

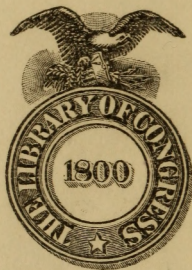
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*Teachings of  
the Lord Jesus*  
*W. S. Bean, A. M., D. D.*

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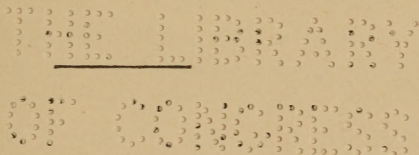


# Teachings of the Lord Jesus

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By  
Prof. W. S. Bean, A. M., D. D.

With an Introduction by  
Prof. C. R. Hemphill, D. D., LL. D.



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## Preface

“Back to Christ,” is a cry heard from many parts of Christendom. It may have different meanings, as men wish to repudiate dogmatic theology or to emphasize the moral teaching of Christ, or to obtain a more distinct impression of the personality of our Lord. In so far as it represents a tendency toward a clearer understanding of the great Teacher and Saviour of men, it is a welcome sign.

This little work does not undertake to enter upon critical questions. Accepting, on sufficient evidence, all the gospels as containing the essential teachings of our Lord, it strives to arrange some of the truths which he uttered in such a way as to bring them to the understanding and heart of believers on him. To have “the mind (*νόος*) of Christ” (I Cor. 2 : 16) is necessary for understanding the religion which he taught; while to “have this mind (*φρονεῖν*) in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2 : 5) is necessary for giving

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a practical direction to our active life. If this brief treatise shall aid any Christian believer in drawing nearer to our Lord and grasping his teaching more firmly, it will accomplish its purpose.

The teaching of Jesus is not simply ethical, as contrasted with the doctrinal deductions of the apostles, but it contains the germs from which all New Testament teaching has been developed, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth. In proportion as the principles taught by Christ are embodied in the life of the believer and of the Church will they leaven the mass yet outside the pale of the kingdom of God.

NOTE.—In the larger works of Prof. Bernhard Weiss, *Lehrbuch der Biblischen Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, translated into English; Wendt's *Lehre Jesu*, also translated into English, and Prof. A. B. Bruce's *Kingdom of God* may be found a more detailed exposition of the teachings of Jesus himself, as well as that of the evangelists from the point of view of each of them. But these works are rather long and critical for the majority of busy Christian workers.



## Introduction

The nineteenth century was the century of the Son of man. In no other hundred years since the apostolic era has the unique figure of Jesus of Nazareth drawn to itself so many eyes or engaged so profound study. To recover the historical surroundings of his life, to set him in the midst of the social and religious ideas of his time, to discover his thoughts of himself and of his mission, to interpret his deeds and words, to penetrate the mystery of his person, to estimate him as a force in humanity, to this the world's best thought and scholarship for two generations and more have been consecrated. The result is that we have found anew the Man Jesus, who is to us now almost as he was to those who saw his face and heard his voice.

In these studies of Jesus, his teaching has received special attention. Not only do the numerous Lives of Christ devote much space to this, but his sayings that have come down to us, comparatively few

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as they are, have been the subject of distinct treatises, some of them most elaborate and minute. It need scarcely be said that some have essayed this task who were without fitness for it; they lacked insight or sympathy or knowledge; and their expositions are crude or one-sided or fanciful. Some, too, have exalted the teaching of Jesus to the disparagement of Peter and John and Paul. But surely it is a mistaken loyalty that, under the guise of devotion to his supreme authority, would make void his promise of the Holy Spirit to be to his disciples the teacher of the many things he had to say to them, and which they were not able to bear while he was yet with them. He is not to be blamed, however, who attaches a peculiar value to the words of Jesus, and who finds in the water from the well of Bethlehem a taste and sparkle all its own. The grouping of the sayings of our Lord under their principal themes, and their simple and judicious interpretation must appeal to all who honor him as Teacher and Lord. This is the object of the book here offered to the reader. Critical and technical matters have not been ob-



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truded, but the genuine scholarship that underlies the discussion will be most readily appreciated by those best acquainted with the subject.

To speak in praise of the book would be to do violence to the modesty of my friend, who would have no shadow of himself fall on these pages, written as they have been, for the service of men and for the glory of Christ.

C. R. HEMPHILL.

*Louisville, Ky.*

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# I

## INTRODUCTORY

“Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God.” John 3 : 2. This acknowledgment made by Nicodemus to the Master represents the involuntary testimony of a man impressed by the wisdom of Jesus, but not yet ready to become an open disciple. It is the lowest possible view which can be taken of his earthly mission, considered as having any relation to a divine purpose.

“They were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.” Mark 1 : 22. Such was the impression made upon the mass of the people who heard him speak in public.

“Never man spake like this man” (John 7 : 46), was the testimony of the officers who had been sent to apprehend Jesus and bring him before the priests for trial.

“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast

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the words of eternal life." John 6 : 68. This was Peter's answer for the Twelve, when their Master asked if they too would be offended at his sayings and depart from him as some temporary disciples had done.

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6 : 63. This claim Jesus himself made for the importance of his teaching.

These and similar passages show us the impression, novel and even startling, which was made upon different classes of hearers by the words of the Lord Jesus.

Yet the temporary impression made by them is not so wonderful as the fact of the enduring hold which his teaching has upon the hearts and consciences of men through all generations. "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." John 9 : 33. This simple conclusion of the blind beggar at Jerusalem is confirmed to us by the marvellous power which is still exerted by the few recorded utterances of the great Teacher. For the teaching of our Lord is by no means voluminous. Taking his words in their entire compass, they do not fill as much space as the writings of St. Paul.

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Except the Sermon on the Mount, and the closing discourse at the Last Supper (John 14-17), we have no connected sayings of our Lord which would fill as much space as even a short sermon. Moreover, our Lord wrote nothing himself, he left no manuscripts or fragments in the hands of his disciples, and the gospels give us a good deal of the same material, slightly changed in expression by their different writers.

Yet how much more weighty and precious are these few words of the Lord Jesus than all the most able, learned, and eloquent sermons that have ever been preached from them, or the most valuable theological treatises based upon them! Should they be destroyed and lost forever to the world, it would be the greatest loss which could be inflicted on the hearts of men. The source of this power and this value must be sought in the personality of Jesus himself. Had he not been what he was, his teaching would not have had so great an effect upon men. Herein is a notable difference between the influence of his words and that of great poets and philosophers or thinkers.



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Homer's poetry would be just as beautiful and as lasting if we knew positively that his existence was a myth. The scientific principles established by Sir Isaac Newton would be just as clear and convincing if we knew nothing of the life of their discoverer and expounder. Even in the case of many religious teachers, such as David, Isaiah, and Paul, the divine truth taught by them is no less precious to us, though we know that they were men of like passions with ourselves, and compassed about with our infirmities.

But in the case of our Lord, we feel that there is an immeasurable distance between himself and others. He places himself apart from men and lifts himself above them by the sublime and unselfish egoism of his claims. These we are to consider in their proper place; we only allude here to the importance of the relation of the truth taught by him to the personality of the great Founder of the Christian religion.

By the teaching of the Lord Jesus, we understand the sum total of his recorded utterances, supplemented by whatever in his actions gave emphasis and meaning to his

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words. For sometimes an action may reveal a truth as well as a spoken word.

When we read that Jesus laid his hand upon a leper (Matt. 8 : 3), when he made the scourge and drove the money-changers and hucksters from the temple (John 2 : 15), when he turned and looked upon Peter (Luke 22 : 61), there was profound significance in these movements. And when before Herod, who wished to see some miracle performed by him, he was absolutely dumb (Luke 23 : 9), his silence condemned the weak and wicked prince even more sternly than a scathing invective.

We assume without controversy that the four gospels give us faithfully the substance of the words of Christ. We ask no question here as to their inspiration, but simply whether they are true and accurate. That they must be true is evident from their *harmony* in all essential points, from their *originality*, precluding any imitation on the part of disciples, from their *high moral and spiritual tone*, making the thought of deliberate fraud revolting to any sincere and candid inquirer.

In order to avoid repetition and to group

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together the principal elements in the teaching of Jesus, it may be systematized under seven chief topics. These are:—

I. His teaching concerning God. II. His teaching concerning man. III. His teaching concerning himself. IV. His teaching concerning the Holy Spirit. V. His teaching concerning salvation. VI. His teaching concerning the kingdom of God; and VII. His teaching concerning the citizens of that kingdom. These will comprehend the essential divisions which make up our Lord's teaching, which was uttered always in a fresh, direct, and practical way, never in dry and abstract definitions. Yet we can better classify his utterances when we group them around some of the prominent truths which we find often emphasized in his sayings.



## II

### HIS TEACHING CONCERNING GOD

There is in our Lord's teaching concerning God, part that is old and part that is new. Jesus himself declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matt. 5 : 17. He recognized the Jewish Church as the church of God, declaring that "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4 : 22); the Scriptures of the Old Testament as God's word, as is shown by his frequent appeal to them (see, for instance, Matt. 4 : 4, \* 7, 10, and Luke 10 : 26); the ordinances of the Law as binding, as when he sent the healed lepers to the priests for purification. Matt. 8 : 4.

He submitted himself to all that the Law demanded of him, and hence we find him at twelve years of age going up to be enrolled as a "son of the Law" (Luke 2 : 42); and speaking in the temple of "the things of his Father." Verse 49. He declared to his disciples that according to the Scrip-

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tures, the Christ "ought to suffer all these things." Luke 24 : 26.

All this is very different from the attitude of Paul at Athens. We find the apostle appealing to the numerous statues as evidence of reverence for the divine, and to the altar to an "unknown God" as proof of their ignorance of the true Deity.

Jesus indeed charged the scribes and Pharisees with overlaying the divine truth with their own traditions (Matt. 23), and making it of none effect (Matt. 15 : 16), but he never set aside the Scriptures as obsolete. (Compare on the contrary Matt. 5 : 19, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments" and "Whosoever shall do and teach them.") Nor did he contest their authority but declared that the "Scripture cannot be broken." John 10 : 35. All, therefore, that was taught in the Old Testament concerning God, or all in accordance therewith received by his contemporaries, we find that Jesus recognized and accepted as truth established and understood. Hence we find him speaking of God as the Creator of the lilies (Matt. 6 : 28); as Ruler and governor of all creatures (of

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the fowls, Matt. 6 : 26); as good (Matt. 19 : 17); as all-powerful ("Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee," Mark 14 : 36). Many other such passages might be adduced and will readily occur to the reader.

The great distinction, however, between the teaching of our Lord as to God, and that of the Old Testament, is the prominence which he gives to the Fatherhood of God.

In the Old Testament, the conception of God is kingly rather than paternal. "The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." Psa. 95 : 3. The Old Testament Church itself had the form of a nation and at its head was the theocratic king. Hence the conception of the future kingdom of God was as an enlarged and glorified kingdom of Israel. God would appear as a judge and an avenger to punish all the heathen nations that did not submit themselves to him; the kingdom of Israel would become the center of all nations and God through the Messianic King, would rule over them from Jerusalem.

The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God



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does indeed appear in a few scattered passages of the Old Testament Scriptures; as in I Chron. 29 : 10, where David says, "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever." So in Isaiah 63 : 16 we read, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting." And again in chap. 64 : 8—"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." So the prophet Jeremiah says (ch. 31 : 9, 20), "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still." But the utterance which is most like the New Testament is that beautiful passage in Psalm 103 : 13, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

When we turn to the New Testament and examine the teachings of the Lord Jesus, we are struck with the frequent recurrence of this name of God. Instead of having

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to seek for it here or there, it is prominent in almost every utterance of Christ. In the Gospel of John alone, we find it used by Jesus over one hundred times, and it appears that it was the usual term which he used of God in speaking to his immediate disciples. The first utterance we find recorded as coming from the lips of the boy Jesus expresses this truth, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2 : 49); while almost, if not the last word which came from his dying lips contained the same truth, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23 : 46. In the Sermon on the Mount, it is not simply as "my Father," but as "your Father" that God is set before us. Our Father who is in heaven is to be glorified by letting our light shine before men (Matt. 5 : 16), and it is as "Our Father who art in heaven" that we are to address him in prayer. Matt. 6 : 9. It is with the assurance that our "heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt. 6 : 32), that we are encouraged to trust in God and seek for food and clothing from him. And in the tenderest, most persuasive words we are

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told, "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11 : 11-13.

There is a special sense in which the Lord Jesus speaks of God as "my Father," but he delighted also to impress the reality of this relationship on his disciples as shared by them. "I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." John 20 : 17.

It is evident that the conception of God as a Father was already contained in the Old Testament. We must now consider, What is the difference between this Old Testament conception of the Fatherhood of God and the same doctrine as so frequently inculcated by our Lord?

The Old Testament conception is limited by the relation of God to Israel as a nation.



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“I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Ezekiel 36 : 28 and 37 : 27), expresses well the covenant relation between God and the people of Israel. While we find in the Old Testament prophecies of the future kingdom of God as *universal*, and all nations are called upon to serve the Lord and to rejoice in him (Psalm 67 : 2-4), yet God is represented as a great King over these nations, and not as a Father to them. Moreover God is the Father of Israel as an entire nation, and there is not the sense of personal sonship between him and the individual believer. The ancient Israelite could call God “Our Father,” because God was the Father of the chosen and redeemed nation of Israel. The New Testament believer can call God “Our Father,” because our Lord says, “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” John 14 : 21. Those who are “born of water and of the Spirit” (John 3 : 5), are the true sons of God, who call him Father because of the abiding presence of the Paraclete, the Advocate. John 14 : 16.

Another question of much importance

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which arises is—How far does Christ extend this term “Your Father in heaven” in reference to all mankind? Does he use this expression *universally*, or is it to be limited to those who have been “born from above”? John 3 : 3.

There is now no limitation of God’s Fatherhood by reason of nationality. Our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” John 4 : 21, 23.

There is a sense in which God is the Father of all mankind. Man was created in the divine image and designed to bear dominion over all God’s creatures on earth. Psalm 8. Now this idea of Fatherhood implies, (a) a common origin of life. “Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?” Malachi 2 : 10. Paul quotes to the Athenians, “certain even of your own poets” as having said, “For we are also his offspring,” and he adopts this as true by

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arguing, "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God," etc. Acts 17 : 28, 29. This universal Fatherhood implies (b) providential care. "When the Most High . . . separated the children of men, he set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut. 32 : 8); a truth repeated by Paul in Acts 17 : 26, "Having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation." And it implies (c) moral discipline, a truth universally taught in the Scriptures that all men are under God's righteous rule whether they obey it or rebel against it. In these senses, our Lord recognized the Fatherhood of God as universal. "He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6 : 35), and "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." Matt. 5 : 45. All men derive their natural life from God, and so it is said, "Call no man your father upon the earth : for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. 23 : 9. Thus God's dealings with men were intended to lead them to repentance and to obedience through faith. "Except ye re-



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pent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13 : 5.

But there is a higher sense in which men may be the true sons of God, and for this it is essential that there should be access to God through Christ the Son. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. 11 : 27. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14 : 6. This more intimate knowledge of God as the Father comes through faith in the Lord Jesus and knowledge of him: "Believe in God, believe also in me." John 14 : 1. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also : and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." John 14 : 7. This fellowship with his true children, takes place by the indwelling of the Spirit, the Paraclete: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Advocate, that he may abide with you forever ; even the Spirit of truth." John 14 : 16, 17. And this secures the presence also of the Father and of the Son: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my

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Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14 : 23.

Thus, union with Christ the Son brings about union and communion with God the Father and with the Holy Spirit. Hence the command is given, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matt. 28 : 19. On the other hand, Jesus charged the unbelieving Jews, his enemies, with having no true knowledge of God, because they did not believe on the Son. "If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." John 8 : 42. Thus, those who were not the sons of God were kept away by their own perverse refusal to learn of the Son, and he declared, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5 : 40.

But while there is no true sonship, in the highest sense, except that which comes through faith in the Son and union with him, the same God who is "kind to the unthankful and to the evil" is ready to be

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gracious and fatherly, even to those who have sinned and gone far astray. The fatherhood of God receives its most profound and touching exhibition in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Luke 15. There we see the unworthy, ungrateful, selfish, sinful son in the far country, in destitution, in misery, and at the point of death. We see the wanderer "coming to himself," aware of his condition, remembering the father's house and the father's goodness, making the great resolution, "I will arise and go unto my father." We see the father meeting him, welcoming and forgiving him. We see the strength of a father's love and his joy over the lost one found. All this, Christ meant to be a vivid picture of what he understood by the fatherly love of God. It is a love which bears with folly and sin and rebellion, and provides a way for forgiveness. It is a love which sees the sad reality of sin's defilement, yet keeps the best robe and the ring for those who return to the Father's house. It is a love which requires repentance and return and confession, but which is ready to meet the returning sinner, and to rejoice



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over him with unspeakable joy and tenderness.

Such is a brief outline of the teaching of our Lord on this fundamental topic. We shall find other necessary truth taught bearing on this topic, which can be better treated under other divisions of our subject. To those who receive Christ's teaching and obey it, the welcome is promised hereafter, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25 : 34.

### III

#### HIS TEACHING CONCERNING MAN

We are told that when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the passover, many believed on his name, seeing the signs which he wrought. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." John 2 : 24, 25. This knowledge which Jesus had of men fitted him for the work he came to do as the Saviour of men. Apart from any consideration of his divine knowledge of man, we proceed to ask: How in his estate of humiliation, as one passing through this world, did he gain his knowledge of men?

(a.) Jesus was himself a man. His own favorite title was "The Son of man." His human nature was a real one, his participation in the lot of his human brethren was not a delusion, or an appearance, but a fact. In his own life, which developed like other human lives from infancy to manhood, amid all the relations of life as child, as boy, as

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youth, he learned what was in man. Yet in that knowledge there was no taint of sinfulness. No transgression disfigured his pure life, no bitter remorse could enter his sinless soul. Yet he was tempted and tried. He came into actual conflict with the power of evil and he overcame it. He fought a real battle for us and won the victory against an enemy who actually beset him but who "found nothing in him." John 14 : 30.

It is not necessary for a full and accurate knowledge of man that one should go down into the depths of sin. Indeed, the overclouding of the soul with the mists of evil passions may only serve to darken it and distort its vision, and thus prevent that clear and true knowledge which we should have of our fellow-men.

(b.) There is abundant evidence in the study of our Lord's life that he rapidly analyzed character and distinguished the salient traits of men, and that he seized at once on the real citadel of the human soul.

How he unmasked the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and laid bare with one word "that fox," the character of Herod. How readily



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he adapted himself to the needs of his disciples, warning and holding back the impetuous Peter, strengthening the faith of the skeptical Thomas, and manifesting a warm personal attachment for the beloved disciple! Even in the case of Judas Iscariot, Jesus was not deceived. He knew the dark side of the man's character, he understood the temptations which beset him; yet he suffered him to remain as one of his followers, and sought by his words and deeds to expel the demon of covetousness from his soul.

(c) Again his knowledge of men was shown by his control over them. Some men are specially fitted to see into the secret workings of other hearts and to depict character in well-chosen words. But they may not be able to make practical use of this knowledge in controlling and guiding men for their own purposes. Jesus not only saw what was in men but he saw also what could be brought out of men. He detected latent possibilities for good where others could see little. Thus he was able to train his own immediate followers so that they could take up his work and

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carry it on in accordance with his purpose. He had only the simplest materials with which to found the Church of the New Covenant, but these he selected and used with rare skill and marvelous success. Besides the endowment of the Spirit which the apostles received, we must account this personal training by Christ as one of the chief factors in disciplining them for their work as master builders in the kingdom of God.

Such, from our human point of view, were some elements of the knowledge of men which our Lord possessed. We proceed to inquire what he taught in regard to mankind.

As to the origin of man, Jesus added nothing to the current belief of his age. That God had created man in his own image was taught in the Old Testament, and the Saviour simply adopted this as truth, thus confirming it as part of our own faith.

But Jesus had much more to say about man's present condition and his future state than about his past origin or the beginnings of evil in the race. We never find in any of our Lord's discourses, any mention of

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Adam or of Adam's sin as affecting his descendants. Indeed, this is not made a prominent topic in the Old Testament itself. According to the Old Testament Scriptures, men are "flesh," that is frail, weak, and corruptible, and thus containing within their very nature the seeds of evil. Hence we find Christ recognizing and teaching plainly the sinfulness of men. How this came about he did not teach, but that they are sinful, in need of light, of pardon, and of cleansing, he everywhere assumed. He also assumed that a man would act as his ancestors had acted before him. In answer to the claim of the unbelieving Jews that they were "Abraham's children," he replied, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." John 8 : 39. "Ye do the deeds of your father." Ibid. v. 41. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Ibid. v. 44.

As to the nature of sin, Christ taught that it is partly spiritual blindness. "For judgment (discrimination) I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made



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blind." John 9 : 39. But this blindness is partly of the will. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin," he said to the Pharisee, "but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." John 9 : 41. To open the eyes of the blind was one prophetic attribute of the Messiah, and in every way, literally and spiritually, the Saviour did this.

Again, Jesus taught that sin makes men guilty, that is, exposed to the penalty of the divine Law. He said to the sick of the palsy, first, "Son, be of good cheer," why?—not merely because "Thou art *healed*," but because "thy sins be forgiven thee." Matt. 9 : 2. Where there is innocence there is no need of forgiveness; it is the guilty who need it.

He recognized sin also as defilement. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." Matt. 15 : 19. As he said to the leper, "I will; be thou clean" (Matt. 8 : 3), so he says to all who are polluted and defiled by sin, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matt.

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5 : 8. Men need then to be forgiven, to be cleansed and to have their spiritual vision restored that they may see. How this is accomplished by Christ we shall consider more fully when we investigate his teaching concerning salvation.

It has been made evident that the Lord Jesus taught that men are sinful, and that this sinfulness consists in spiritual blindness, guilt, and defilement. We proceed to inquire further as to particular sins which he specified as manifest.

We can but be struck with the fact that Christ in his popular teaching did not inveigh strongly against the graver and coarser sins of mankind as frequently and severely as did the Old Testament prophets. When we read their writings, we see the corruptions of society vividly portrayed, and cruelty, oppression, rapacity, licentiousness, and falsehood are charged upon the people of Israel. But the attitude of Jesus toward the sinful classes of mankind was such as to bring upon him the charge of being "a friend of publicans and sinners." Luke 7 : 34. His severest words were uttered not against the classes held to be the

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greatest sinners, but against the hypocrites and self-righteous. For the sinner there remained the possibility of conviction, of repentance, and of forgiveness. But for the self-satisfied Pharisee there was little hope of better self-knowledge and of any humiliation of himself before God. What scathing words are those which are recorded in Matthew 23 against the scribes and Pharisees, closing with the denunciation, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Another sin which the Lord pressed home on the conscience of his hearers as deserving condemnation, was that of *omission*. Thus we are taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." Matt. 6 : 12, R. V. The things we have left undone, the things about which we trouble ourselves so little are those which ought to weigh on the conscience and lead us to seek forgiveness.

This truth is even more solemnly impressed in the Lord's description of the Final Judgment. Matt. 25 : 42, 43, 45. There the condemnation turns not on crimes of violence committed, not on fraud or lying,



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not even on unbelief and hypocrisy. But the sentence is, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

Pride is another sin which was condemned by Jesus, as in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican; where the former's conceited recital of his own merits is condemned and the latter's penitent cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is declared more acceptable to God. Luke 18: 10-14. And from this the Lord drew the general truth: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The same lesson was taught by Christ's commendation of lowliness of heart, when after blessing the children he added, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." Mark 10: 15.

Another sin strongly condemned is the

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unforgiving spirit, which has its root in too high an estimate of ourselves. Besides being incorporated into the Lord's Prayer, it is beautifully illustrated in the parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matt. 18 : 23-35); in which the spirit of harsh revenge is severely censured. Indeed the Lord made this an indispensable condition of forgiveness; "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Mark II : 25, 26.

Although the Lord recognized so plainly the prevalence of sin clinging to us, even in the best and most unselfish part of our nature, as witnessed by his saying, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children" (Matt. 7 : 11)—how broad was his compassion and how intense his desire to deliver men from their sins. He did not look upon them as irretrievably lost, but he recognized the possibility of bringing back the lost to communion with God. "The Son of man came

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to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10. "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John 12:47. While the Pharisees and the priests drew their robes closer about them and passed by "on the other side" from the sinful masses of men, Jesus drew near, poured into their wounds the oil and the wine of his love and grace, healed their diseases and restored their souls. "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." Matt. 9:36. "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2) was the scornful comment of the Pharisees. Far from excusing himself, he justified this charge and declared that "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Ibid. v.7. Hence Jesus recognized whatever was good in man and laid hold on that good, however weak it might be, as the means of reaching him. Though he taught that all are sinful, yet he could say of a Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" John



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1 : 47. He could speak of men as relatively good or evil: "The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." Matt. 12 : 35. His disciples must not be satisfied with the goodness that may be shown by sinners, "If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same." Luke 6 : 33. So Jesus called the publican Matthew to be his disciple and made him one of the Twelve. He called Zacchæus the publican to come and receive him at his own house, and declared, "To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Luke 19 : 9, R. V. In his reply to the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" he taught the parable of the Good Samaritan. Luke 10 : 30-37. This parable is remarkable for two things, first it makes the claim of neighborliness as broad as the need of our fellow-men, and second that the type of the true, kind-hearted neighbor was a Samaritan whom the Jews looked on with scorn as outside the kingdom of God. The believing centurion was commended for his faith,

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greater than any which Jesus had found in Israel. Matt. 8 : 5-11. Even those who were sunk in sin he looked on as capable of being reached and saved by divine grace. In that wonderful group of parables in Luke 15, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Money, and the Prodigal Son, while the evil and folly of sin are plainly set forth, the object of Jesus was to illustrate the tenderness and compassion of God in seeking and saving the lost. The lost sheep is still the shepherd's property, bearing his mark, cared for, sought out and carried home with rejoicing. The lost piece of money is still stamped with the image and superscription of the King, and when dragged from the dust and darkness of its hiding place, precious in the finder's eyes. The prodigal son, unworthy, selfish, degraded, and polluted, is still a son, and the father's heart yearns over the lost, and breaks forth in gratitude for his return.

This is the attitude in which Jesus stands before us in the gospels; the Son of man, the Friend of sinners, the Teacher of the common people, the Lover of children, the Healer, the Helper, the Forgiver

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of sins. Could anything be more humbling than to hear this sinless Saviour speak of man's sin? Could anything be more encouraging than his assurance of pardon and peace to those who like the sinful woman can weep bitter tears of repentance yet depart with the joyful word, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace"? Luke 7 : 50. Even in the last bitter agony when he had been "despised and rejected of men," when human hate and cruelty and hypocritical zeal had united in heaping all possible indignity and insult upon him, he showed no trace of bitterness. Even as the nails were piercing his hands and the rude soldiers were carrying out unconcerned the harsh sentence, from his pallid lips proceeded no plea for mercy for himself, no threat of vengeance on his foes, no cry to God for his consuming fires on the city and the race which slew him. But like a sudden burst of sunlight from a gloomy sky, the darkness and horror of that awful scene were illumined by the prayer of him who maketh intercession for the transgressors, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23 : 34.



## IV

### HIS TEACHING CONCERNING HIMSELF

On one occasion, when charged by his adversaries with bearing worthless testimony concerning himself, Jesus replied: "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go." John 8 : 14. It is implied in this statement first, that Jesus claimed to be conscious of the true nature which he possessed as well as of its origin and destiny, and second that he gave such testimony concerning himself as would convey trustworthy information to those who sought it. On another occasion Jesus put this test question to the Pharisees when they were gathered together, "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he?" Matt. 22 : 42. He asked them this because he knew that they doubted and denied his claims. But the formula which embodies the main truths which he taught concerning himself is that known as "the apostolic confession," at Cæsarea Philippi. Matt.

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16 : 13-17. There, after questioning his own disciples as to whom men said that he the Son of man was, he addressed the inquiry directly to them: "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This weighty utterance marks a great epoch in the earthly ministry of our Lord. It was the point of time at which he began to speak plainly to his disciples concerning his Messianic work, and also to prepare them for the shame and suffering which he was to undergo. Matt. 16 : 21.

In this apostolic confession we find associated the three titles which our Lord gave to himself, and which he accepted as true when given to him by his followers. These are (a) "the Son of man," "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (b) "the Christ," and (c) "the Son of God." For while Peter gave to Jesus these latter titles in answering his Master's question, Jesus not only accepted the answer as correct,

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but pronounced a blessing on Peter because "flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father in heaven." We may group together then some of the plainest teachings of Jesus concerning himself under these three great titles, Son of man, the Messiah, and the Son of God.

We will ask first, what is meant by the historical title, the Christ or the Messiah? Three things must be considered briefly, first, What is the Old Testament teaching concerning the Messiah? second, What was the popular view at the time of the appearance of the Lord Jesus? and third, What was the view which Jesus himself took of his work as the Messiah? We can give but the barest outline of the main points as to the Old Testament teaching. Without going back to discuss the "protevangeli-um" in the promise of the seed of the woman (Gen. 3 : 15), or the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17 : 1-8), we find that the title "the anointed one" is applied in the Old Testament first to the priest who was thus consecrated by anointing. In Exodus 40 : 13, Moses was directed, after clothing Aaron in the holy garments, to anoint him



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and sanctify him that he might minister unto God. Hence in Leviticus 4 : 3, the priest is called "the anointed priest," Hebrew, "the Messiah." Later the king was anointed, as we read in I Sam. 10 : 1 that Samuel took the horn of oil and poured it on the head of Saul; as afterwards when Saul was rejected, he did the same to David. Saul is thus called "the Lord's anointed," and a peculiar reverence was felt for him because he had been thus set aside for his kingly office. In later years this anointing became part of the public ceremony of coronation, as in the case of Joash who was anointed by the high priest in the temple. II Kings 11 : 12. The prophets were sometimes anointed for service, as we read that Elijah was commissioned to anoint Elisha to be prophet in his stead. I Kings 19 : 16.

The general conception of an anointed official in Israel then was, that he was a person selected by Jehovah himself to carry out a definite work, and fitted for that work by being filled with the special gifts of the Holy Spirit, typified by the anointing oil.

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monarchy, when David contemplated building the temple, Nathan the prophet was sent to him with the great promise in II Sam. 7 : 12-16, of a son who should sit on his throne and establish an everlasting kingdom. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, . . . and I will establish his kingdom. . . . I will be his father, and he shall be my son." Here are the three ideas of a king, a son of David, the Founder of an eternal kingdom, and in a peculiar sense the Son of God. In the familiar passages Psalms 2, 72, 110, this Messianic conception is more fully expanded. The King is a Son of God exalted at his right hand, a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, triumphant over all his foes, and possessing a kingdom which shall endure as long as the sun. The prophets also spoke of a Prince of Peace (Isa. 9 : 6), a son of David (Isa. 9 : 7), or even of David himself as ruling over the nation (Hos. 3 : 5) after all its calamities should be past. While other great prophecies, such as those of Isaiah, speak of the Servant of God, these were not so often blended by the Jewish

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people with their own conception of the Messiah.

When our Lord came in the flesh, there was a general feeling of unrest and expectation in the hearts of the Jewish people. The Roman dominion pressed heavily on them and the Pharisees considered it an outrage that the Holy Land, God's own possession, should pay tribute to the heathen Roman emperor. Others disliked the Herods, those Edomite usurpers who by craft and Roman intrigue had gained possession of the monarchy of Israel. The people were ripening for revolt, and the popular idea of the Messiah was not that of the gentle Prince of Peace, the King of righteousness in whose days the lion should lie down with the lamb. but rather the triumphant conqueror coming from Edom with garments dyed in the blood of his enemies (Isaiah 63 : 1, 2); the King who should rule the nations with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psalm 2 : 9. Hence we find one of the temptations of Christ in the wilderness was the idea of making himself master of all the kingdoms of the world (Matt. 4 : 8,



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9); that was doubtless to put himself at the head of Israel as a great political deliverer, and to lead the people against their Roman masters. So when Jesus had fed the five thousand in the wilderness, the populace became so excited that they were ready to make him a king by force. John 6 : 15. We know from the gospels how much earthliness and selfish ambition were found even in the hearts of the twelve apostles in reference to the kingdom of God. Many times our Lord had to rebuke them for their ambition and self-seeking, and check their spirit of pride as it became offensively manifest. Hence Jesus did not go at once among all classes of the people declaring to them that he was the Messiah. This truth must be gradually and quietly spread among his own followers, in order to correct their false views as to its meaning and to exalt their conception of the Messianic office. Yet Christ's character and all of his acts and teachings were such as to convince the people that there was One among them who claimed for himself a place of honor and authority delegated to himself alone by his heavenly Father. Had Jesus

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begun at once among the populace by announcing, "I am the Messiah," with their false and narrow views of the Messianic kingdom, they might have been led into some disastrous political movement, but would have been utterly unprepared for the true spiritual kingdom of God. This was to be a kingdom not of political organization or political independence, but a kingdom of faith, love, and obedience, as we shall see when we examine more closely, the views of our Lord touching the Messianic office, and the kingdom of God.

We have thus sketched briefly the Old Testament teaching of the Messiah, and also the popular conception of the Messiah's work at the time of our Lord's coming. What Christ himself thought concerning the Messiah is shown both by his utter rejection of this popular conception and by his positive utterances: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18 : 36. While he cited the Psalm (110) which speaks of David's lord being David's

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son, to confute the Pharisees, he applied to himself particularly those Old Testament passages which speak of the Servant of the Lord, the Sufferer, the Deliverer of men. Isa. 61 : 1-3. The Old Testament teaching as to the Messiah is but an outline sketch drawn in few, bold strokes, an outline which Jesus was to fill up (*πληρῶσαι*) in the sense that he was to give it fullness, life, and color. He was to show by an actual human life what manner of person the promised Son of David was to be, one who should lay broad and deep the foundations of the eternal kingdom of God. Hence it is significant that his first open claim for himself at Nazareth was based on that most beautiful passage in Isaiah:—

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

“Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:

“He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,

“And recovering of sight to the blind,

“To set at liberty them that are bruised,

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Luke 4 : 18, 19.

Again he made a plain declaration of



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his Messiahship to the woman of Samaria, one whom his disciples would regard as having no part or lot in the Messianic hope, while Jesus looked on the neglected country of Samaria as a field white to the harvest. John 4 : 26, 35.

Thus Jesus' view of the Messiah's office was not simply gained by a knowledge of the words of the prophets and an attempt to fulfill them literally, but it was the outcome of his own pure, exalted, holy, spiritual life, animated ever by the consciousness of his divine mission and of the entire consecration to God which characterized him in the days of his flesh. We shall see further what were his views when we take up in detail what he taught concerning the kingdom of God.

The second great title given Jesus is the Son of man. While he did not call himself openly and commonly the Messiah, he did call himself the Son of man so habitually that we may say this was his favorite and chosen title for himself. The Hebrew name was often simply "Ben" (son) followed by the father's name, as Ben-Jacob, Ben-Abraham. Our Lord does

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not entitle himself "Son of *a* man," as descended from some one however remarkable. Nor is it "*a* son of man" as being one among many of the human race. But it is *the* Son of man, emphasizing his humanity, yet distinguishing him by this very title from other sons of men. Indeed the Lord applied this name to himself in many instances where we would rather expect him to use the other title, the Son of God.

"The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matt. 8 : 20. He, the one true man, the only sinless representative of the race, embodying in himself what man ought to be, man to whom was given the dominion over this earth, had not the humblest dwelling which he might call his own. "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Matt. 9 : 6. This he said justifying his words of forgiveness to the man sick of the palsy. "The Son of man is lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2 : 28), having authority to set aside all traditional views as to its observance and perform his gracious deeds of healing when and where he pleased. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which

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was lost" (Luke 19 : 10), being the good Shepherd who follows far and wide the lost sheep until he finds it. And it is the Son of man who is to come in the glory of his Father and all the holy angels with him (Matt. 25 : 31) to pronounce judgment on all the nations and to assign to each soul its everlasting doom. "For the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of man." John 5 : 27. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." John 3 : 14.

The most solemn and thrilling use of this name was during the trial of Jesus by the Sanhedrin. To all charges brought by false witnesses, to all perversions of his own utterances, Jesus answered not a word. Then the high priest, the representative of the national religion, rising from his seat, solemnly put the question: "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus saith unto him, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on



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the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26 : 63, 64. These words refer to Daniel 7 : 13, 14, R. V., "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man . . . and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, . . . his dominion is an everlasting dominion, . . . and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Thus the expression Son of man does not merely indentify Jesus with humanity. Though he as Son of man was to be delivered into the hands of man and they should kill him (Matt. 17 : 22), yet this same Son of man is to come again, in a day and an hour of which no man knoweth, and "send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity." Matt. 13 : 41. The Son of man is truly the representative of our humanity, himself sinless, perfect, entirely obedient and able to deliver by his grace all his sinning human brethren who trust in him.

We come now to the third title, Son of God. We have seen that Jesus accepted and endorsed Peter's answer, "Thou art the

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Christ, the Son of the living God." We have seen that in his trial he replied to the high priest's question, whether he was the Son of the Blessed, "I am." In the first recorded utterance of Jesus at the age of twelve, he expressed his peculiar relationship to God, "I must be in the things of my Father." Luke 2 : 49. It is noticeable that while he taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven," and while he spoke to them frequently of "your heavenly Father," he did not use this language of his own relation to God. It is always "My Father," and he speaks of himself as "the Son." Thus in the saying, "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." Matt. 11 : 27. This is equivalent to the utterance, "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14 : 6), and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Ibid. v. 9. At the baptism of Jesus, his divine sonship was brought prominently before his own mind by the voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son." Matt. 3 : 17. And when tempted

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by Satan in the wilderness, two of the temptations turned on this, whether he would put his divine Sonship to the test of some selfish or presumptuous use of his power. But it is in the Gospel of John that the divine Sonship is most fully brought out, not only in the words of the evangelist, but in the utterances of the Lord Jesus himself: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." John 3 : 16. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Ibid. v. 17. As Son of God, Jesus is the Revealer of the Father, as he is the confidant of the Father in his plans and purposes of grace. "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth." John 5 : 20. "He hath given all judgment unto the Son ; that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Ibid. vs. 22, 23. In John 17 we have the most wonderful outpouring of the soul of the Son of God, as he commends himself, his disciples, and his future kingdom into the hands of the Father. "Father, the hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." V. 1. "I have



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glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Vs. 4, 5. All that man may know of the Father is to be learned through Jesus as the Son of God. All life is in him, and only as united with him do we become the children of God, as he is in this special and peculiar sense "the SON OF GOD."

## V

### HIS TEACHING AS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Old Testament has numerous references to the work of the Holy Spirit. In the first chapter of Genesis, it is the Spirit who brooded upon the face of the waters and brought life and order out of chaos. The Spirit came upon the judges, warriors, and prophets, and fitted them for their work. Num. 11 : 25 ; Judg. 3 : 10 ; I Sam. 16 : 13 ; Isa. 11 : 2 ; Ezek. 11 : 5. The Spirit is to be poured out in the latter days upon all flesh, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Joel. Isa. 44 : 3 ; Joel 2 : 28. Hence the teaching of the Old Testament on this important subject must have been familiar to Jesus from his earliest years.

We must bear in mind also the special agency of the Holy Spirit in preparing Jesus for his life-work. The Spirit was the agent by whom Jesus was conceived (Luke 1 : 35), while at his baptism the Spirit descended like a dove and rested upon him (Luke 3 : 22); and immediately after his

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baptism, the Spirit led him into the wilderness for his temptation. Luke 4 : 1. We find that Jesus, being thus especially a child of the Holy Spirit, recognized and taught the agency of that Spirit all through his ministry, and laid particular emphasis on the continued influence of the Spirit upon his disciples, after his own personal withdrawal from the world. Jesus appealed to the witness of the Holy Spirit in testifying to the work of the coming Messiah, through the prophets of the old dispensation.

When he wished to confute his enemies he asked them, "How say the scribes that the Christ is the son of David? David himself said in the Holy Spirit,  
"Sit thou on my right hand,

Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet."

Mark 12 : 35 ; Psa. 110 : 1.

Again, when Jesus first returned to Nazareth after his entrance upon his public ministry, he went into the synagogue and stood up to read. And when the book was opened, he read from Isaiah 61 : 1, 2,  
"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he hath anointed me to preach



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good tidings to the poor." When he closed the book, he sat down and declared, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4 : 16-24.

We find him also claiming that he cast out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12 : 28), and in this connection he uttered the solemn warning against blaspheming the Holy Spirit: "Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." Mark 3 : 29.

He taught also that the same Spirit by whom he wrought his own works should be bestowed upon his disciples, if they asked for him. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11 : 13. It was in the presence and the influence of the Spirit that the disciples were to trust for their defense before their enemies. "The Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." Luke 12 : 12. Not only for them, but for every disciple through the ages, the work of the Holy

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Spirit is necessary, and each disciple is to be baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matt. 28 : 19.

After the resurrection of the Lord and before his departure, he gave a special promise to the apostles, saying, "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit." "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses." Acts 1 : 5, 8.

The Gospel of John is very rich in the teaching of Jesus as to the influence and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the agent of regeneration for every soul that is born into the kingdom of God. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3 : 5. The work of the Spirit is free and sovereign, mysterious, and wonderful as the course of the wind. Ibid. v. 8. The Spirit is the "other Advocate" (the Paraclete), who is given to the disciples in accordance with the prayer of Jesus, that he may be with them forever; "even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot re-

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ceive." John 14 : 16, 17. He is to teach them all things and bring to their remembrance all that Christ had said unto them. Ibid. v. 26. This Spirit of truth "proceeds from the Father," and "bears witness of Jesus." John 15 : 26. His mission to the world is to "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Ibid. 16 : 8. But the disciples he will guide into all truth, and "declare unto you the things that are to come." "He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." Ibid. vs. 13, 14.

After his resurrection, Jesus breathed on the disciples and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." John 20 : 22. This act was symbolic of the inbreathing of the Spirit who should enlighten and strengtnen them for their mission in proclaiming the gospel to the world.

From this outline which covers all essential points, it is evident that Jesus clearly taught the great truths of the Holy Spirit's work in preparing for the Messiah by inspiring the prophets to announce his coming. The Spirit was with him in his own



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ministry, both in declaring the truth and in overcoming the powers of evil. It is the Spirit who is to abide in the Church, to regenerate, enlighten, and sanctify the believing children of God, through all the ages.

And that his Holy Spirit is not a mere spiritual influence is shown by the solemn warning against blaspheming the Spirit, and by the association of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in the formula of baptism. There is no more developed teaching in the other New Testament writings, concerning the Holy Spirit, which is not found already in the germ in these great sayings of our Lord. Jesus who was himself the "Advocate with the Father," has given us the promise of the "other Advocate" who pleads with men the cause of Christ and brings them to the knowledge of the truth.

## VI

### HIS TEACHING CONCERNING SALVATION

Our Lord frequently represented his mission to the world as one for the salvation of men. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19 : 10. "This day is salvation come to this house." Ibid. v. 9. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Matt. 24 : 13. In these well-known passages, Jesus sets forth salvation as something needed by men, as something which may be obtained by them, and as that which he himself procures for them. It was his office, his work as the Son of man to seek and to save the lost. He is the Good Shepherd (John 10 : 11) who goes after the wandering sheep until he finds it, then lays it on his shoulder and brings it to the fold again rejoicing. Luke 15 : 4, 5. Probably the dearest name by which our Lord is known to us is that of "Saviour." Yet he never called himself by this title, although in many instances he spoke of his work

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as the saving of men. His description of his work on earth gives us a clear and full knowledge of what he is and what he does for our souls.

Where there is salvation there must be the necessity for it, and Christ would not come to save men were they not in peril. Accordingly we find him speaking of the danger in which men are, and of the necessity of being delivered from it. This is very different language from that of a reformer who expects to save men merely by his teaching. Christ represents the peril of men's souls as one attended with momentous consequences and of eternal duration. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8 : 36, 37. The word soul is translated "life" in the Revised Version, indicating the real life, the life never ending. Again this loss of the soul is represented as exclusion from the presence of God: "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Matt. 25 : 41); as a thrusting out into the outer darkness (Ibid. v. 30); as the destruction of both soul and body in hell (Gehenna, Matt.



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10 : 28); as the burning of the tares in the fire (Matt. 13 : 40), and as the final and eternal separation between the righteous and the wicked. Matt. 13 : 41-43. These are solemn words coming from the lips of the Friend of sinners, and whatever view we may take as to the figurative language of some of these expressions, they would be unmeaning unless they set forth some real terrible, and everlasting loss to which men are exposed.

Now the very object of Christ's coming was to save men from this danger of eternal loss. "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9 : 56. "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John 12 : 47. "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him." John 3 : 17. Hence the offer which Jesus made upon earth to men, and which he still makes by his word and his Spirit, was the offer of salvation. This consists in the Forgiveness of Sins. He teaches us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matt. 6 : 12. But he claimed that the Son of

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man had authority on earth to forgive sins, and this authority he committed unto his Church. After his resurrection, when he appeared unto his disciples he said, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." And when he had said this he breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." John 20 : 21, 22, 23. This forgiveness of sins is effected by the faithful proclamation by the Church of the offer of Christ; for wherever his gospel is carried in truth, men are brought to the knowledge of the way of life and to the forgiveness of sins.

But our Lord did not simply state that he had authority to forgive sins, but declared also the basis on which rest our forgiveness and restoration to communion with God.

The ground of our salvation he declared to be his own death upon the cross for the sin of men. "The Son of man came not to be minister unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom (*λύτρον*) for many."

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Matt. 20 : 28; Mark 10 : 45. This passage is very weighty and significant. It is sometimes claimed that the whole teaching of the atoning death of Jesus is Pauline and a later development, that Jesus himself never taught any such doctrine. It must be noted that this passage occurs both in Mark and Matthew, and even the keenest critics cannot on any grounds reject it. The word ransom (*λύτρον*) used here is the word always used for the payment of redemption money for the life of men. The paschal lamb was such a ransom and a symbol of God's sparing mercy. The first-born of Israel were redeemed from death, and the payment of a half-shekel yearly was made afterwards a "ransom" for the men of Israel. Compare Exodus 13 : 15 and Num. 35 : 31: "Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death." In this verse satisfaction (Heb. **כִּפָּר** covering, atonement) is translated in the Septuagint by *λυτρον*. Had God not provided a ransom for his people in Egypt, they would have suffered also by the stroke of the destroying angel;



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and thus Jesus represented his life as a ransom given for the deliverance of men from the second death. But this was a voluntary gift on his part. He said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself." John 10 : 17, 18. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life (soul) for the sheep." Ibid. v. 11. When he spoke to Jewish hearers he used the word familiar to them, "a ransom for many." But when he spoke to the Greeks who sought him in the temple he said, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." John 12 : 23, 24. Here his death is represented as the dropping of the seed corn into the earth, apparently to perish and decay, but really to germinate and grow into a great harvest of souls.

But no more touching or familiar proof is needed of this truth than is found in the statement of our Lord at the Last Supper.

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The accounts differ slightly in words, but all agree that Christ said of the bread, "This is my body," and that he said of the cup, "This is the New Covenant in my blood which is shed for many." The old covenant was the covenant of Sanai, ratified with the blood of animals which could not take away sin; the new covenant was to be established with the precious blood of Jesus himself. Thus in the institution of the Lord's Supper, the Church of God has through all time, not merely a memorial rite, but a constant symbol of the death of Jesus for the salvation of men. The Saviour taught the same truth in the words: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life." John 3 : 14, 15.

The Lord Jesus taught that salvation consists not simply in the forgiveness of sins, but in the gift of a new life. "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." John 10 : 10. "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." John 5 : 40. "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and

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him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." John 17 : 3. This gift is not something reserved until after death, but is bestowed now, and cannot be taken away. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." John 10 : 27, 28. The effect of the forgiveness of sin and the bestowal of a new life is the perfect peace which the Saviour imparts to his disciples. He said to the sinful woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in (or *into*) peace." Luke 7 : 50. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." John 14 : 27.

We have seen that Jesus represented his death as our ransom, and as the efficient cause of the forgiveness of our sins and the restoration of peace between God and man. But how are we to become partakers of this salvation? After he had fed the multitude in the wilderness, the people asked him, "What must we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John



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6 : 28, 29. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." John 14 : 1. He always demanded faith as the condition of performing some miracle of healing, and this faith was faith in himself. "God . . . gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish." This was part of the apostolic commission, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Mark 16 : 16. "I am the door ; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." John 10 : 9. But this faith is something more than mere assent to what Jesus taught. It is not enough to say that we accept the truth that he is a Saviour and Redeemer. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7 : 21. No one can shield a deceitful heart or a wicked life by a formal and unpractical profession of discipleship. "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock." Ibid. v. 24. Faith in Jesus brings

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to the soul also perfect freedom. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8 : 32, 36. We are free from slavish fear of God who is revealed in Jesus as our Father ; free from condemnation, by the ransom which he has given for us ; free from the Pharisaic bondage of a scrupulous formality because of the new life imparted to us ; free from the dominion of men in all matters of conscience, because we have been made children and servants of the living God. We are free also from the ignorance which darkens the soul and either leaves it groping in uncertainty or wandering in paths of error. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8 : 12.

Jesus represents our faith as something which brings us into vital union with himself, so that his life becomes our life, his power supplies our need ; and our ability to "work the works of God" flows from this abiding communion with him. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth

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in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit : for apart from me ye can do nothing." John 15 : 5. "I am the bread of life." "This is the bread which cometh down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." John 6 : 48, 50, 51. As the body becomes partaker of material bread and receives strength from it, so the soul becomes partaker of Jesus by faith in him and receives power from him. "He that eateth me, he also shall live because of me." John 6 : 57.

These are great promises, the highest, the noblest, and the most stimulating which can be offered to the souls of men; light from above for the darkened intellect, freedom for the enslaved will, peace for the troubled conscience, rest for the weary heart. And they are important, because just here the teaching of Jesus touches our actual daily life with its temptations and its cares. We can test the practical value of his teaching by taking hold of these promises and trying for ourselves whether he can and does give pardon, peace, freedom,



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light, and life. If he cannot, then however beautiful his teaching, he may have been a visionary, an enthusiast, a man of pure life, but not the strong Son of God, the Saviour of the world. We need not fear to put his words to this test, for unless we do so, we can never grasp these truths for ourselves. Millions have thus tested them, gone through life and its trials, passed into the Valley of the Shadow, and staked all that was dear in this world, all that was consoling in death on their certainty. Still the promise remains the same, still the voice of the Master calls across the centuries, "Follow me." Still his assurance is given, "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 10 : 32. In our darkness and our weakness the word still comes to us, "Only believe"; and we can at least say with the man who vainly sought the help of the disciples, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Mark 9 : 24.

## VII

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Our Lord's teaching concerning the kingdom of God constitutes the main pillar of all his doctrines. When he began his public ministry, it was with the proclamation, "The kingdom of God is at hand." Mark 1 : 15. In the Sermon on the Mount he gave the exhortation, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6 : 33. And in the Lord's Prayer, the central petitions are, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Ibid. v. 10. The latter clause is an explanation of the former, for when the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, his kingdom will have been established.

It is absolutely necessary for the ennobling of humanity that it should have presented to it some glorious ideal. The future is always more fascinating to us than the past, because it contains the unknown,

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the unrealized, the unattained. If we narrow down our existence to the struggle for satisfying the animal desires of our nature, we render ourselves selfish, savage, and even brutish. Great multitudes are toiling and sacrificing themselves in order that the next generation may have greater advantages than their fathers enjoyed. Many struggling, disappointed hearts bear their burdens silently because upheld by the hope and the belief that to-morrow will be better than to-day, that many past failures may not prevent ultimate success. Foolish, fantastic, and impossible as have been some objects of human quest and human endeavor, yet the search for them and the struggle to procure them have been as tidal waves, giving a great impulse and an onward movement to the mass of mankind. The search for the philosopher's stone which could transmute base metals into gold gave birth to chemistry. Observations of the stars for astrological purposes, in order to read the destiny of men or nations, brought out the permanent results of astronomy. The search for a shorter route to the East Indies led to the discovery of



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America. Men could not live and advance under the heavy burdens of actual life except for the inspiring music which comes sounding down all along the line, "There's a good time coming." Our literature is full of this world-old problem, how to make the world pleasanter, or better, or more pure and righteous. Questions of politics, questions of sociology, questions of political economy, questions of religion, of education and popular literature, are all propounded and discussed with the utmost eagerness, the one great object being to solve this problem, How to improve and perfect the social order of the human race.

When our Lord came into the world, he came to a society modeled on a basis held to be divinely given, absolutely fixed, and ruled by a law which came from God himself. Every department of life was strictly regulated, the laws directing what was to be done for birth and marriage and death; how property was to be held and what was the fixed tenure of land; the payment of wages, the settlement of debts; the use of money; the cleansing from sickness; the

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punishment of crime, and the rights of different ranks and classes of men.

The religious life was no less strictly regulated than was the civil. Sacred days, sacred seasons, sacred offerings, sacred places, clean and unclean animals, purifications, vows, thank-offerings, and tithes, all were regulated by exact, prescribed laws, and to deviate from these ordinances was to shut one's self off from the people of God.

What kept the entire fabric of Judaism from becoming dead, stagnant, and utterly worthless? What prevented all this machinery from converting the people into so many formal pieces of mechanism in this complicated structure? That living "word of the Lord" which came through the mouth of the prophets, "like as a fire . . . and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." Again and again the voice rang out against formalism, against corruption and oppression, against luxury and impurity, against fraud and deceit, and against blind trust in the value of mere outward ordinances. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." I Sam.

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15 : 22. "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Hosea 6 : 6. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6 : 8. Consult also the whole of the first chapter of Isaiah and Psalm 51.

Among all the prophetic denunciations of vice, sin, and formalism, in the age in which they lived, we find added a glowing picture of a coming age when Jehovah should be a God to Israel and to all the peoples of the earth. The short prophecy of Obadiah closes with the words, "The kingdom shall be the Lord's." The long prophecy of Ezekiel ends its visions thus, "The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there." Ezekiel 48 : 35. Jeremiah sets in the forefront of his prophecies of woe and destruction the promise, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem The throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the Name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." Jer. 3 : 17. Daniel, prophesied that after the overthrow of the world-kings, the "God of heaven shall set up



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a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . and it shall stand for ever." Daniel 2 : 44. And Isaiah rises to the sublimest height of poetry in describing the beauty and glory of the City of God: "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Isa. 60 : 18.

Such are some of the hopes and visions of the prophets of God, of that kingdom of God which they desired and yearned for, but saw not with their mortal eyes, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11 : 40.

This great conception holds the central place in all our Lord's teachings. He opened his ministry by declaring that the kingdom of God was at hand. He distinguished the time of his coming from the past dispensation: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Luke 16 : 16. After his resurrection, he was occupied during the forty days in "speaking of the things per-

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taining to the kingdom of God.” Acts 1 :

3. We can but be struck with the number of times that this term is found, especially in the Synoptic Gospels. Matthew writes “the kingdom of heaven,” where the others employ “the kingdom of God.” The kingdom of heaven expresses the heavenly origin and nature of this kingdom, not its location. We must get rid of the conception of the kingdom of God as a life of future blessedness after death, which God’s children hope to attain. When we pray, “Thy kingdom come,” and add the words, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,” we mean something more than that we may reach the kingdom of eternal peace hereafter. While we shrink from attempting to define so great and comprehensive an expression, we may venture to describe the kingdom of God thus: The kingdom of God is the universal and perfect reign of God upon earth, in the hearts and lives of men, in a social system based not on selfish necessity, but on mutual love and helpfulness, for Christ’s sake.

We have attempted to describe the kingdom of God as “the universal and perfect

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reign of God upon earth, in the hearts and lives of men, in a social system based not on selfish necessity, but on mutual love and helpfulness, for Christ's sake." Notice that this kingdom is to be established *upon earth*. Our Lord teaches us to pray, "Thy kingdom come," which is not equivalent to our reaching a future spiritual kingdom hereafter. The kingdom of God, he declared, was at hand, it was already in its germ, and was to spread like leaven through the entire mass of mankind. That the kingdom was to be *universal* is shown by our Lord's express command, to "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." Mark 16 : 15. Hence the kingdom should be always in a state of advancement and growth. When the Lord was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17 : 20, 21. That is, the little group of disciples whom the Pharisees ignored and despised was really the germ out of which



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the future universal kingdom should grow. Yet how can the kingdom of God exist in this world, when Jesus said expressly, "My kingdom is not of this world"? John 18 : 36. It is true that his kingdom is not of or from ( $\epsilon\kappa$ ) this world, that is, its origin is heavenly, and its laws are divine. It did not come in conflict with an earthly power, it was not founded on any claims of territory, nor upheld by diplomacy or force. Yet it is to be made an actual kingdom and built up here on earth, the will of God is to be done on earth as it is in heaven. We may presume that the will of God is done in heaven *perfectly*, not obstructed by sin and ignorance and unbelief, as it is here. It must be done also *willingly*. Here, God overrules the opposition of the wicked and makes even the wrath of man to praise him. But this blind, unconscious fulfillment of his purpose is not the clear-eyed, hearty obedience which God expects from his true servants. Again this will is done in heaven out of love, not out of fear. Fear enters into much of the outward respect paid to the divine law here on earth. Some are rescued from fleshly sins by fear of the

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natural punishments following their indulgence, not because they long to be pure in the sight of God. When the hearts of men are filled with love to God, the service which they render him will be an entire conformity to his holy will. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them," said our Lord, "he it is that loveth me." John 14 : 21.

The kingdom of God is to exist in a social system bound together by the ties of love and helpfulness, for Christ's sake. As human society is now constituted, it is actuated very largely not by motives of kindness but by the absolute necessity of some bond of union to protect individuals against injuries to life or property. Despotism is better than anarchy, and yet despotism is itself a source of unnumbered evils. Law and civilization are based too largely on fear and necessity, not on brotherly love and service. We cannot imagine society so bound together when the law of Christ becomes supreme and the love of Christ is the tie which unites heart to heart.

We can imagine two different kinds of society, one a penal settlement where the

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government is so strong, the watchfulness exercised so constant, and the provision for exacting obedience so perfect that any outward crime is altogether prevented. Or we may imagine a monastic community, where the ideal is a devout, personal communion with God, and an entire withdrawal from the active cares and temptations of life. Neither of these would correspond to the kingdom of God. The former would have outward order but inward rebellion; the latter, inward purity of motive but outward neglect of active duty. The children of the kingdom are *in* the world but not *of* the world. John 17 : 11, 16. They are the salt of the earth, the light of the world (Matt. 5 : 13, 14), the good seed sown everywhere and springing up, though here for a while intermingled with tares. Matt. 13 : 24, 38.

Men have endeavored at various times to give reality to their conception of the kingdom of God. In the Middle Ages, the Church of Rome attempted to embody its own view by claiming for the Pope, authority over all the rulers of the world and making the Pope as the vicar of Christ



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master of the consciences of men. Thus the civil authority was bound to carry out his behests and to employ the sword against those who defied the Papal See. Hence arose such enormities as the Inquisition, the crusades against heretics, the censorship of opinions, and the interdicts against whole kingdoms.

In our age, Socialism is making rapid progress as the ideal of human society. It demands an entire reorganization of society, a redistribution of human possessions, the holding of all wealth not by the individual but by the collective society, and on this basis we are promised the abolition of poverty, oppression, and crime. Yet the goal of socialism is not morality in itself, but only the material improvement of human life.

The kingdom of God in our Lord's view, is not precisely either the State or the Church, as existing earthly institutions. But it is greater than both and comprehends the functions of both. For the State protects life, liberty, and property by law and force, and does this only so far as overt acts are concerned. It cannot enter into

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the conscience, or punish a man for opinions so long as they are kept to himself. A man may be utterly corrupt in heart, so far as the State is concerned, so long as he does not transgress any law, or invade the rights of another. The Church on the other hand, has to deal with the conscience and the heart of man. She can exert no outward restraint and inflict no penalty in the way of fines, imprisonment, or bodily correction. She approaches men on the moral and religious side of their natures, and seeks to elevate their conceptions, purify their motives, and bring them under a sense of personal accountability to God. Our Lord recognized both State and Church as existing and permanent institutions. The kingdom of God will still find men united by all the ties of social life and engaged in all the occupations demanded by human necessity. It may comprise all kinds of callings, various occupations, differing ranks and conditions of men. But the motive power which keeps all this complex machinery at work will not be sheer necessity, but the spirit of unselfish ministration which marked our Lord's life on

earth. "Whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister." Mark 10 : 43. And the test of admission into the perfected and glorified kingdom of God will be just this conformity to the law of human brotherhood. The blessed are welcomed into the kingdom prepared for them because they ministered to their Lord when hungry or thirsty or sick or naked or in prison, in ministering to the least of these his brethren. Matt. 25 : 35, 36. The rich man was found in Hades, not because charged with any enormous crime, but simply because his conception of life was to eat, drink, and be merry, while his poor brother Lazarus lay at his gate full of sores. Luke 16 : 19-23.

Another question of great interest comes up, Whether the completed and perfect kingdom of God will be found here on earth or only in the future world of eternal life? Granting that the kingdom of God under its final dispensation began with Christ and his apostles, that like leaven it has been permeating the masses of mankind, that it is always extending and not yet completed, what will be its *final* state



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when the end is really attained? The leaven will at last leaven the whole lump, the last wanderer will be reclaimed, the last cast will be made of the net into the swarming sea of the world, at some time the last idols will be thrown away forever, the last swords shall be beaten into plowshares and the last spears into pruning hooks, war and strife shall cease and the earth be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then, where will the kingdom be located?

Is there to be a triumph in this earth for some future generation of toilers, from which the builders and founders and martyrs of the past are excluded? Ah, if we only knew! This is a question on which we may not dogmatize. Would-be prophets have often arisen who wished to interpret the words of Christ so as to fix a time and place for this glorious and blessed consummation. But as "ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 25 : 13), so we know not now just when or where the perfect kingdom of God shall appear. Perhaps heaven and earth are not so far apart as we im-

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agine. Like one who in some delirium of fever imagines himself far away amid strangers, and tosses and moans and longs for home, then wakes to find the fever gone, the vexing phantoms fled, and the loving faces of home bending over him, so may we wake from "life's fitful fever" to see that heaven has been all around us, and that it was but a step to the threshold of our Father's home.

Now, to our human vision, the perfect kingdom of God seems only a dream of some far-distant future. Human society as we see it, is like a stormy sea of conflicting motives and passions. It has its limits set by God himself, its metes and bounds beyond which its proud waves may not pass. We see them dash against the strand, we behold the awful destruction wrought at times by their fury, and we feel helpless in attempting to control their power. We cannot like our Lord say, "Peace, be still." We may not be able to man a lifeboat and push out across the angry waters to save even a few in danger. Perhaps we cannot build a breakwater which shall check the long wave as it comes

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in from the open sea, and give a quiet harbor within its protection. But one thing we can do. We can let the light of a true, earnest Christian life shine out across these troubled waters. This our Master himself commands, and this lies within the ability of each member of the kingdom of God. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5 : 16.



## VIII

### THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

Every organization founded by men has its own conditions of membership. These may be wider or narrower according to the nature of the organization. The State comprises all those who are born within its boundaries although not competent to understand the laws. But the right to vote is limited to a certain sex, and to those who have reached a certain age; again certain classes are excluded from the right to hold office because of crimes which they have committed.

A society made up of men belonging to one profession or occupation may limit its membership strictly to those who follow the same calling. But each association has some test of fitness for membership, a test which it lays down as a condition of entrance.

We would not expect it to be otherwise with the kingdom of God. The fact that it is designed to be a social system, work-

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ing harmoniously for the establishment of God's righteous rule would imply that there must be some common traits by which the members of that kingdom may recognize each other. Our Lord's teachings as to the citizens of the kingdom are full and explicit.

The first thing to be considered is the condition of entrance into the kingdom. One of the conditions mentioned by our Lord is apparently negative: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5 : 20. The righteousness of the Pharisee was legal. His object was to classify all the commands of God, to "set a hedge about the Law" and to trust in his perfect obedience for salvation. The type of such a Pharisee is given us in Luke 18 : 11, 12, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I get." This righteousness was also formal, done to be seen of men, and its tendency was toward pride and self-righteous-

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ness. Not such should be the disposition of the children of the kingdom.

For positively, Jesus laid down the conditions of repentance and faith, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15. Repentance is change of mind. The world and its desirable things are seen in a new light. The penitent soul looks with different eyes on the things which it formerly desired and finds that they repel it, while it sees in the service of God something infinitely great and precious. This necessity for the right estimation of the kingdom of God is brought out in Matt. 13:44-46, in the parables of the pearl of great price and the treasure hid in a field. Together with this change of mind comes change of purpose. The object of the changed purpose is now to do the will of our Father in heaven.

The faith required is simple trust in the glad tidings that the kingdom of God is at hand, and that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Our Lord showed also the disposition with which the kingdom must be sought.



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“Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.” Mark 10 : 15. The spirit of the child is the reverse of the spirit of the Pharisee. The child is humble, knowing little and willing to be taught; trustful, feeling its weakness and seeking for protection; loving, and believing in simple faith the father’s word and resting satisfied in the mother’s love.

How then may we become penitent, believing, and humble, so as to be fit for admission into the kingdom? There is a divine side and a divine influence which cannot be overlooked. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again, (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God”; and again, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3 : 3, 5. This new birth is from above and by the Spirit, and makes us sons of God by bestowing on us the gift of a new spiritual life. In the Old Testament kingdom, the natural birth sufficed for entrance and for citizenship. Each Israelite was by virtue of his birth and descent entitled to all the

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privileges of the kingdom as it then existed. But Jesus rebuked this exclusiveness when he declared, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom (the born Jews) shall be cast forth into the outer darkness." Matt. 8 : 11, 12.

But having been admitted into the kingdom, how are the citizens to conduct themselves? What are their duties, their privileges, and their responsibilities? Those who enter the kingdom become the disciples of Jesus. "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke 14 : 27. "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples." John 8 : 31. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples." John 15 : 8. The disciple must be a learner and a follower of the Lord Jesus. He is ignorant and desires knowledge, he comes to the source of light and truth with a teachable disposition, he takes upon him the yoke of Christ and learns of him and thus finds rest unto his soul. Matt. 11 : 29.

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The disciples are also citizens of the kingdom. This name is not indeed given them by Christ himself, who prefers to use the old Jewish expression, "Sons of the kingdom." Matt. 13 : 38 and 8 : 12. Their character is described in the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, they are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Matt. 5 : 3-10. "Of such is the kingdom of God." Yet in this kingdom there is no absolute equality of work or of reward. To one may be given five talents, to another two, and to another one, and each shall be rewarded according to his ability and faithfulness in service. Matt. 25 : 15-30. He who shall do and teach the commandments of God shall be called great in the kingdom. Matt. 5 : 19. The kingdom requires personal, active, self-denying service. "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9 : 62. It is not to be won by careless, slothful souls who are indifferent to their own salvation and



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that of others. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Matt. 11 : 12. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because with all their pretense of serving God, the publicans and sinners pressed before them into the kingdom. Matt. 21 : 31. Hence he warned them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Ibid. v. 43.

Those who are citizens of the kingdom are called by a still higher title. They are "the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." Luke 6 : 35. The peacemakers shall be called the children of God. Matt. 5 : 9. Those who love their enemies and bless those who curse them are "the children of our Father in heaven who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good." Matt. 5 : 45. Thus as sons of God, the kingdom becomes to them a family, the household of the redeemed, and the image of the Father is seen in each regenerated soul. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5 : 48.

A very solemn and important truth is

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plainly taught by our Lord, that the kingdom of God all through its earthly career will exhibit a mixture of the true and the false, the genuine children of the kingdom and those who only share in its external privileges. There was a Judas among the Twelve who "by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." Acts 1 : 25. There was a Simon Magus in the Apostolic Church, received and baptized by the apostles themselves, but afterwards showing that he was still "in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity." Acts 8 : 23.

The truth of this intermingling of characters is set forth by our Lord in several different ways. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Matt. 13 : 47, 48. It is like the wheat and the tares growing together until the time of harvest when the final discrimination and separation will take place. Ibid. v. 37-42. It is like the wedding supper where one guest was found who had not on the wedding garment, and who was

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therefore cast into the outer darkness. Matt. 22 : 11-13. It is like the ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom, five of whom were wise and five were foolish, five keeping their lamps prepared for the coming of the bridegroom and five of them letting their lamps go out and being themselves at last excluded from the marriage feast. Matt 25 : 1-13.

Solemn words from him who knew what was in man! They warn us to beware of false security, to search well the grounds of our hope, to confirm that hope by patient, faithful lives of obedience, and to seek above all things that we suffer no past experience to satisfy us, when our conscience testifies that we are inconsistent and careless in our Christian service. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are." Luke 13 : 25.

Nearness to the kingdom of God, while a great privilege, brings with it serious re-



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sponsibilities and awful dangers. Jesus commanded his disciples when a town or city refused to receive them, that they should wipe off from their feet the very dust of that place and say, "Notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." And he added, "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city." Luke 10 : 11, 12.

There was one who answered the Master so discreetly that he said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Mark 12 : 34. One may then be very near the kingdom yet not within the kingdom nor of the kingdom. Nay, more, one may think himself already within the kingdom, may have his name enrolled on earth as a citizen, as a disciple, as a follower of the Lord, yet finally be gathered up with the tares and cast out of its boundaries forever! "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21 : 36.

Yet let us not be discouraged. While

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Jesus speaks such solemn words of warning to careless, inconsistent and pretended disciples, he "does not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax" He knows his sheep and calls them by their names. He laid down his life for them (John 10 : 11) and keeps them safe from every foe. "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10 : 28. When we are sorely disheartened by the seeming triumph of evil, by the opposition of the world, by the weakness of our own faith, by fightings without and fears within, the voice of our Lord calls to us, full of love and cheer, "Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you THE KINGDOM." Luke 12 : 32.

## EPILOGUE

With this chapter we conclude our series of studies in the teaching of the Lord Jesus. If we have succeeded in gaining any insight into the connection of his words, if we have impressed more vividly well-known truths, we may well be grateful for undertaking to meditate on these words which are spirit and which are life. If we have failed, as human weakness and error are sure to fail, to catch the fullness of our Master's meaning, if we have in any way misrepresented one word of his eternal truth, may he in his grace and his compassion, pardon the error and cause it to be harmless.

If any reader has been helped one step forward in the journey toward the kingdom of the glorified, may that disciple unite with us in prayer for the establishment of our own faith and the perfecting of our own love. There is nothing worth living and toiling for but the kingdom of God, that kingdom in its rule within our own souls,



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and the kingdom in its all-conquering power upon earth.

He who keeps the keys is the same Jesus who spake these words beside the blue lake, amid the foldings of the Galilæan hills, under the shadow of Solomon's porch, in the courts of the splendid temple doomed to the Roman torch; in the hushed stillness of that upper chamber and in the sacred hours which followed his Resurrection. The day is coming when we shall see him face to face; when from his own lips we shall hear the words of welcome, when his voice shall confirm at last each dearest hope and purest desire of our hearts. We need no other Guide for life and its perplexities, no other Friend beside us in the dark Valley of the Shadow, no other reward than to depart and be with him forever.

Dear reader! Christian friend unknown, may it be ours to sit down with him at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

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