see what I am getting on to.

Here I could say a word (as I find it current in certain circles that perfection is attainable here) that there is no perfection for the Christian except Christ in glory. If I am a risen man I take Him on earth as a pattern for my steps, but not what I am to attain to. Christ down here is unattainable, because Christ had no sin, and I have sin. There is no perfection down here-you never find any maintaining that there is, who do not lower it to Adam condition. I seek to walk as Christ walked, not after the flesh at all, but the point I am aiming at and looking to is Christ in glory. It is " when he shall appear " that I shall be like Him, and not till then. I try to be as like Him here as ever I can be. " This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling "-the calling above-" of God in Christ Jesus." I have no calling down here; there is the calling above-the whole thing that God has set before us.

People say, God cannot give you a rule you cannot attain to. But I say, God never gives you a rule which you can attain-never! First, there was the law. Could man attain to that as in the flesh where it was given to him? It was not subject to the law of God, nor can be. And now there is Christ in glory. Can I attain to that? Never here! But I press on to it; it is before me, and I never attain it till I get to Him. This object that I am aiming at governs me where I am; " I live by the faith of the Son of God "; and, if you are not living by Him glorified, you have not got Him at

all. If you look for perfection down here, you have lost your object; it is a complete blunder in the very nature of the thing. Christ in glory is the object to which our minds ought to be always looking on. We are predestined " to be conformed to the image of his Son," and, if you are looking at anything else, you are not looking at that.

And now, mark, as regards the path down here, we are " strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power." Is not that a wonderful thing to say? And what is the fruit of it? It sounds a poor thing-" patience! " But I say, you try and see if there be not a working of will in you that does not like to be thwarted. That is not patience! " Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." See if you do not want divine power for patience. " If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." This is the first thing: " Strengthened with all might unto all patience." And what next? " Long-suffering." As we see it in Ephesians, " I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering." And then follows " joyfulness." The moment the will is broken-my will bowing to God's will-bearing with patience everything I come across-then joy is unhindered.

Thus we have got the place in which we are set, and then the behavior with which we are to walk. What the apostle looks for is that we should be " filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." But do we not often find ignorance of His will? Where we do, there is always our own will working. He looks for a spiritual conformity to Christ's mind to so mark our mind, and walk, and ways, that our life should bear the expression of the life of Christ. It is not merely avoiding positive sins; it is far more than that. The question is, What will please Christ? I do not say a thing is wrong-not merely wrong; but what will please Christ? The question, beloved friends, really is, Is Christ in our hearts enough to make us seek only one thing upon this earth until we get to Him where He is? If our hearts are set on Christ our one desire will be to " walk worthy of the Lord," and then the world will not know us.

Thus we see, that, not only are our sins gone-put away through the precious blood of Christ, but that we are brought into this new place in Christ, " delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son," and that, being thus brought there, we have now to walk in it " worthy of the Lord." Just as I would send a child out into the world, and say to him, Now walk worthy of your father and your family. But how could he do it if he did not know his father?

God wants us to be "holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight." That is what He would have us-what is pleasing to Himself. The earnest seeking to walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing; forgiven, justified, reconciled to God, fit for the inheritance of the saints in light, fit for the kingdom of God's dear Son, and sent now to walk down here in the consciousness of our place up there.

The Lord only give His saints to have a deeper truer sense in this way of the place into which He has brought them in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they may know what it is to be brought to God according to the acceptance that is in Christ Jesus.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Doctrinal 9, Christ in Colossians 1

ON the whole I should judge that pro panton is not merely before all things in point of time, nor the head of them when taken up in power. Christ is prototokos pases ktiseos, He has this headship in place, because He has created them all. He must therefore have existed before them; and to say merely that He was before creatures as they are does not say a great deal. I apprehend that it is His natural superiority, not taken place, to all things, as having a being independent of, superior and prior to, them all; more than prototokos, which is a consequence of His being their Creator, more than priority in time; but distinctness of being superior to all in nature, independent of any place He took, and existing without them, hence in a nature which was superior to them all, referred to them all, but naturally as wholly above them; a divine place, because it was of nature in Himself; not given but estin, what He is, not egeneto. Autos estin pro p. And what follows confirms this; for all things subsist and consist as a whole, and the parts have each their sustaining and ordering energy in Him. He was first alone, independent of them, and then, when they existed, is the constant sustainer of them in the co-ordination in which they subsist, as of their subsistence itself. Still He is viewed as the Christ, but it is what the Christ is. We have no en in Heb. 1, but elalesen en. All the rest is mediatorial in character, though the Mediator is fully recognized as being God-indeed it is the object of the chapter, but it is the Christ who is recognized as being so.

So in Col. 1 you have His place, only founded on what He is, and His creative and sustaining power, the creation having been en auto, the pro panton as said not being the place He takes in virtue of creation in the resulting order of God, but what He is in His personal place and glory, always in respect of the panton naturally, in divine place, power, and priority.

As to the church estin arche prototokos ek ton nekron ina genetai en p. autos pr. It is only by resurrection; and here we have result, what He becomes general. And then we get the resulting effect, and how far it is fulfilled.

Thus we have of the Christ what He did, verse 16; what He is, verse 17 and half a; then what He becomes, or will be.

Verse 15 is His general place and title as manifested, but fully accomplished at the end; His relationship in His place toward God and toward the creature, His mediatorial glory according to counsels. Verse 19 is part of the egeneto, though here only the eidokia as to it. The fact is in chapter 2: 9, only it is not here His personality as one. Then in verse 20 et seqq. comes the effect.

John is simpler, speaking but of His Person. He was God, and all was created by Him. The rest is egeneto, as particularly verse 14. Colossians is more complicated, because, while saying what involves it, it does not state His divinity, but gives the place rather than the nature, though that place be naturally, or rather supernaturally, above or before all and the Creator's, while John and Hebrews state that He is God.

En has the force of what characterizes by the power which operates in that governed by it, dia used in similar connection is of course instrumental. Thus en auto ektisthe to panta. This past act of creation was wrought in the power which was personally in Him. For this reason He is prototokos when He personally takes His place in creation. So continuously all things consist en auto. It is the same power which continuously holds all together in the unity of the kosmos. When He speaks of the instrumental action by which all have been and are created, it is dia and eis auton. In verse 19 en has the ordinary sense of " in," or place, pan to pleroma being the nominative (compare chap. 2: 9), and this will reconcile di autou: so verse 22, en to somati, and dia you thanatou. So en in a lesser case, verse 29, en dunamei, and chapter 2: 2, en

agape: cf. 2: 23; as often en sarki, en pneumati, ye are en pn; Rom. 8.

Thus the creation of all things was characterized and wrought by the inherent power which was in the Lord Jesus Christ, and all things subsist together as one ordered and law-governed whole by the same constant and inherent power. When the pleroma is spoken of, then His Person is distinguished as the One by whom and for whom, He being to take it personally as the prototokos. All the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him, and by Him to reconcile: prototokos is what He is in creation, the reason oti en auto ektisthe. It is what He is, not His divine nor His human nature. Cf. 2: 9, to, where we have the pleroma tes theotetos in Him on one side, and we are peplerornenoi in Him on the other. This is consequently the place He has taken before God, head of all principality and power. The pleroma of Godhead dwells in Him, but when He takes a place as man before God, a man, but personally and above all principalities as man. The way in which the Godhead and Person of Christ are connected, or both, before the mind of the Spirit, is striking in what follows. Verse 13 is clearly God; verse 14 passes on to Christ. He has taken it out of the way, beginning a new sentence grammatically distinct really.

The prototokos clearly holds a special place in the revelation of God's counsels. He takes it as man; He takes it as Son; but He takes it as having created all, all things having been created en auto. As a fact it is His creation, but also dia, looked at as the actual instrument of God's counsels; the object also, all is eis auton. But then in sovereign grace He is also prototokos amongst many brethren. So the prototokos is introduced into the world, and the angels worship Him. But then all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him, and we are complete, pepleromenoi, in Him. And now continually all things subsist in Him. Heb. 1, though the same general truth, presents more a personal Messiah, and so manifestation. God has spoken en uio. He is the express image of His substance. Indeed in Colossians we have the eikon of the invisible God in the prototokos, and all this is in a man! It is a wonderful thing, and the place among men holds the first place, as in Prov. 8 The church, as His body, is another line of thought, though closely connected. In John it is more the Son in and with the Father, and we in Him, more personal and relationship though it is in. With the Father it is ex (1 Cor. 8:6), so Rom. 11:36, ex, dia, eis. In Heb. 1 it is di on and di on. But this is another thought.

Letters 2, Gospel and the Church, Ministries of the

As regards Col. 1, it is long a settled thought with me that there are here two ministries. You may see two headships, two reconciliations, and two ministries; ministry in the whole creation under heaven, and ministry of the church to complete the word of God. The revelation of the mystery had been reserved till now. S. is very anxious that these ministries should not be separated, that is, the church and the gospel of salvation. They sometimes are partially, outside brethren: revivalist preaching characterizes the separation. One visit I made to Canada for six weeks only was to connect the two, and they have gone pretty well since. It is a question which occupies people often.- is greatly exercised by it, but now passing from the first into the second: partially from the second to the first. Few can so adapt themselves to all as to be each in its place; but where Christ is fully known, and His claims, it gives a tone to the first which leads on to the second: where it is only man's salvation this is not the case. God may allow this to carry out and hurry on the last testimony. Blessed be His name! He is above all our weaknesses. I am not sure but that there was more union of the two at the first of the work of brethren. So many evangelists have come out since on all sides without church truth that the two have been more separated. It is one of the serious practical points of the present day; but, I repeat, God is above all this, and will accomplish His work.

Of the work here I know not what to tell you: inquiry, a good deal; several found peace; a little conscience, but an unheaved or rather unmoved mass, for it is heaving within itself, and all whose souls stir dissatisfied. I have at the least a dozen ministers, one or two several times, but, with rare exceptions, they are the farthest from spiritual wants and spiritual intelligence of any. It is especially a sowing time. I do not know that I have much ground for staying here very long: I wait to see the cloud move, probably passing by Philadelphia to see them. Thence I suppose west, by what route I know not. The Lord be with you, and keep you all in peace.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Boston

[1875].

Letters 2, What Death Is to the Believer; Large Heart in the Narrow Path

Your letter gave me comfort, because I see you yourself are getting into liberty. I think there are many who are not, where even it is not apparent, because there is no pressure on the conscience from without, and no exercise of it much within. But grace has set us in Christ before God. Holiness by law will not do; it is not holiness....

We had a very calm passage, for I continue my letter from Dublin, as you see. We broke bread, and had preaching every evening but the first and second and the last, as we were approaching Lough Foyle.... We went on to Liverpool, and had a telegram that dear Mrs. was to be buried yesterday, so started the next morning. We had a peaceful and happy meeting.... So goes this world, but life and death are only parts of the same passage, and life far the hardest of the two; for to die is to go to Him, to live to be present in the body, but absent from Him. Still it is a privilege to represent Him in this world; but who is sufficient for it? for, if we walk tolerably, still if the heart is not full of Christ, what issues from it is not properly from Him; there is not the spiritual intelligence of what suits—" Worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing."

There is plenty of work in America, and my heart longed to see the brethren in the west again, but it could not well be; but the Lord sees them always, and I reckon upon His grace for them. I trust I shall hear of them. The brethren here are at peace and happy, thank God. Still there ought to be more power, and loose activity is rife enough, though as to gatherings there is nothing solid among them.... It is of all importance to keep a large heart, with the deep conviction that a close following of Christ ourselves can alone maintain a clear testimony, alone is faithfulness. My impression is they want being fed with Christ in England, but the personal faith which feeds on Him alone keeps the soul, and keeps it in true progress.

Do not be afraid of full grace. Be well sure that does not mar holiness; whatever deadens the conscience does, but this does not. Would a child's sense of a mother's love weaken its desire to please her? And as to power which we need, in grace alone it is found: then press consistency with our calling as much as you please, you cannot do better. Fellowship in the heart with Christ keeps the sense of our standing in Christ steady, and is the saving power of the heart practically in our walk. May He—oh, may He keep us near Himself!

But I must close. I expect (D.V.) to go to London the coming week, and July 9th or 10th turn north for a meeting, and to visit various gatherings; but I look for leisure for study work, when the Lord grants it me. I trust there was blessing in Canada from my last visit, but it is that that must be continually renewed to go on well: we cannot live on yesterday's manna. My voyage has rested me a little, for I was quite knocked up, and I am at work pretty much as usual. Thankful for all the kindness received in Canada, and the Lord's goodness to me wherever I have been, looking to His grace to occupy till He comes, and then see Himself—infinite grace 1 -and all perfect, and so infinite rest, God's rest.

Ever affectionately yours, dear brother, with thanks for frequent care in love. Christ be with you.

Dublin,

June 23rd.

Bible Treasury: Volume N4, Giving Thanks to the Father

It is impossible to make too much of the Lord Jesus. He, Who as a babe received the homage of the wise men from the East (men, who, it has been finely said, though accustomed to instruct youthful princes, could only worship that little Prince), He, equally with the Father, is worthy of the fullest and most exalted honor. When Thomas addressed Him as “My Lord and my God,” our Savior accepted the homage. In the Epistles the Father and the Son are habitually coupled in a way that would be inconceivable if Jesus were not God. All this is beyond dispute. But because through grace we are free from the ruinous error of Arianism, Unitarianism, etc., we must not slip into another error, less common no doubt (for it is not a question of denying the Deity of a Person in the Godhead), but still very grievous; we must not practically exclude the Father from our adoration.

We “give thanks unto the Father.” Does this mean at the prayer or the open meeting only? Nay, it is a grave and deplorable omission when the Lord Jesus only is addressed at the breaking of the bread. It all springs of course from the one-sidedness that is inseparable from trusting the human mind; and believers are by no means exempt from this snare. Perhaps such are more liable to this infirmity for the simple reason that the truth, even partial truth, when received from God, claims and produces the devoted allegiance of the soul. And there is the deepest claim on our affections in the humiliation and sufferings of the Lord Jesus. He, and He only, suffered for our sins; He loved and gave Himself for me. What believer's heart could be dead or dull to such an appeal as this? But in fact both the Father and the Son are to be worshipped now; as in the Revelation we see them both the joint object of heaven's adoration; and the Holy Spirit using the word as the standard is the only safe guide as to where and when. Undoubtedly when we worship God as God, we include Father and Son—and Holy Spirit. There is room and place for all.

The writer is aware that some think that the worship of the Father is on a higher plane than thanksgiving to the Son in the breaking of bread. And beyond doubt it calls for more maturity in the truth, and more spiritual power in the worshipper. But in reality can anything be higher than the adoration of the blessed Lord, once the holy sufferer, now the risen Head and exalted Savior? Everything should lead up to that supreme act of thanksgiving at the holy Supper. Yet even there the Spirit of God might guide, not to separate the Persons of the Godhead, but to join them in praise, and so to direct address of the Father, though there is doubtless a peculiar fitness in addressing the Lord Jesus at His table. But who is entitled to dictate or exclude, since scripture shows us the contrary? Let us abide simple and subject to God's word.

There is indeed to be no bondage to human thought or will or fancy, but contrariwise holy liberty. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Only let us remember that it was the Father that sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, the Father that spared not His Son, but delivered Him up freely for us all, that the Father of lights begets believers by the word of truth and of His own will, and, last but not least, that He seeks worshippers and that the true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and truth. This is the testimony of our Lord Himself.

It is the Father Who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. None more jealous than He for His Father's glory, unless it be the Father for the Son's. As scripture abundantly proves we should thus exalt both in our praises. Let us beware of any unauthorized regulations, and of setting one against the other in any way.

Enough has been said to enforce a most important truth that seems in danger of being disregarded. Let us heed it and worship both the Father and the Son; and let us recollect too the claims of God as God. “For God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in Spirit and truth.” Indeed all the names and titles of the Godhead have an inexhaustible fullness, not least surely the name of Father. “I have declared unto them thy Name” said our Lord—the name of Father. What infinite love is wrapped up in it Elevate the human conception of fatherhood to the highest degree, and we fail to touch the fringe of that divine relationship. “I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.” It is too, not , which latter term embraces all. And to know Him leads to the worship of Him, to giving Him thanks now and forever.

R. B.

Christian Treasury: Volume 4, Man as a Child of Adam

Man, as a child of Adam, is not at the center of the immense system of God's ways. Out of Christ and without Christ, he does not know the center: he speculates, without foundation and without end, only to lose himself more and more. His knowledge of good and evil, and the energy of his moral faculties only lead him farther astray because he employs them on higher questions than those which Simply relate to physical things. Consequently, they produce in him the need of reconciling apparently inconsistent principles which cannot be reconciled without Christ. Moreover the tendency of man is always to make himself, as he is, the center of everything, and this renders everything false.

Christians then ought to walk with simplicity in the ways of the Lord, even as they have received Him, and their progress ought to be in the knowledge of Christ, the true center and fullness of all things.

The Dangers of Philosophy and Religion: Judaism Us the Religion of the Flesh

When man occupies himself philosophically with all things, the insufficiency of his own resources always throws him into the hands of an intellectual leader, and into tradition and. when religion is the subject into traditions which develop the religion of the flesh, and are suited to its powers and tendencies.

In those days Judaism had the highest pretensions to this kind of religion. It allied itself with human speculations and adopted them, and even pursued them assiduously offering at the same time proofs of divine origin, and a testimony to the unity of the Godhead which the absence of the grossness of pagan mythology and the meeting of human consciousness of the divine rendered credible. This relative purity tended to remove—for enlightened minds—that which was disgusting in the pagan system. The Jewish system had, by the death of Jesus, lost all pretension to be the true worship of God, and was therefore suited (by the advantages it offered in the comparative purity of its dogmas) to be an instrument of Satan in opposing the truth. At all times it was adapted to the flesh and was founded on the elements of this world, because by its means, when owned of God. God was proving man in the position man stood in. But now God was no longer in it, and the Jews, moved by envy, urged the Gentiles to persecution. Judaism allied itself to pagan speculation in order to corrupt and sap the foundations of Christianity and destroy its testimony.

In principle it is always thus. The flesh may appear for a time to despise tradition, but that which is purely intellectual cannot stand in the midst of humanity without something religious. It has not the truth nor the world which belongs to faith, and for an immense majority superstition and tradition are needed, that is to say, a religion which the flesh can lay hold of, and which suits the flesh. God by His power may preserve a portion of the truth, or allow the whole to be corrupted, but in either case true Christian position and the doctrine of the assembly are lost.

We may indeed find philosophy apart from the religion of the flesh, and the latter apart from the former, but in this case philosophy is impotent and atheistic, the religion of the flesh narrow, legal, superstitious, and, if it can be so persecuting.

Human Wisdom and Men's Traditions in Opposition to a Heavenly Christ

Who Answers All Our Need In our chapter we find philosophy and the emptiness of human wisdom united with the traditions of men, characterized as "the elements of this world." in opposition to Christ. for we have a heavenly Christ who is a perfect contrast to the flesh in man living on earth, a Christ in whom is all wisdom and fullness, and the reality of all that which the law pretended to give, or which it presented in figure. At the same time, He is an answer to all our wants. This the Apostle develops here, showing death and resurrection with Him as the means of participating in it.

What We Have and Are in the Person of Christ

All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily. Instead of the misty speculations of men and fantastic axons, we have the fullness of God bodily, in a real human body, and thus efficaciously for us, in the Person of Jesus Christ. In the second place, we are complete in Him; we need nothing out of Christ. On the one side, we have, in Him, God perfectly presented in all His fullness; on the other side, we possess in Him perfection and completeness before God. We are lacking in nothing as to our position before God. What a truth! What a position! God, in His perfect fullness, in Christ as Man, we in Him before God, in the perfection of what He is—in Him who is Head of all principality and power, before which man in his ignorance would incline to bend the knee! We are in Him, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells as to His Person, in Him, who is above all principality as to His position and His rights as Christ. Man exalted on high.

J.N. Darby

Christian Truth: Volume 5, Man's Faculties Lead Him Astray

"As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and confirmed in the faith, even as ye have been taught." Col. 2:6, 7.

When we have received Christ, all the rest is but a development of that which He is, and of the glory which the counsels of God have connected with His Person. Knowledge, or pretended knowledge, outside this, does but turn us away from Him, withdraw our hearts from the influence of His glory, throw us into that which is false, and lead our souls into connection with the creation apart from God, and without possessing the key to His purposes. Thus, since man is incapable of fathoming that which exists, and of explaining it to himself, his efforts to do so cause him to invent a mass of ideas that have no foundation, and to endeavor to fill up the void that is found in his knowledge through his ignorance of God by speculations, in which (because he is at a distance from God) Satan plays the chief part without man's suspecting it.

Man, as a child of Adam, is not at the center of the immense system of God's ways. Out of Christ and without Christ, he does not know the center; he speculates, without foundation and without end, only to lose himself more and more. His knowledge of good and evil, and the energy of his moral faculties, do but lead him astray the more, because he employs them on higher questions than those which simply relate to physical things; and they produce in him the need of reconciling apparently inconsistent principles which cannot be reconciled without Christ. Moreover the tendency of man is always to make himself, as he is, the, center of everything; and this renders everything false.

Christians then ought to walk with simplicity in the ways of the Lord, even as they have received Him; and their progress ought to

Letters 1, Communion With God; the Work in France; Fruit of Sifting; the Highest, Easiest Lost Truth

I was on the move when I got your kind letter, so that I could not answer it at once, but I thank you much for it. It has not been my desire to interfere in matters in England, until I could do it seriously on the Lord's behalf, as called upon of Him to do it, and thus pursue it with the advised certainty of His calling as His service and obedience. It makes all the difference as to one's work, in certainty and effect too; indeed, nothing else is properly work. Save in two places (and in the second only with one person) where I was specially asked, I did not touch this question in England. I was in general very happy, 'always indeed, as to the course this matter is taking. Every prevision of God's working in it has taken place, and been surpassed considerably as to blessing. Individual souls have been exercised, and much more reality in Christ exists, without which all is nothing.

A mass of brethren had received blessed truths, superficially though really, and they were unconnected with an inward walk which associates the soul with Christ in them. The first wind blew much of this down; but where the inward state of the soul laid the ground for it, all this deepened exceedingly, and strengthened, and made to understand the relation between the soul and Christ in these things; and a large increase of real growth has been the consequence.

I blame myself as unfaithful in passing over many truths for the sake of what is called peace. And God took the matter in hand, and now I doubt not the ground of the truth which God is using will be far more deeply felt and understood, and a path according to it more intelligently pursued, by those who through grace have laid hold on it. This I thankfully believe God is doing. A humbling sifting was needed for it, but in gracious love and faithfulness, that He has sent us. It will put to the test whether Christ is preferred to brethren (even though loved), to ease, to everything; but this is blessed in fruit, because He will be everything, and thus links our souls to the time when He will be. I regret what was attempted at-; I regret what was done at-... But what was done at-and-does not affect me, because it was but a needed expression of what was to bring about the sifting. Hence I remained, and remain quiet. Where God is acting, it is useless for man to put in his hand.

I do not speak of fidelity when in the circumstances. My path is to consider it a settled question, and to go on in faithfulness in the truth, delivering according to what is given to me, when the case is presented to charity, as from any other evil, but to seek positive good. What is of the world will sink in, somewhere or other. What is not attached to Christ by the Holy Ghost, according to the needed truth by which He is now acting in and on His church, will fail in the conflict somewhere; but I act on the quiet conviction of entrusted truth, and the assurance that what does not receive it, cannot bear its fruits without agitation. Those who do not see what the church is, will not stand. But that is not the wickedness itself, but they will not be capable of holding good against it; and I act accordingly, or rather walk, acting only where called on. One may rest sometimes with God, as well as act with Him; for one cannot act without Him, save to trouble, even though meaning to do good. Along with steadfastness in testimony, the saints in general want building up in Christ, and also personal leaning on the grace of God towards them.

In general, abroad we have to be thankful. In France there is very much to be thankful for, and here in Switzerland they have been revived since winter. In Neuchatel there is positive blessing. I was in a part of France lately where I had not been before, in the Doubs (Montbeliard), where the blessing is greater and more extensive than I at all even knew, though I knew there was such. They are walking in a good deal of simplicity and love (though Satan tried hard to make mischief in one place), with little public preaching help, and a good deal of dependence on the Lord. The world in general has the conviction, that if a man is converted he ought to be there. Save a very few, if any, Christians are there, and the world, as men say, "go to church," but unless one they are all poor. Query—If the rich came, would they remain as simple? The gracious Lord that loves them, keeps them! What a mercy to be kept in the secret of His grace!

My feeling, and indeed conviction, is that there is decided progress, and that of God; His Spirit is working, though with needed (needed through the state of souls) slowness, in the godly discernment in conscience of what is right and wrong—a coming to themselves in the saints. This is the only work of any account: this we must have or nothing; I decline all else as useless. Deputations, and going up to Bethesda, and all such like, are useless and worse, save as God uses everything (and in this I have full confidence), without denying that individuals may do it conscientiously according to the light they have. But it must come to a conscientious judgment in one's own conscience of evil by the Spirit of Christ, or nothing. And this will always be a humble, not a haughty thing. The rest we must leave behind or cast away.

My purpose is to come to England as soon as ever I can. I am bringing out the second volume of "Etudes sur la Parole"- the only definite thing which keeps me—but paying any needed visit on the way. I purpose (D.V.) to come to England as soon as that is done. I ran over for a few weeks, finding I could not get to stay, and was very glad I did.

One great thing we have to seek is, that communion with Christ Himself be as strong as all the doctrines we hold or teach. Without that the doctrine itself will have no force: besides, we ourselves shall not be with God in it, and, after all, that is all. Peace be with you, dear brother, and much of this communion. It is easy for the life within to decline before the outward exercise of gift or activity does. I am sure the brethren want to be more exercised with Christ themselves. When the full truth God is using is not held and walked in, there cannot be community of service—that is, where it is denied; for there may be ignorance of it. And further, what would be called the highest truth is the only safeguard against the principles of the worst error. If I am not one with Christ—that is, if I depart from this—I am ready to Judaize and worship angels. It is the easiest lost, because it requires the flesh to be mortified, and that living faith should be in exercise spiritually; and if lost, admits the worst errors. Farewell. Peace be with all the brethren.

Ever your affectionate brother in. Christ.

Lausanne

[Received], November 30th, 1850.

Letters 1, Separation of Plymouth; Principles Exercised at the Beginning; the Reformation; Separation From Evil; Separation From System

I have a profound conviction that the question with God, and that in grace on His part, goes much deeper than the particular evil which gave occasion to the break up of Plymouth. I agree with all you say, but if it was the mere negation of evil, the case would be sad; because I have never found, though this be a bounden duty, that it sufficed to gather. I believe at my deliverance from bondage in 1827-8, God opened up certain truths needed for the church. I believe that, though holding and seeking to help souls by them, for what was called peace and union I swamped them, had not faith to make them good in service. I do not enter into all the questions how far it was permitted, or how far grace entered, or natural dislike of conflict, but so it was. God would not allow this; and what was founded on this unfaithfulness, associated with what was opposed, was broken up. I have no regret at this now, though the passage was painful. It is the grand reason why I have left the exercise to go on without interfering. It is no use attempting to daub with untempered mortar.

I have, as you know, long said that for my part I begin again, that my proper work now begins. In saying this, I only confess my unfaithfulness, but on the other hand it is an encouragement, for to begin with God is always an encouragement. He has never lost time—alas, we often. But I have faith in what I believe, only I feel it humbling even that God should be obliged (so to speak) to do so much outside what I am confident is His truth. It does not enough absorb the work. This, however, is true, that the truth now given by grace is not merely foundation or elementary, as at the Reformation, but while setting that again on its true basis, builds up and brings out that needed for the latter days—that which was earliest, and always, is soonest lost—" holding the Head from which all the body," &c. Hence people can content themselves with a certain Christianity which saves, which gives elementary truth, which has delivered from popish corruption and the like, without that which puts faith to the test.

But the question will go, I do not doubt, on large grounds in England. It is the question which is now exercising it as to prophecy. This will require patience, for the great body have not the ground on which to judge these questions: they have not faith in the doctrine of the church. Now Ebrington Street brought down to its worst form, not ignorance, but opposition to this truth which is what God would have brought out, and—as the corruption of what was best is the worse corruption—was gone as far as possible. I doubt altogether that Raleigh Street has as its foundation anything solid which would hold it together as a whole. It is possible spiritual power might with patience` have formed it into something consistent, but as a fact there was little common foundation truth on which it stood. Negations are nothing to build on, though conscience be a ground of conduct. This many have not understood; and because separation from evil may have been a duty, have supposed it to be a ground of union and gathering. It is not.... I should have been much disposed to begin afresh at——, not as rejecting many dear brethren, far from it, but that they and I may enjoy together the refreshings of God's love in joy and peace: and this is a general principle with me. Perhaps continuance at might have got it on this ground, but across many wearisome difficulties.

As to the judgment they form of my separation and all the rest, even supposing there might be mistakes, I am more indifferent than as to the form of the paper I am writing on: because they have no perception at all, I am satisfied, either of the principles on which I acted, or on which God has dealt, or on which He would have us to act. The only point on which I have ever questioned whether I might have acted better or more -wisely, they know nothing about, nor any one else. I bless God for it now, though that does not justify me, for I do not think I knew, or in a certain sense ought to have known, the evil of Ebrington Street the least as I know it now. I leave all that, their judgment and their course, entirely out of question.

I should in England, as indeed I have done, go on my own ground, the Lord's, I believe, and if they liked to come, on that, well—if not, well. I shall go on no other; alone or with beloved brethren, I shall go on what I believe the Lord wills I should go on.... I am quite decided to walk in what I am satisfied is the Lord's. If they do not like it, I have no desire nor thought of quarreling: we shall not walk together. The Lord will judge who is right. That judgment I accept beforehand, and bow to it with my whole heart. Hence it is I am in no hurry, and, I may add, full of confidence. I see abundant failure in myself, but it is not where others see it—just the contrary; but I believe in the Lord's, grace.

I believe He has confided a testimony to me, however feeble I may be and unworthy. I do not say that to the exclusion of others of His servants, but as that for which I am responsible. I believe I failed in it, and I trust now in my little measure I may not. Until I am myself in England, I refrain from all interference in what passes there, because I wait upon God, not being yet called upon to act. The cloud seems rising to lead me back.... In general there is considerable blessing in the work, with the usual opposition.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

[Received] February 25th, 1851.

Letters 3, Lord's Day; the Sabbath; Socrates, The

My mind is extremely remote from any purpose of institution, but I was led by our conversation to look into the evidences of the practice of the early church upon the subject, on the principles of which, though feeling the opportunity of instruction, I felt no doubt. For I cannot but feel that the religion of which we profess membership, is not an imposition of observance, a law of carnal commandments contained in ordinances (as indeed it would contradict the whole purpose and counsel of God), but an admission to privileges, exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature; not merely in our hearts, but that, in respect of our consciences, no man should judge us in respect of a sabbath, or of a new moon, "which are a shadow of things to come." Nor is this any license to evil, because we are only so far become therein free, as in that we live we live unto God, for all that is in the flesh can never be free from condemnation of the law; but we as alive again from the dead, are not under the law, but made free. True it is that, being in the body in respect of its weakness, even to those who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, grace is ministered; also under ordinance, of which I see Christ Himself, the comprehensive center; and, for that man is prone to go astray and not only in respect of individuals but more especially when according to the dispensation of God congregations take place, the order of righteousness must be maintained; in this respect laws must be enacted. Yet this is no part properly of Christianity, but the appendage of its dispensation; and even in scripture itself I distinguish between these two things. My mind would gladly go into the nature of precept, which it has had great delight in inquiring into, but it would be far too wide a subject to indulge in. However, in what I give you full leave to account a speculation if you please, I remember, though admiring that God should have afforded

such apprehension to a heathen, Socrates ended where Christianity began. He speaks of all the appetites of his flesh as nails which fastened him down to wretchedness and misery, and speaks of death as a benefit which should deliver his soul from this; his other hopes seem to be wholly vague.

But if we consider the nature of the law we shall find its end to be rest from labor; the desire of entering into rest was the foundation of the hopes of the [Jewish system]. It knew the labor of the present, and rest therefore morally was its hope; to it, therefore, the sabbath was afforded, the symbol of that rest derived from the cessation of God from the labors of creation. But we are admitted in some sort by hope within the veil; we know that that rest is not a resting day nor night from the undivided glorifying of the ever living God. This is the new life. To us therefore the earnest is afforded, by Him who is the resurrection, was the Author and Firstborn of the new creation, of this living rest which remaineth to the people of God, aptly signified by the Lord's day. Both, you see, affirmed one day as God's, the witness of His universal right; and, so far, both concur. But to us the mystery is far more fully revealed, and we have the Lord's day—not a compulsory recognition of right, but the blessed pledge of our inheritance amongst the saints. To him therefore who refuses this, and will not recognize himself as the child of eternity, which is all God's, but will put himself under the law from the freedom of son-ship; to him the Sabbath arises again, an unalterable claim of a jealous God. I cannot enter here into the statement of how I distinguish Christianity from all that preceded it, or is out of it, of which the Jewish system is an imputably defined covenant; but I go to what led me to write to you, to communicate to you what my books afforded me on the view which struck your mind.

Now the state of the case seems that all the East observed the Sabbath as well as Sunday; at least the observance of it was settled at the time of Athanasius, when there was, as on Sundays, communion (which, generally speaking, was on these days only), with this difference that they always stood praying on Sunday; indeed that from the first century the Ebionites always observed Saturday as well as Sunday, but they observed it as Jews. They commenced in the first century of Christianity, and became a distinct sect in Hadrian's time. The origin of its observance seems uncertain in the East; it was observed as a festival by the church except at Milan. As a fact it was introduced into Spain about A.D. 300 by the Council of Illiberis.... Constantine passed a law that Christians should not work of a Sunday, except agriculturists, who were not to neglect the seasons God afforded them.1

I adduce these evidences of the course and practice of the church then as to the Sabbath and its nature. All refer the observance of Saturday to deference for the Jews for its origin. Augustine is the first, I find, who directs that the honors of the Jewish Sabbath should be transferred to Sunday2 At this time the Gallic councils forbid rural labor. In the sixth century early, the council of Orleans says, " Because the people are persuaded that they ought not to travel on the Lord's day with horses and men and carriages, nor prepare any victuals to eat, and use no exercise pertaining to the cleanliness of man and horse.... And we think they ought to abstain by which more easily coming to church they may be at leisure for prayer"; and many councils under Charlemagne, etc., enforce further strictness. By both the Theodosiuses spectacles were prohibited on Sunday; but it will be remembered that attendance on them any day was excommunication, before the empire became christian.

In the earlier councils I find only enforcement of attendance on worship; in the still earlier fathers statements of the devotional services of the Lord's day, and nothing more3.... Gregory the Great, the author of many of our prayers, says that Antichrist will renew the observation of the Sabbath. I would mention here that, though Brigham himself affirms it, I do not find direct evidence of Saturday being a day of divine service in the week Tertullian has another passage to the effect of the above. I have given no evidence of Sunday being a day of special devotion from the beginning, as it is not questioned, but there is abundant direction.4... I find, by the bye, both my learned compilers informing me that the Essenes (which is singular considering their general principles) only among the Jews, and the antichristian Dositheus carried the Sabbath to the excessive strictness. They interpreted the command of continuing where they found themselves on the entering in of the Sabbath, to their very posture. The Jews determined two miles to be the place where they were, and so held it lawful to travel two miles all around because they did not go out of the place where they were; how foreign to the perfect law of liberty!

I confess my apprehension of the nature of the christian Lord's day (Sabbath clearly it never was called, in scripture or anywhere else, for many centuries) would. make it consistent that there would be no direction in the New Testament concerning it, and consequently little notice of it in the early fathers—and of its actual ordinance there is abundance: notice of this seems to flow with its habit of observance. This no way detracts from its validity in my mind, in fact but founds it on clearer and christian ground:. but I am running into the expression of my opinion, of which I would only say that I would be a Christian and not a Jew.

Socrates, the historian, says, in a long and valuable chapter, that the apostles and evangelists have by no means left the yoke of bondage on those who come to the preaching of faith, but have left the feast of the Passover (he writes of Easter and other feasts) to the good disposition of those who received benefit in them; and that the observance of Jewish types is abolished. I do not forget that the Sabbath is in the first table, as I have observed that God by His prophets identifies it with the recognition of Himself, placing it, I think, on a much higher ground than formal ordinance.

Yours sincerely.

[Before 1830, according to a note made by the original copyist= before he came to Plymouth.]

Notes and Comments 2, Red Sea and Jordan, The

IT is clear that the Red Sea is more the positive work of God who delivers, and the Jordan more that in us which realizes it, as associated with Christ. We are "begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"—I am set free and brought to God—he that had the power of death is destroyed—I am brought to God. Christ having died and risen again, death and judgment were there, but Christ has gone through them, and I am free and with God; death and judgment ruin those not in Christ.

But I have died with Christ in Jordan. It is a real work in me in the power of the Holy Ghost, so that that flesh which does exist, and was tried and judged in the wilderness, as it is, is dead, as I am crucified with Christ, and we sit in heavenly places in Him, and war there. There is no circumcision in the wilderness; it is the first thing in Canaan, and strength there and the camp there. There are no hostile powers destroyed in

Jordan, they are there to fight the other side—we being the Lord's host. The ark had dried the river—then Gilgal characterized it. "Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death and delivered them that were, all their lifetime, subject to bondage." It is ourselves in Canaan, and the ark is there, we with Christ in grace—the power in Him; death is not inflicted as judgment, but it is death to sin. God condemned sin in the flesh in Christ's death, but that is Red Sea work, but then He died to sin there, and we reckon ourselves dead to sin; but not in Jordan deliverance through Christ's death, where death and judgment were, but death in us, and with Him, as an end of flesh—not deliverance from and by, but with and to—then practiced and realized in Gilgal, not known as deliverance once for all.

Though we start from death and resurrection, I do not think that Colossians takes us out of the wilderness; it is not however Hebrews truth, but a condition between. It takes up the Red Sea, but not for the wilderness, but in view of Canaan. The wilderness was no purpose of God (see Ex. 3:8 and chap. 15) but His ways. In Colossians the hope is laid up for us in heaven. When we are said to be risen, it is only the administration of Christ's resurrection in baptism (not so in Ephesians); it is "we are buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with Him through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." It is only, too, on our going down into death as theretofore alive in sins, which is not in Ephesians, where we are dead in sins and created anew. Hence when he speaks of the Ephesian part (chap. 2: 13) he does not go on to resurrection. But then we must remark that in the Ephesians it is a distinct point, i.e., "quickening" is alike in Ephesians and Colossians, then, without any reference to baptism, resurrection and sitting in heavenly places of Jew and Gentile is stated. In Colossians, resurrection comes by itself, connected with baptism. Being "in Christ" is in all, Romans, Colossians1 and Ephesians, except Galatians—there it is not.

What is more remarkable is that, while Romans and Colossians have also Christ in us according to John 14, in Ephesians this is not found, save in the wish that He may dwell in our hearts by faith, which is quite another thing, and could not be applied to His being in us. It is clear Colossians is only a state on earth, but dead and risen with Christ and looking up to heaven. As heretofore remarked, we have not the Holy Ghost here, but life. The Colossians, too, is exclusively to Gentiles, not the union of both Jew and Gentile in one body, though the Church and Body be specifically named. Hence also state and condition, not relationship, is fully developed; not relationship either to the Father or to Christ. It is not the plan or counsel of God, but the state of the Colossians. Hence in Ephesians we have no "if"; in Colossians we have "if" in the first chapter-as they were on earth, the question remained. But it is not through the wilderness, but holding fast the hope, for the position is in chapter 1:27; so verse 5, the condition is in verses 10-14. So Eph. 1:4 is counsel; Col. 1:22 is what is to be. So the result in Ephesians is the showing forth the exceeding riches of God's grace; in Colossians we have "a hope laid up in heaven." "Resurrection" in the Colossians is after burial to death (we had lived in sin); in Ephesians, it is when we were dead in sins. After this in Colossians we have no resurrection. "Quickening" makes the essential difference, resurrection and heavenly places in Christ the place. Had He taken man living on the earth, He could not have made them one, but dead in sins, Jew and Gentile were all alike.

Colossians looks back and blessedly too-forgiven all trespasses, but stops there; Ephesians forward-it is a new creation. In Colossians, renewed in knowledge, but there it is anakainoumenon, a wholly new thing really, and so eis epigeosin, for it partakes of the nature; in Ephesians, "after God created." In Colossians the believer is clearly in the wilderness, but we can have a new life, whose hope is elsewhere; in the wilderness, and by faith looking at the resurrection of Christ, we are begotten again to a living hope by Christ's resurrection; so Peter, so Col. 2:12—we are not baptized in Jordan, but to Christ's death (the Red Sea)—our death is the end of the wilderness position, and the end of the wilderness death itself. But in Ephesians, this is looked at in the nature that belongs to the wilderness, or Egypt as it is—sinful flesh dead towards God, and, as to God, we begin in Jordan, or rather in what He does with us there when Christ is gone there for us. It begins with Christ, not as dying but raised from the dead, and so we dead in sins, found so, where He had come in grace (hence in virtue of the blood and the Red Sea) and quickened together with Him.

But Colossians goes farther than Peter; in Peter, Christ having suffered, we arm ourselves with the same mind, have faith in the Red Sea work, and so arm ourselves with the same mind, begotten again to a lively hope through His resurrection. That we have in Colossians but we have more; we were dead in sins and the uncircumcision of the flesh, and are quickened with Christ. But that goes no further here. It is life, Christ as our own life in the wilderness, and our hope and affections in heaven; dead with Him in baptism gives occasion to resurrection, not quickening when we were dead, i.e., chapters 2: 20 and 3: 1, refer to chapter 2: 12, not to verse 13. It is life, and life in the power of Christ's resurrection to whose death we have been baptized, and by faith in the operation of God, are therein risen, so that our profession here is resurrection and risen life-we are not alive in the world, i.e., Egypt, Christ is our life but it is hidden; we are on earth. Hence it is Christ's appearing that is brought forward-the hidden life manifested, and here.

The link between Ephesians and Colossians is in "the truth as it is in Jesus," the having put off the old man and put on the new-difference no doubt, but still a link. Just as the Red Sea and Jordan have the same general thought, but one at the beginning of the wilderness, the other at the end—one, deliverance out of Egypt, the other, entrance into Canaan—one, smitten with the rod opens the way, and is judgment, the other, the ark in it and the way made when the priests' feet touch the water. It is the power of life in grace.

As regards figures, Ephesians, though it recognize the fact of sins and redemption, yet in its teaching sets us wholly in Canaan, as once dead and a new creation, and Christ Himself as so risen from the dead. All is in heaven. We have no wilderness, or man proved here. Man is looked at as nonexistent morally for God, and no feeling there, and none to be awaked. The Red Sea as redemption and Jordan coalesce- indeed the Red Sea comes in by the bye, that is, though redemption through blood be fully recognized (chap. 1: 7), yet our sitting in heavenly places is the beginning of our history along with Christ. It is our state, and we begin from over Jordan, i.e., as out of it; or Israel is looked at as in a lost dead state in Egypt, and, as I have said, the Red Sea and Jordan coalesce, and we, as far as the type corresponds, are out of Jordan or death. Redemption is just noticed, but the purposes of God are before us, and that is in Canaan and with Christ or in Him now—the Red Sea and Jordan—Christ's death and resurrection, and especially Jordan (ours with Him), supposes we have to die, and of this there is nothing in Ephesians, being in heavenly places. In Colossians this is hope, and death to sin through Christ's death is brought in. Man lived in sin. A new creation is no part properly of the types; we may see where it comes in, but it stands by itself. Hence the calling in Ephesians is before the redemption, the inheritance after. Redemption supposes a people, object of God's favor, to redeem, though in Ephesians only forgiveness is spoken of. In one we are associated with Christ before God according to His nature, chapter 1:3-6 (redemption); but having put us there, we are trusted with the knowledge of Christ's glory in purpose, and so made heirs with Him.

The calling is more sovereign grace, not government of what is; one, we in, the other all things under Christ. Only hence we inherit and reign with Him; of this the Holy Ghost is earnest, of our place the power, only in these earthen vessels.

Galatians and Rom. 1 have spoken of elsewhere; 2 Corinthians has the doctrine of we in Christ and Christ in us. But in Colossians we have the administration of death to the old man and resurrection in faith of Christ's, i.e., here, and are quickened with Christ so as to have His life (here), and the hope of what is in heaven.

Another thing we may remark in the difference of Ephesians and Colossians is that Colossians being life is far more subjective, compare Eph. 1:15 and Col. 1:9 and following verses. In Ephesians it is more contrast with the old creation; compare, in the highest development of practice, Eph. 4 and 5, with Col. 3 Even in the highest subjective thought in the end of Eph. 3 the apostle turns to what is around in glory, and we are filled to this fullness. Also it is power not life. It is not development of life but contrast-the new creation and power, and the old as it actually was. Even in Eph. 3 it is power not life, as verses 16, 20. Chapter 4: 17, begins with contrast.

But I have said the Red Sea and Jordan coalesce. The desert constitutes the ways of God, seeing what man is, but Canaan was His purpose. Israel was brought to God at Sinai; nay, even at the Red Sea, and even in the song of Moses, from redemption (Ex. 15:13) he passes to Palestine and enemies in verse 15, which is striking (so in chapters 3 and 6). But they are different; one is Christ's death and resurrection looked at as leading forth a redeemed people to God, not merely forgiveness but redemption-deliverance by Christ by redemption. It is the redemption and deliverance itself, " He hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." I am redeemed out of the condition I was in, and brought to God, so verse 13, 14, is hope assured. But I die in Jordan, though it be by the Ark (Christ's) going into it; I do not say " He has delivered me by death and resurrection," but " I have died and am risen with Him "; I do not say " I am redeemed by glory," but " I am not alive in the world." It is Christ's death, but it is mine—the twelve stones are there, as a memorial, where the ark was, and they are where it came out, brought from the depths of Jordan. Then and then only is the reproach of Egypt-our captivity to flesh-rolled away, not in the desert; there the flesh is practically detected when we are delivered, "to know what was in thine heart." But at Gilgal, after I recognize myself dead, there is true circumcision of heart, the circumcision of Christ; then the Passover can be eaten—Christ's death looked at from God's side, in remembrance, with no blood on doorposts to secure from still threatening judgments, but all this owned much more deeply, because free and in Canaan. Then, too, we feed on the old corn of the land—a heavenly Christ. None of this could we do till we had passed Jordan.

The wilderness is no part of God's purpose, only of His ways; redemption and Canaan were His purpose; Ex. 3, 6 and 15.

I think it is important to notice that, in a certain sense, the Red Sea is complete, and closes the history—gives redemption its proper power; not the purpose but the redemption; the wicked are judged in death and judgment, and the people saved and brought to God—to His holy habitation. There is distress and guilt before redemption, but that is complete as the thief could go straight to Paradise. All that follows is experience till rest comes—experimental. There is a short epitome of experiencing grace till they come to Sinai, brought to God. But not only is the wilderness proving them, but Jordan connects itself with what is experimental, only based on faith. We have died with Christ, we are risen, we then find circumcision—return there as our perpetual basis of operation. Christ has dried up the Jordan, made it the way into Canaan; but it is not His death as a perfect redemption, the gospel as in 1 Cor. 15, but our state, crucified with Him, not death as judgment, though He bore it as such, sin in the flesh being condemned, but death, ours to sin, in Him. We go into a new order of things—the place of purpose by it; it is not perfectly meeting our condition, and saving us as the Red Sea. It is connected with experience, identified with purpose, but connected with its realization here.

There was no ark at the Red Sea, there was in the Jordan; the first was deliverance out of Egypt (natural state), the other entrance into Canaan. One was redemption, the other, the accomplishment (so far) of purpose. One was instrumentally wrought by Moses, who held the rod of God, i.e., the power of God in His dealings, the other by Joshua who led the people—the present power of Christ in the Spirit. One brought to God (in grace) in the wilderness, the other was to lead into the place of purpose-the resulting place of the people as God's host. Judgment, as well as death, was in the first, as we know from the Egyptians; in the second only death, there was no judgment—only the redeemed people had to do with it. The Red Sea was an act of sovereign power in redemption and deliverance. The blood on the lintel and doorposts having met the sin, now full deliverance is wrought by the death and resurrection of Christ. Satan's power, judgment which shut them in, were gone and secured Israel forever from them. It was finished, done, and they were delivered and with God.

But in Jordan death was there as death—it is the end of the career down here in every sense. But Christ goes down into it, and makes it the door into the heavenly blessing of God's purpose—He enters in alone when Jordan overflowed all its banks. But His going into the river destroyed all its power for His people. Here then, though going in alone, yet it is not redemption accomplished for them; He personally enters where they have to go, only they go over dry shod, and it is not a barrier but an entrance into heavenly places, and in that power they have all the good of it, i.e., done with nature and the wilderness for faith, dead to sin, to the world, to the law. They are crucified with Christ, though it be all a blessed passage into Canaan, and efficiently Christ is there till all are over. It is not redemption from and making it a wilderness where we are, but death with Christ, resurrection with Him; He associates His people with Himself, and they enter into a new place through what wholly closes the old. The differential point is that He goes where the people are to go, only making a way for them there, not delivering them from a place and state of condemnation and ruin, by redemption accomplished in Himself.

Christian Truth: Volume 37, Risen With Christ

Col. 3:1-10

We get here the blessed side of the Christian state—being risen with Christ, the great groundwork on

which we are. It is not that Christ has died for our sins, but that we have died and are risen; this is the starting point of the exhortation. We have done altogether with the old man, having died as children of Adam; we are also risen, having totally done with the world, although still in it, but risen with Christ; therefore you get the practice of a person risen, and the affections and state and condition of the heart. The Christian is looked at as a person not alive on earth at all; he has died, and now, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

In chapter 2 you get, "Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" You are not living in the world; you are dead. Now set your affections on things above. You belong there; you have not gone there yet, but the new man has no

desire for earthly things. The Spirit takes of "the things of Christ" and shows them to you, not to fix your heart on earthly things, but to deliver you from them; we are to be, in spirit, mind, and affections, up there. We are risen, and have nothing more to do with the world as to our affections and object than a man who has died. It does not say, "You must die," but "You are dead," for that is the Christian state. Christ having died, and He being my life, my life is hid up there in Him. There is complete association with Christ. He has died; I have died. He is hidden up there; my life is hidden. He will appear; I shall appear with Him in glory. Thorough, complete, blessed association with Christ is the place into which we are put, and it is the starting point of the character of this life displayed on the earth to which we do not belong. If an angel were here, he would do that which was God's will for him, but he would have nothing to do with the earth as the object for which he lived.

The Apostle does not allow that we have any life here, but talks of our members: "Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth." All that proceeds from the flesh, the Christian is not to allow for a moment. Mark how different it is from dying to sin, as people speak. Mortify is just the opposite; it is putting to death. That is power. If I say, "I must die," that is being alive. We are dead to sin, the world, and the law. Christ having died, we also have died. What is true of Him is true of us. Having now life and power, we are to put these things to death. There is no more lust, or self-will, or working of the flesh, if a man is dead. I am to reckon myself dead, not trying to die to sin, for I should not be able; that is, the flesh, the old man, does not want to die. The Apostle says, "Reckon yourselves dead." You have died. Then put off the old man. "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Rom. 6:6. Now I have the place of power to put to death every evil that the flesh would produce. Put to death your members, not your life in Adam. You are dead, therefore put to death your members. If you let them act, it is the flesh. The Christian has power in Christ—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13)—to put down everything inconsistent with the life in which this power is. The life is hid with Christ in God, but your members are on the earth, and he says, in effect, "Now keep them in order; you have the power of Christ."

There is no deliverance till you get to that. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." We have to watch not to be careless and let these things spring up, but we have power to say, "Not a single sprout of the old stock shall spring up." The old tree is cut down and grafted. The old stock may begin to sprout, but that is not "the tree" in common parlance; it has been grafted. We know the stock is there, and so is the flesh there, but we must remember we have power, and must not excuse ourselves. Our will is not changed, but if Christ is our object, there is power. There is sill the law of sin and death, but I am not a debtor to it; it has no claim or power over me. It will have power enough if we allow it, but we have a power entirely above it. The Lord leaves us here to learn to have our senses exercised to discern good and evil, to be tested and tried. The flesh is there, but if we are full of Christ we are masters of it; if we are not full of Christ, it masters us, but it is our own fault—we have no excuse. We have to exhibit this life of Christ or else the flesh acts, and then the old man is exhibited. The Apostle says, You are not living in the old man at all now; you are living in Christ and you are not going to walk in these things of the flesh.

In verse 7 he applies it to their walk. It requires us to make active use of the power. The flesh is soon up if we are not full of Christ. We are to arm ourselves with the power of Christ, and be active in keeping the flesh in its place—down altogether. If I am not full of Christ. for Himself, for His own sake, enjoying

Him, the flesh comes out. It will not do to put on your armor at the battle. Everything we pass through in this world is one of two things: either an occasion of obedience to the new man, or of temptation to the old.

The Lord prayed in an agony in Gethsemane, and when they came to take Him, He said, "Whom seek ye?" He had gone through it with His Father, and it was an occasion of obedience when it came. "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" Peter was asleep in the garden, and when the Lord was witnessing a good confession, he was cursing and swearing he did not know Him. If he were full of Christ, temptations would be nothing but occasions of obedience and glorifying God. We need self-knowledge and diligence of heart in abiding in Christ for Himself, so that when the temptation comes, we do not enter into it, and it is an occasion of blessed obedience.

In verse 8 we come to another thing—there is no lust, but the flesh is not subdued. It is not lust to be angry, but anger is from nature, and that is not Christ. This is a second step—"also put off all these." We have done with those horrid evils that God abhors (and He abhors them even more in His children than in others; His delight in us does not change the holiness of His nature); now put off these which express an unsubdued will, and unarrested action of the flesh. If a man says something to me, and I get in a passion, that is not Christ; it is that which unsubdued flesh gives forth. "Lie not one to another." Satan was a liar and a murderer; we are to put off lying and violence. Put these off, because you "have put off the old man [faith has done it]... and have put on the new." You have done with the old man as to its very nature, and you have put on the new. Now do not bring forth the fruits of the old, the crabapples of the old stock. The new is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." The new man knows God, and esteems nothing as the right thing but what suits God. The Christian knows the love and holiness of God in Christ. It is the knowledge faith has in God.

There is no measure of the path I am to walk in as a new man but God Himself. That is where the Christian is set. Act in the same spirit and character as He has shown in Christ. Did He not show grace to you when you were an enemy? Then you go and show grace. Was He not full of mercy to the unthankful? Then you go and do the same. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Evangelic 1, Life in Resurrection

Col. 3:1-4

THE great principle upon which a Christian stands is as to what is his life, and from whence it flows. The Christian is said to be raised from the dead-to have risen with Christ; and whatever is not thus quickened and risen is not of Christ. " He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." All blessing and comfort is associated with this life in resurrection. There is the entering on a new position, and the setting aside forever all previous and natural situation.

The apostle alludes to this in the preceding chapter where he says, " And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." And again, in chapter 3: I: " If ye then be risen with Christ." The principle of life flows then from this: that he is dead, dead with Christ, quickened with Christ, risen with Christ; thus manifesting his practical identification with Christ in all things.

In Eph. 2 it is said, " You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins," to manifest " what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." The same power which wrought in Christ's resurrection is effectual for the spiritual resurrection of His people. " God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The Christian then, being quickened with Christ, has the resurrection-life of Christ, and is privileged to sit in Him in heavenly places, unto eternal life, as Christ is now sitting at the right hand of God; and the consequence of this position, when made known to the soul, is to bring in a rich revenue of joy and comfort, even " joy and peace in believing."

Now, where an individual is not in this position, it is just to be under all his trespasses and sins-to have them upon himself. He is a sinner, as all are; but he is nothing else than a sinner in thought, principle, affection, and standing; all that he is, and he is nothing else. Perhaps he may not outwardly have manifested as much sin as others. He may have been restrained by regard to decorum; he may not have been placed in such circumstances as to draw it out equally with others. He may not have had the opportunity as others of appearing as great a sinner, but still he is a sinner, and nothing else. If he has committed, in thought, word, or act, one sin, that is the evidence that he is a sinner, as one bad fruit evidences the unsoundness of the tree. Where did he get the inclination to transgress? No union of outward circumstances could have brought forth what was not within.

Now there is no association of principle with God as long as man remains in that state; but it decidedly manifests his departure from God. It was that which caused Adam to be driven out from the presence of God; actual transgression, arising from dissociation of principle from God; and all Adam's responsible posterity have actually transgressed; and so their natural position is, alienation from God: and except those who have received the new life, being dead with Christ and risen with Him-that is just the position and standing of every individual. There is no difference of their being driven out- all were driven out in Adam. As it says in Romans, " There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

There is one grand sin which leads men to the commission of all others-the desire to please themselves. If this has once been acted on, it constitutes that man a sinner; just as the breach of one law of the land stamps a man a criminal. We do not require him to run through the transgression of every law in the statute book in order to bring him in guilty; his having broken one is the evidence of his guilt: we need no further proof. While acting then on this as a principle, we are spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. There is no life, no love, in us; as our Savior said to those by whom He was surrounded: " I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Now this is the real fact, that there is no assimilation to God in man's natural state; but the contrary principle-hatred, enmity.

Now this is the position of every individual of the human race, until called out of the general mass by divine grace. He is sprung from Adam, associated with him in his sin, as to its guilt and condemnation, belongs to that world which has the guilt not only of leaving God but of positively rejecting Him. That is the world he loves, belongs to, and forms a part of; and whether his transgressions are few or great, he is doomed to destruction, if he continue so to the end. Just as in the case of the flood: doubtless there was a wide difference in the amount of actual transgressions among the sinful inhabitants of the world at that time; but none were saved but Noah. Many might even have bid fair to be saved, so as to be near the ark, but none were saved except such as were in the ark. So in Sodom: many had not so openly exhibited their enmity to God as others, and yet, in the general conflagration, Lot alone escaped; and why? Just because all the others, without distinction, were opposed to God-were quite opposite to Him in every principle, and consequently had come to that state of exclusion from God's presence.

If so, we are at present without God in the world; and to be forever without Him is perfect misery. And is not this really the present position of the world, though they are unconscious of it? There is a veil cast on futurity, as it regards them. They are occupied in the pleasures, amusements, profits, and pursuits of a Christ-rejecting world. But when the veil is raised, then will their position be disclosed. And whosoever is of Christ will have Christ's portion; they will enter on the enjoyment of that portion, which by faith they now see is prepared for them.

By faith alone have we any 'of these exceeding great promises now. Now is the time for us to ascertain by faith our personal identification with Christ. Now are we to know our interest in Him. The time is coming, yea, swiftly coming, when we shall know even as we are known; and as we are now quickened, raised, brought forth, what should be the effects but to manifest our identification with Christ, in a union so close and abiding that Paul says, " We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones "?

Christ went down into death for our transgressions, though holy, yet accounted guilty. He did suffer the penalty of sin, and was brought " into the dust of death." He became dead. Having thus put away sin, He rose again-He is a risen Christ. A risen Christ is one that was dead; and it is with a risen Christ that we have now to do. This state of blessedness He reveals to the soul by the Spirit of truth. He reveals what He had done in man's estate for man: as having borne our sins, and thus evidencing that " the wages of sin is death." The believer then knows experimentally what Christ was doing here. He was bearing sin on the cross, and making sacrifice of Himself to the justice of God; " It pleased Jehovah to bruise him."

Now there is the point on which the Christian rests: the power of the recognition of God's pleasure and God's approbation in the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ; the point at which we feel the woes of Jesus inflicted: not the external perception, irrespective of a personal interest in His unexampled afflictions, such as the daughters of Jerusalem felt, when they bewailed and lamented Him. " Daughters of Jerusalem," said He, " weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

To weep in tender sympathy for human sufferings and woe does not testify a union of sentiment with God; but the recognition of the wherefore " it pleased Jehovah to bruise him," leading us to sorrow for those sins, and to rejoice at the Lord's approbation of their removal. This is a godly affection; this brings to the soul a perception of Christ's woes, when He says, " Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." When the cup of suffering was presented to Him, mixed up with the bitterness of our sins-holy, yet agonized-sinless, yet bruised: does not this

present us with the view God must take of sin? When we see, not the perpetrator, but the bearer of sin only, exposed to such unexampled sufferings; and yet where, in what position, can we perceive so clearly and completely the riches of divine grace, and love, and mercy, as here?-" He spared not his own Son."

It is not merely the fact that He was left as it were to the unmitigated rage of man; it was not merely that Adam's sinful race were permitted to " persecute and take him "; but God Himself withdrew the comfortable perception of the light of His countenance, which extorted from Him that bitter cry, " My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? " The prophet, in the prospect of tills event, declares in Isa. 53 " He had done no violence, neither was deceit found in his mouth: yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him "-and why?

There must have been some great concern passing between heaven and earth; some wonderful transaction pending between God and man; some immense negotiation which was now to be decided, sufficient to awaken the world, and into which the very " angels desire to look." There must have been a something great and tremendous to have had such consequences attached to it; to have seen Him of whom the Father's testimony was, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased "; and yet " pleased to bruise him! "

When this great mystery is understood (and none but a believer can enter into the spiritual perception of it), the soul is brought out of a state of death and darkness, and is translated into life and light. It then sees and feels what it was that caused the Father to bruise Him, and the Son willing to be bound. When the believer sees Christ reduced to that state of suffering as to cry, " Now is my soul troubled," then the believer himself experiences something of this soul-trouble; when he hears Him exclaim, " The waters are come in, even unto my soul! " and sees Christ " sore amazed, and very heavy," then he participates in spirit in it; he sees, feels, believes it; and, seeing in it the evidence of the love of Christ, is glad, and rejoices.

And now, what were all these sufferings about? Sin, sin was the cause of all, and such sin as to draw down such fearful consequences on the bearer of it-how tremendous! Now, if we are not such wrath-deserving sinners, for whom was it undertaken? Assuredly not for us. If we have not come to the consciousness that our individual sins were so aggravated that in full justice they deserved What was laid on Jesus; that as He was bearing our sin, so was He bearing the penalty of it; if we are not brought to see these sins as ours, and the guilt of them ours, we have no consciousness of assimilation or union with Christ. If any of you can say, I know nothing of this soul-trouble, this does not describe my feelings and state, then what have you to do with the promises of eternal life to the miserable, wretched, sinful? If you can say, It is not so with me; I do not think myself so bad as to draw down such heavy judgments upon me individually; I am not worse than others, and sin is not such a grief to me; then assuredly all these sufferings and agony and woe cannot be manifestly about you.

If the consciousness of it has not been to make you " sore amazed and very heavy," troubled and oppressed, then is Christ crucified no concern as yet of yours. But if we have seen and received the truth, that the death of Christ was the wages of our sins; if we have seen and understood the meaning and sense of His sufferings and death, and by appropriation can lay claim to them as ours, then the resurrection comes home to our souls with a quickening and revivifying power.

If we have seen Him really bearing the consequences of our sins, brought into the dust of death for us; if we can experimentally understand Christ on the tree, bearing the heavy burden of His people's sins-so heavy, that they bore Him to the very dust of death and brought Him low, even to the grave; if we can see Him rising without them, having put them away by His precious blood; then are we in a state to enter into the perception of that glorious privilege, " having forgiven you all trespasses." Though our sins brought Him down to the grave, yet they could not hold Him there, " because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." He rose, having triumphed over sin; He left sin no longer on His people or Himself, but washed it all away, never to appear against them, never again to draw down heaven's wrath.

The grave then has borne witness with us that He was dead; that He put away sin, rose above it and every enemy: the full tide of His people's iniquity was here expiated, and forever! Eternal justice poured down the punishment which sin deserved, until sin was no more. Christ, having risen from the dead, became the living witness that the justice and truth of God were forever satisfied. Had there been one sin unatoned for, there the surety must have remained. " Thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite ": that is what the law exacts; but the penalty was paid in all its demands, and eternal justice perfectly satisfied.

There was no more required, nothing more demanded; and all this in perfect accordance with the purpose, counsel, and determination of God. The sins were owned, were confessed in penitence and shame, were mourned over, and the bearer held up to heaven, on which were to be inflicted the terrible effects of God's wrath. That wrath He met, and thus forever settled the question between God and sin.

There is no more suffering for sin; the controversy is now at an end forever. Now the believer has done with sin, as regards God's anger and condemnation; he also is risen, risen with Christ-has recognized it as his sin which is put away by the Redeemer-that He was accounted the guilty one. Seeing this, he sees his sin put away; if he did not, it would be to suppose that the sufferings were not commensurate to the extent of sin; that the death of the victim has not expiated all; that it is not all done away with; but the believer, who is conscious of having risen with Christ, sees sin gone, forgotten, no more to be remembered. It is actually gone as regards us (believers); and in that position we are actually standing in the presence of God, justified from all things, risen with Him without sin unto salvation, brought up before God in a justified state.

Who then can (or shall) lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God Himself that justifieth; it is Christ Himself that died, yea rather, that is risen; nay in Him His people are complete, and made one by virtue of union with Him here. How solid is the ground for peace, and an occasion for great rejoicing, " He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Now we see that this mighty transaction was all about us, and that we are the persons interested in it. Now indeed we see why Christ became incarnate, suffered, and died: it was for us, and for us too He rose again. The moment we can, by faith, see our personal interest in the sinless sufferings of Christ, that moment we have the certainty of our redemption; we taste of the cup which He drank, and are associated with Him in all He did and suffered.

Having seen what we belonged to as heirs of the first Adam, " by nature children of wrath, even as others," we now see our entrance on another position, as heirs of the second Adam; we see that, as we did belong to that system of whose members it is said, " They have all gone out of the way "; and that " there is none good, no, not one "; and that " they drink in iniquity like water "; believers can say, " Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all "; they are now translated into another state, another system of things; they are " risen with him through the faith of the operation of God "; they have heard the voice of the Son of God, and live; they live the life of Christ; and though this life is not fully exhibited in this present dispensation, yet it is a real true life.

There is more truth in God's life than in man's life: it is not a name, a voice, a notion, but eternal life, that very life which Christ has now, that very life which is without end, that we have. " He that hath the Son hath life "; he has it now: there is no such thing as shall, as regards our possession of it. " He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life "; and is not the believer called upon, by these wonderful mercies, by this stupendous grace, to exhibit his possession of this eternal life? He is. And how? The apostle says, " Seek those things which are above," Col. 3:3.

Now, brethren in the Lord Jesus, are you doing so? Are you dead now to all that you were conscious of being alive to before? It is true, your life is hid now to sight, you see it not; but " blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." It is, nevertheless, a certain life; and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall they who have been quickened by the life-giving power of the Son of God appear with Him; then will it be seen that there is, and there can be, " no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Of this they are now conscious, for " he that believeth hath the witness in himself." Yes, they have the eternal Spirit testifying to the believer of the truth of God, making known to him his personal identification with Christ, his oneness with Him, as well as his perfect acceptance and justification in consequence of His work.

In the sensible enjoyment of this the believer lives, and walks accordingly. He lives, subject to this new life which he derives from Christ; it has its desires, affections, and objects of delight. Your natural life has its likings and attractions, " the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life "; and so has the life of God-Christ in glory, having triumphed over every enemy, and holiness and happiness with Him in heaven: these are our objects, our desires-the affections tend upwards to them.

Suppose a person now alive with Christ in glory, what would be his desires, feelings, and pursuits? Just similar, then, should be that of those who are alive with Him with that life which Christ gives. The glory of God should be their one end and aim. They have not merely the forfeited life which Adam lost, but eternal life.

The peculiar joy of the believer is the consciousness that he stands before God as Jesus stands; that he is a partaker of that love which God has for Jesus. So prayed Christ, " that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Where can we know anything of this love but in Jesus? The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He alone declares it. He brings it to our souls as one that knows it Himself, and tells us that God has loved us as He loves Him.

Here then is the position of the Christian, and it is a position of deep blessedness, everlasting blessedness, to stand as Christ stands before God, without the shadow or imputation of sin, perfectly justified, to be loved with the same love. This is wondrous blessing; and this is Christ's joy and delight, to bring them into the same blessedness with Himself, as happy as Himself. It is His very rejoicing to come and make known to the soul these great and inestimable privileges, to reveal Himself and the Father by the eternal Comforter; and, notwithstanding the weariness of the flesh, the body of corruption, and the many, many hindrances to the enjoyment of this privileged spiritual existence, yet doth grace triumph over all in the soul of the believer, enabling him in faith to enter into the appropriation of Christ's declaration: " My Father and your Father, my God and your God." Standing as in the presence of God, free from all condemnation, resulting from what Christ has done and suffered, having made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in everlasting righteousness. Now faith realizes this; it recognizes the justice of God satisfied, and His love well pleased; it rests on this, and lives in the enjoyment of it.

Now do you believe this? If you do, what practical effects has it led to? Are you dead to the world? Would you like to be dead? Would you feel it painful to be as dead to the world as Christ is now? There can be no assimilation to heaven in the things, desires, and pursuits of this world. The world does not like heaven, nor anything belonging to heaven: such is the judgment that was passed on it; it was proved when the Lord came down from heaven, and they turned Him out of the world. God had one Son; there was just one thing in heaven with which God would try man; " I have yet one Son, it may be they will reverence him." But no; they would not let Christ have the world, neither would they have Him. Men did not like Him; He was not the portion they wanted, and therefore they got rid of Him.

Now we must either have the portion of the world, or Christ's portion. Happy they who have the Lord for their portion! Happy they who are dead to all the little gilded toys of the world, which Satan has scattered around in order to entrap us! All the blessings and fullness of the Father's love are in Christ's portion; but then He is a Savior that is dead to every other portion; soon will this be, not a hidden treasure, but a manifested one. He is now gathering out of the world His own, picking them out from among all nations, testifying His unwearied patience and forbearance towards still unpunished sinners; but when the last saint has been brought into the church, Christ Himself will then appear, to the joy of those who have confessed His name here and borne testimony to His truth, who have been content to give up all for Him. It will be then quite another scene from what the world anticipates, quite another dispensation; and what the saints have been waiting for will then be accomplished-" the manifestation of the sons of God."

Have you believed this? If you have, do you act on it? Are you looking for, and hastening towards, the appearing of the glory of the Lord? Are you conscious of being dead to that world which crucified Christ? When you say, We are " risen with Christ," are you conscious of a distaste to, a dissociation from, those things that crucified Him? or are you alive to a judged world? are you favoring that world? If you are, then are you fit assessors over it? for the word of God declares, " the saints shall judge the world." " They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." " If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." " Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

If you are one with Christ, walk in the privileges of that union, and " when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Expository 6, Colossians 2:20; Colossians 3:1: Dead With Christ, Risen With Christ

THE Christian's risen life is exhibited in two things-death unto that which is here, and heavenly-mindedness. " Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ," writes the apostle, " from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? " The expression " rudiments of the world," goes a vast way. I am to be dead, not only to sin, but to all the religiousness of human nature. A Jew has this religiousness, and it was cultivated of God; but it brought not forth good fruit, it produced nothing but " wild grapes."

Now, if we do not see that we are risen, we shall be cultivating human nature, for God. He Himself has tried this already; and He says, that not anything could have been done more than He has done; Isa. 5. But man would still, still be striving to cultivate the religiousness of human nature, and introduce sinners into heaven, otherwise than by death. We are dead and risen again, and it is simply heavenly.

In this, is the real power of our living above sin. It assumes death, it goes upon the principle that we are " dead to sin," Rom. 6. We get a blessed liberty in seeing and accounting ourselves dead. We have a new life. Christ has taken His place where death and resurrection have put Him. And there I am, where Christ is. It is altogether another life, and this life has its own world, and its own sphere of affections. " They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit," Rom. 8:5.

Resurrection life is manifested in walking through this world as abstracted, withdrawn from, unactuated by, the motives of the world. A Christian has new motives. If I see a man walking through the world without things here affecting him; I say, " He is either mad-or risen with Christ." Alas! we are not as consistent as madmen. All the motives in the world never touch the new nature. Do you think it could be thinking about friendship with the world? could be seeking riches, or honor, or power? The motives which actuate men have no influence upon it. Perplexity comes in by our having a motive which is not drawn from heaven; whenever I see myself, or another, in difficulty, I may be quite sure some other motive is at work.

There is always a tendency to decline from this singleness of eye.

When we first receive the knowledge of life in Christ, we are absorbed, we readily admit all else to be " dung and dross," Phil. 3. But when decline comes in, we get old motives into action again. Little by little, we are not absorbed, and then a hundred things begin to be motives-things of which I took no notice, which did not act before. People say, " What harm is there in it? " When I begin to inquire, " What harm is there in this, or in that? " there is the tendency to decline. There may be no harm in the thing, but the thought about it shows that I am not absorbed with that which is heavenly. " Thou hast left thy first love." It is not in great sins, but here, that decline in the saints is manifested.

When the sense of grace is diminished, we decline in practice. Our motives must be in God. Sometimes, effort is made to press conduct, works, and practice; because (it is said) full grace was preached before; now, that there is decline in practice, you must preach practice.

That which is the rather to be pressed, is grace-the first grace. It is grace, not legalism, will restore the soul. Where the sense of grace is diminished, the conscience may be, at the same time, uncommonly active, and then it condemns the pressing of grace, and legalism is the result. When conscience has been put in action through the claims of grace, that is not legalism; and there will be holy practice in detail.

We may fall into either of two faults-that of (because fruits have not been produced) preaching fruits; or, that of getting at ease, when certain things come to have influence over us again, through thinking that what we approved of before, was legalism.

We shall not get back by dwelling on detail. Christ is the great motive for everything; and we must get up into the knowledge of resurrection in Christ, to remedy detail. Here, there is a wonderful truth, and wonderful liberty.

Another very important point is, the tone and spirit of our walk. Confidence in God, and gentleness of spirit, is that which becomes the saint. For this we must be at home with God. The effect of thus walking in Christ, setting the Lord ever before us, is always to make us walk with reverence- lowliness, adoration, quietness, ease, and happiness. If I go where I am unaccustomed to be-if I get, for instance, into a great house, I may have much kindness shown me there, but when I get out again, I feel at ease; I am glad to be out. Had I been brought up in that house, I should feel otherwise. The soul is not only happy in God for itself, but it will bring the tone of that house out with it; because of its joy in God, anxieties disappear, and it will move through the ten thousand things, that would trouble and prove anxieties to another, without being a bit troubled. No matter what it may be, we bring quietness of spirit into all circumstances, whilst abiding in God.

If a man be risen with Christ, if he be dwelling there, it will show itself thus. We shall not be afraid of the changes around. We shall live, not in stupid apathy and listlessness, but in the exercise of lively affections and energies towards the Lord. One great evidence of my abiding in Christ, is quietness. I have my portion elsewhere, and I go on. Another sign is confidence in obeying.

This connects itself with fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ-fellowship, not only in joy, but in the thoughts of the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost, the third person of the blessed Trinity, is our power of entering with the affections into the things of God. " The Father loveth the Son "-what a place this puts me in, to be thus cognizant of the Father's feelings towards His beloved Son.

In our proper place, we get our mind filled and associated with things, that leave this world as a little thing-an atom, in the vastness of the glory, which was before the world was.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Miscellaneous 3, Risen With Christ

Colossians 3:1-17

WE get here the blessed side of the Christian state-being risen with Christ, the great groundwork on which we are. It is not that Christ has died for our sins, but that we have died and are risen, and this is the starting-point of the exhortation. We have done altogether with the old man, having died as children of Adam; and we are also risen, having totally done with the world, and yet in it, but risen with Christ; therefore you get the practice of a person risen, and the affections and state and condition of the heart. The Christian is looked at as a person not alive on earth at all; he has died, and now, " If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above." In chapter 2 you get, " Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? " You are not living in the world-you are dead. Now set your affection on things above. You belong there; you have not gone there yet, but the new man is not in you to put you into earthly things. The Spirit takes of " the things of Christ " and shows them to you, not to fix your hearts on earthly things, but to deliver you from them; we are to be, in spirit, mind, and affections, up there. We are risen, and having nothing more to do with the world, as to our affections and object, than a man who has died out of it. It does not say, "You must die," but, "You are dead," for that is the Christian state. Christ having died, and He being my life, my life is hid up there in Him. There is complete association with Christ. He has died; I have died. He is hidden up there; my life is hidden. He will appear; I shall appear

with Him in glory. Thorough, complete, blessed association with Christ is the place into which we are put; and it is the starting-point of the character of this life displayed on the earth to which we do not belong. If an angel were here, he would do that which was God's will for him; but he would have nothing to do with the earth as to the object for which he lived.

The apostle does not allow that we have any life here, but talks of our members: " Mortify "—put to death—"therefore your members which are upon the earth." All that proceeds from the flesh the Christian is not to allow for a moment.

Mark how different it is to dying to sin. Mortify is just the opposite, it is putting to death. That is power. If I say, " I must die," that is being alive. We are dead to sin, the world, and the law. Christ having died, we have died. What is true of Him is true of us. Having now life and power, we are to put these things to death. There is no more lust, or self-will, or working of the flesh, if a man is dead. I am to reckon myself dead, not setting about to die to sin, for I should not be able; that is, the flesh, the old man, does not want to die. The apostle says, " Reckon yourselves dead." You have died. Then put off the old man. " Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Sin has been " condemned in the flesh." Now I have the place of power to put to death every evil that the flesh would produce. Put to death your members, not your life in Adam. You are dead; therefore put to death your members. If you let them act, it is the flesh. The Christian has power in Christ-" I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me "to put down everything inconsistent with the life in which this power is. The life is hid with Christ in God, but our members are on the earth; and he says, Now keep them in order; you have the power in Christ.

There is not deliverance till you get to that. " The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." We have to watch, not to be careless and let these things spring up; but we have the power to say, Not a single sprout of the old stock shall spring up. The old tree is cut down and grafted. The old stock may begin to sprout, but that is not the tree in common parlance; it has been grafted. We know the stock is there, and so is our flesh there; but we must remember we have power, and we must not excuse ourselves. Our will is not changed; but if Christ is our object, there is power. There is still the law of sin and death; but I am not a debtor to it; it has no claim or power over me. It will have power enough if we allow it; but we have a power entirely above it. The Lord leaves us here to learn to have our senses exercised to discern good and evil, to be tested and tried. The flesh is there; but if we are full of Christ, we are masters of it; if we are not full of Christ, it masters us: but it is our own fault-we have no excuse. We have to exhibit this life of Christ, or else the flesh acts, and then the old man is exhibited. The apostle says, You are not living in the old man at all now; you are living in Christ, and you are not going to walk in these things.

In verse 7, he applies it to their walk. It requires us to make active use of the power. The flesh is soon up if we are not full of Christ. We are to arm ourselves with the power of Christ, and be active in keeping the flesh in its place-down altogether. If I am not full of Christ, for Himself, for His own sake, enjoying Him, the flesh comes out. It will not do to put on your armor at the battle. Everything we pass through in this world is one of two things: either an occasion of obedience to the new man, or of temptation to the old. The Lord prayed in an agony in Gethsemane; and when they come to take Him, He says, " Whom seek ye? " He had gone through it with His Father, and it was an occasion of obedience when it came. " The cup which my Father hath given me shall I not drink it? " Peter was asleep in the garden; and when the Lord is witnessing a good confession, he is cursing and swearing he does not know Him. If we were full of Christ, temptations would be nothing but occasions of obedience and glorifying God. We need self-knowledge and diligence of heart in abiding in Christ for Himself, so that when the temptation comes, we do not enter into it, and it is an occasion of blessed obedience.

In verse 8, we come to another thing-there is no lust, but the flesh is not subdued. We have no lust to be angry; it is an unsubdued nature, and that is not Christ. This is a second step-" also put off all these." We have done with these horrid evils that God abhors (and He abhors them even more in His children than in others; His delight in us does not change the holiness of His nature) now put off these which express an unsubdued will, and unarrested action of the flesh. If a man says something to me, and I get in a passion, that is not Christ; it is that which unsubdued flesh gives forth. " Lie not one to another." Satan was a liar and a murderer; we are to put off lying and violence. Put these off, because " you have put off the old man [faith has done it] and put on the new." You have done with the old as to its very nature, you have put on the new; now do not bring forth the fruits of the old-the crab apples of the old stock. The new is " renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." The new man knows God, and takes nothing as the right thing but what suits God. It is not merely an intelligent creature; he is not received in that way; but the Christian knows the love and holiness of God in Christ. It is the knowledge faith has of God. There is no measure of the path I am to walk in as a new man but God Himself. That is where the Christian is set. Act in the same spirit and character as He has shown in Christ. Did He not show grace to you when you were an enemy? Then you go and show grace. Was He not full of mercy to the unthankful? Then you go and do the same. " Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Verse 11. There is no motive, no life, no character but Christ. " Christ is all and in all." I am not a Jew, a Gentile, or an Englishman; I am in Christ as to my life, and " to me to live is Christ." What we are brought into is Christ, and our object is Christ, and nothing else whatever. The life was expressed in Him, and the power of it is in us as alive; we are brought into it by redemption, and Christ is the whole object and character of it. It is Christ subjectively in me, and objectively outside me. I get in Christ Himself the knowledge of God. He is Himself the image of God. Look at Christ, and you see it all in a man. Christ is everything, and He is in the Christian. The whole sphere of the life, and the object of the Christian, is Christ. Where Christ is the divine life, He is the object of the life. The Father's love is fully revealed in Him too. Then what comes in most blessedly is, that I have His place..

Verse 12: " Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved." Was He not the " elect of God "? He was God's beloved Son. Having thus brought in Christ, the apostle looks at what we are to put on in practice. " That is your place," he says. You are the objects of God's delight, holy and beloved; His nature is in you; now walk in the consciousness of it, and your heart will be in a state to put on these things that are suited to Christ. If Christ has put us into this place, He looks for fruit. He has cut the tree down, and it is the graft that now lives. Then, Paul says, show all these blessed fruits. If Christ is my life, He is in me, and He is my object. Remember, he says, what you are before God; walk in the affections of it, in the consciousness of it. You are to have the sense of it, as a child has of its mother's love. A child has the consciousness of the place it is in, and it ought to walk worthy of it, and please its mother; but it must have the consciousness of the place it is in first. It may do every duty without that; but it is only show, there is no heart in it. In Ephesians we get much the same thing: " Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children "; go and act like your Father. Here it is another aspect of the same thing: " Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved." There is the character of Christ, and you are in His place of relationship to God; let us see the spirit that belongs to such a place- the place of Christ in this world. It is hard to be put down, and trampled on; but that is what Christ had. " If when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable to God." That is Christ's character. Did He not do well, and suffer patiently? You do it. It is more

important to keep Christ's character than to keep my coat. That is the way it works in the heart. I do not expect righteousness in a world of sin; my business is to show the character of Christ before the world-gentleness and meekness in a world of wrong- that is superiority. If a man vexes me, we are on the same ground. If I have the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of power, it lifts me above the flesh.

But all this is not natural gentleness. He says, " Above all these things charity, which is the bond of perfectness "-the real love of God, that perfects a thing, and makes it divine; and not merely a gentle nature that we see constantly with no power to resist, no firmness of character, one who cannot say "no." There are plenty of people to whom it is torture to say " no," and where it would be grieving the Spirit not to say " no "; that is human kindness, not divine love. This bond of perfectness is a holy thing. Gentleness is very sweet to see, but it will not stand good in a world of temptation. If it is the grace of Christ, and I have divine love and power, I do go through it; for it is divine godly love and obedience.

" Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts"—with the spirit of peace, the Holy Ghost not grieved, peace is enjoyed with God in a conscience not injured. Then he adds, " Be ye thankful," for I get everything from God. I cannot be thankful for everything if my will is not broken; but the moment I look to God as counting the hairs of my head, I glory in tribulation, and count it all joy, every trial and exercise. There is the Christian's place-the place of Christ ruling in his heart, walking in peace through the world, thankful for everything he gets; it is for his good. Now he is to enjoy the things of his own world. " Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." That is the positive world into which you are brought-" The unsearchable riches of Christ." It is not head knowledge, but spiritual things-" Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." We know God's ways and thoughts in the wonderful word we have, and we have the mind of Christ. The men of the world sing in their enjoyment: you sing together to the Lord. Now the Christian is enjoying his own world with his heart's affections. We get the rule for his conduct. It is very simple, very sweeping, and uncommonly satisfactory to the heart that really desires to do the will of God. " Whatsoever ye do, whether in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." If we look at that " Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," it is bringing all the principle and motive for our conduct from the revelation of a Person who is everything to us, not forbidding things. We know in how many things during the week the question arises, Shall I do this or that? Not as to absolutely wrong things; but a person says, What is the harm of that? Are you going to do it in the name of the Lord? No! Then you are getting away from the Lord, and that is the harm-a great harm for the Christian. In taking a house, or buying a dress, in the way I manage my house, is it " in the name of the Lord Jesus "? What can we say? It is leaving the Lord out (not leaving Him altogether), and letting self in. That is what the will of the flesh is.

The Christian has the privilege in every-day things of doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. People ask if there is any harm in a concert of sacred music. It is a cheat of the devil. Ask if they are going in the name of the Lord Jesus. They know they are not thinking of Him. Some one says, Can you not come and see this beautiful scenery? God made it. I know He did. Are you going in the name of the Lord Jesus? It is the object, that is the thing. God sent honey to Jonathan when he was going through the wood, and he was refreshed by it. Very right and nice. But if he had been looking for honey, it would not have been fighting the Lord's battles. There was to be no honey in the sacrifices; but if God sends it, it is right to be refreshed by it, and I am thankful for it. The question is-where the mind of the man is set and living. If a person is in earnest to do the will of God (and the Holy Ghost could not lead us in our own will to amuse and please ourselves, He is not down here for that), if a person is anxious to live to God, and no one else, he says, Give me a simple rule for the things that turn up every day. " Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Then I live with Him in the everyday things. Suppose my father wants this book put that way, and I put it this way; it may be of no importance, but it is a proof I do not care for my father. If the blessed Lord is all to me, I shall be seeking to do everything in His name. We may forget-alas! we do-but if it is on my heart to please a person, I do not forget. Suppose I am walking thus in everything, I shall taste more of Christ, and it will give fixed happiness, instead of grieving the Spirit for some foolish thing I shall not care for in a few years. I shall have Christ for my object in everything I do. We do think much of those we love in our conduct, and I shall have in my mind what He likes, if I love Him. That is what the Lord looks for as One who has loved us and gave Himself for us in grace.

As Christ is everything to me, and I have Him for my life, now I must walk in it, and do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. I am sure it is what makes us happy. We shall find what weak creatures we are, and that is humbling and very useful. There will be that walking with Him that gives the secret of His presence and counsel, as He says Himself, " I will manifest myself to him." There is the positive living of the heart in the enjoyment of the Lord's presence, in consequence of living for Him. Are we content to live like Lot, vexing ourselves with the evil we are amongst? or do we give it up, and joy to think of the time when the Lord comes and says, as He did to Abraham, " I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward "? Are we content if God says that? It was seen in Abraham's walk. He was called " the friend of God "; and God says, " Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? " The secret of the Lord was in his heart. We find then in what has been before us the remarkable expression of what the life of Christ is, and its workings in us.; and it all starts with having put off the old man, and put on the new. God has fully revealed Himself in Christ, and we have received the divine nature. There we are put to understand in our souls what God is thus revealed-Christ the pattern of our walk, and Himself our strength for it.

Notes and Comments 4, Fragments: Colossians 3:12

Col. 3:12 is the formal character of Christ towards others, in the consciousness of relationship—for Christ is the Elect One, Holy and Beloved—what precedes the subjective and objective condition for oneself before God. In the Psalms there is a measure of similarity in this latter part, only no sonship nor clear knowledge of grace, but integrity pleaded, righteousness claimed, only mercy put first as it must be for the Remnant. Hence when we come to dealing with others, we have the sword and judgment instead of grace. The fruit partakes of, but brings out more dearly the character of the relationship. Trust is not the Church's place, but relationship and character. Hence Peter and Hebrews take this ground, not union with Christ, but a Mediator. Here faith in the character of trust and confidence is enlarged upon.

We are called upon to know the time of God's visitation morally—to judge the time—to know our adversary in the way with Him. Now the Lord gives a great means of this immediately after He says so; Luke 19:42-46. The Word of God tells what His house is in His mind. It is a house of prayer, where man is in intercourse with a God of love—where he finds a home with Him, and a refuge in his need and distress. It may have been imperfectly known, but the Lord who knew the Father's heart knew it to be such. To Him it was a house of prayer. So to the spiritual mind—to him who fears God and so has the secret of the Lord—God’s house has its character from Himself. Hence it knows by the Word which reveals it, what He would have—what His house ought to be, because he knows what He who dwells there is. The passages in the Word which speak of it have their force and suggest themselves to his mind, give him the clue to judge of the character of the time. It is remarkable how

this characterizes the Lord. How He draws out from the Word characteristic passages which give the central points of divine truth as what the essence of the Law was, the Son of David being Lord at the moment of His departure, and even the resurrection in connection with faithfulness to promises, and the future millennial glory on earth, in His reply to the Sadducees! But the Word also describes the evil as man's heart produces it, and judges it according to the good the child of God knows, dear to him as knowing God Himself, his Father, as its Source. And thus the state of things is judged, 'It is written, My house is a house of prayer, ye have made it a den of thieves.' Men speak of respect, and a right-minded person is imbued with a spirit of respect, but I am too ignorant, too imperfect in judgment, too evil to know what to respect. The disposition may even deceive me, without the Word of God. Then guided by it, I respect, jealously respect what is of God, with affections which hold to Him, and a submission to what His Word says—what touches that, has the character of evil, is the opposite to respectable. The heart is engaged in its thoughts towards God—the judgment guided by the Word, both for good and in its judgment of evil. Thus the state of things is known, and God's heart and judgment about it.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Miscellaneous 3, Life of Christ in the Believer, The

Colossians 3:18-25; 4

WHAT characterizes Colossians is the life of Christ in us; not the effect of the presence of the Holy Ghost, as in Ephesians, but the life of Christ. The Holy Ghost is the power that acts in me: the power and presence of the Holy Ghost is everything to me, assuming that I have life. I am led by Him, the love of God is shed abroad in my heart by Him, He is the earnest of the inheritance: the consciousness and power of all our relationships is by the Holy Ghost; so that our bodies are His temples. Life is equally important; for if we had it not we could not have the Spirit. He could not put His seal and dwell in us on the mere ground of life; but we being sprinkled with blood, He comes as the witness that we are whiter than snow, and dwells in us. The new life has a capacity to enjoy the things of Christ, but no power of revelation; and we need the power of the Holy Ghost to bring these things to us. They are spiritually discerned. We cannot even use the Word without the Spirit; it is the sword of the Spirit. It is not the life that unites me to Christ, but the Holy Ghost-" By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." It is the Holy Ghost that is the power, and it may take me clean out of all relationships with this world (the Lord says to Paul, " I have delivered thee from the people and the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee "), and yet in the fullest way He owns the relationships.

We find here some that God did create, and some that He did not. In marriage I get, not redemption or the Holy Ghost, but what was set up at the creation; and what God created God owns. All these relationships are owned in the fullest possible way; they may be dreadful snares, now sin has come in and made everything miserable, and spoiled and corrupted what God made good. Then a power comes in, not grace, but the Spirit, and takes Paul out of Jew and Gentile, and identifies him with a glorified Christ, who sends him with the message of what is heavenly into the world; but he is not of it. " As my Father sent me into the world, even so send I you." Their bodies were in it, but they were not there morally. They came from Christ; He had sent them. That lifts them above relationships, though God puts His seal on them; and it is one of the signs of the last days, that men are without natural affection. He sanctions them, but they are all to be given up to serve Christ here. Creation is God's own making, and He never gives up the title to it. Only another power has come in, and from the moment it is a question of Christ I have to give up everything. " Salute no man by the way." The closest ties were the most dangerous; not that they were not fully owned by God, but " if a man hate not his father and mother... he cannot be my disciple."

The world-the state of things around-is not what God created it at all; it is sin's making. I get His beautiful workmanship in it, but spoiled by the devil getting man's ear. The whole creation is under the bondage of corruption; that is not God's doing. It is a labor to make people happy; they seek in a thousand ways to forget God, for if they think of God they know they are lost. But there is the world of God's providence, where not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him; everything is under His hand. He has committed authority to magistrates and so on, and He owns it. If I were innocent as Adam in Eden I should not need magistrates; now this world would be a kind of pandemonium without such. The Christian is to be subject to such authority-the Queen of England or a Turk, wherever it is. It may not be righteousness. I do not look for righteousness but at the right hand of God-Christ. I do not mean it ought not to be, but I do not expect it. My business is to walk as a Christian, and show the character of Christ, not to set the world right; when Christ comes He will do that, for He will take it into His hand. If I could only set myself and other Christian right, that would be the thing. The Christian should be the perfect presentation of the character of Christ in the world that has turned Him out. We are the living witnesses of what we are enjoying of the Christ they will not have. The world is under judgment, but in grace God has not executed it; He is sending out His gospel.

Now there is a great system of government going on, and God owns it. There were no servants in paradise; there was no stealing. Now God owns property, etc., it is not the original thing that was instituted in goodness, nor the heavenly condition, nor is it in itself what the Christian is (though Christianity maintains it all)-he is the expression of what Christ is; but he owns and submits to all that God has established. " Servant " here is slave, and nothing but sin brought in slaves. There would never have been such a thing if sin had not been there; but the apostle does not meddle with it. He does not say he approves of it, but he leaves the government of the world just where it is. If I can relieve bodily wants as a Christian I am bound to do it, or prevent one beating another if I can do it by kindness; but I am to leave the world alone. It is hard to do it; in our hearts we do not like it. Suppose a war is going on, we wish success to one side; it was all settled before you ever heard it. There is a hard-hearted emperor wishing Rome had one neck that he might cut it off, or setting the city on fire, and then accusing the Christians of it; well you must be subject-" The powers that be are ordained of God."

Wherever I find real power exercised I find God's authority. If there is a rebellion, and other powers rise up, I am submissive as before. It is my Christian path, though not the relationship God created; there the bond is maintained on the principle of Christianity. Where it is a question of slaves it is-If you can be free use it rather; but if you are bound never mind. You are the Lord's free man, and Paul sends the runaway Onesimus back to his master. He expects Philemon to set him free, and speaks very touchingly-" I beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ." But he would do nothing " without thy mind," " knowing thou wilt do more than I say." He expects grace; but he leaves the thing where he finds it. You will never set the world right; you have no principles nor power to do it. You can control an unconverted man with unconverted principles, but you cannot deal with him as a Christian. If I am to set the world right I must join with the world, and cannot have any principles but theirs. Then I must give up Christianity: for they have none to be governed by. You can use gracious influence as Christ did, and that we have to do. The Christian is to let his light shine, and the testimony of what his principles are is so distinct and positive that they " see your good works." If he joins with an infidel he owns infidelity can set the world right. The Christian by

himself has his own gracious godly principles to act on, that the testimony may be there of what his principles can do (Christianity has reformed the world in a sense; for it brought in the pattern of things better, and they are ashamed to do in the light what they did in the dark).

A man will not do what is unworthy of a man: but " unworthy of the Lord," you never find that; and that is where the Christian is to walk.

Paul says to masters, " You have a Master in heaven " who will take notice of everything you do. Your part is to show what Christianity is and does, and that is good to an infidel, or whoever it is. Your confession of Christ is to be so positive, that they should know what to attribute these things to. Let the world go on its own way, and you go yours-that is Christ's. If not, you compromise Christianity, instead of maintaining its testimony.

Remark here, that the obedient side comes first in everything. It is the natural thing the Christian gets into. He is " sanctified unto obedience." He never gets out of it; he fails in it, of course. The Lord says, " As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." The apostles never said, what often jars on one, I have a right to do so-and-so. It is, " We ought to obey God rather than man." If man hinders me from obeying God, it is wrong. But it is not, I have a right, but I must " obey God rather than man." You get in the path of Christ, the path of divine wisdom, that the vulture's eye hath not seen; and the way to keep yourself in it is to " continue in prayer " (ch. 4: 2), incessantly referring everything to God. There is the positive direct intervention of God, everything working together for good; and by prayer our hearts get through grace in connection with this overruling power of God, whether to stop some mischief Satan is doing, or to open a door of utterance. " We will give ourselves to prayer, and the ministry of the word "-not the ministry of the word and prayer. Whatever the subject of prayer is, there is continually bringing in God, so that the heart is with God. If I am entirely dependent on Him, living in Him, and His word living in me to direct my thoughts, I am sure to get what I ask. Then there is most gracious dealing with regard to my requests—" Be careful for nothing." " Make known your requests to God." It does not follow that they are right; but do not brood over anything, bring it to God. Perhaps He may say He cannot grant it; as when Paul asks for the thorn to be taken away, He says, I have given it to you for a purpose; I am not going to take it away. And the power of Christ rested on him through the very thing that had broken him down. So the peace of God keeps my heart.

" Watch in the same " here (v. 2). If I am living with God, I know what to ask God for-I see Satan and danger coming; or else when a snare comes I may not be thinking of it, like the disciples sleeping for sorrow: they were not watching. If I am watching and see temptation, I get power to obey and to show Christ in it, " with thanksgiving "; for if a person is walking in a path of intimacy with God, thanksgiving is there. Before I get the actual thing I ask for I get His answer, and say, Thank God, He has come in, though not seeing the fruit of it at the moment.

Verse 5: " Walk in wisdom." As "dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth an ill savor, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom"—godly wisdom; to give no occasion to the enemy. A foolish word, a rash expression, may hinder a person receiving the gospel. It may be a slight thing; if it is a stumbling-block to hinder the gospel, that is not slight. You have to carry Christ, and it behooves you to be fit carriers of Christ in the relationship in which you are. " Let your speech be alway with grace " (v. 6). If Christ is dwelling in my heart by faith, and my habitual habit of mind and thought is with Christ, Christ will come out. How many words-not bad or evil-but idle, for the moment without harm meant, do we speak in a day? It is not Christ, and mark, if it is not Christ, it is something else- the flesh. It is not that we are not to be happy, Christ makes us happy, and that will be seen; but our speech is to be " alway with grace." If we carried Christ in every word, what a life we should live! The joy of heaven to me is, I shall not want my conscience at every step. Here I cannot let myself loose, there are snares everywhere, and I require to keep a wonderful check on myself.

Verse 12. He looks that they should stand " perfect in all the will of God "; not perfect in the flesh, but " growing up to him who is the Head in all things." The Christian who begins to want proof in his walk that he is a Christian is wrong; others do look for testimony. He is to be totally given up to God, and looking for nothing but His will, the eye single. Do you ever doubt about anything-taking a house, or the like? Ask what the will of God is. If you doubt then, I say your eye is not single. Perhaps you have not found out the cause; but He is teaching you, putting you in circumstances to detect motives you never knew were in your heart, that you may be like Christ, and " perfect and complete in all the will of God." Is the energy and purpose of our heart that? It is connected with the consciousness that we belong to Christ. We are set in the world as the epistles of Christ, known and read of all men, that we may manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies. We look to Him for strength and wisdom, and to grow up to Him in everything. Is that the purpose of our hearts in all we do? Is it, I want to do the will of God? The Lord give us to have that as our desire, constant and earnest, and then to " continue in prayer, and watch in the same." If you want to be happy as a Christian, it is in not grieving the Spirit; and not to do that is to walk close to Christ, and get the secret of His will, that you may enjoy Christ with ungrieved Spirit. I do not say you will see your growth. Moses did not see his face shine; but it was the witness to the people that he had been with God. The Lord grant us to be with God in the dependence of prayer, and we shall get the strength of the Lord, and clear-sighted as to where we are not walking with Him.

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