

“The Man Christ Jesus”: Addresses on the Gospel of Luke

The Transfiguration

Luke 9:18-36

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when you are little aware of it. Lord, grant that Thy saints may not be ignorant of his devices!

The enemy says, "I know what will catch that young man, I know what will catch that young woman; I know how to assail that old man, I know what will trip up that old woman." Oh, it is solemn! May we take heed to our ways; may we ever be on the watch. Remember, the chart for the mariner does not only tell of the fair way, where all is clear, but it marks the shoals and rocks, the places of danger and peril and shipwreck.

But let us observe what the tempter left out here: "In all thy ways." That is the way to the end. Mark how the Lord meets it: "It is said." Beautiful words! "It is written" on one occasion, "It is said" on another occasion. "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt Jehovah thy God."

Has that no voice to us? Do we never tempt Him? What is tempting the Lord our God? Let me try and tell you. Have you never known your heart to be assailed in this way: "Now let me see whether God is as good as His word"? Is that trusting Him? Is that resting in Him? Is that believing Him? Is that confiding in Him? This is the very thing that was not in Adam -- confidence of the heart in God, no resting in Him who has pledged His word. It is the very opposite to it. It is to say, "I will see whether God will sustain and uphold me; I will see whether God will carry me through this thing." Ah, that is not leaning on Him, resting in Him, but the very opposite! You are not sure then, are you? You are trying whether God will be as good as His word. That is tempting Him. But faith, confidence in God, says, "It shall be done." How sweet those old lines

"Faith, bold faith, the promise sees,
And leans on that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says, 'It shall be done.'"

That is resting upon God. The heart, as it were, says, "I know Him; I do not test Him, I do not tempt Him; I believe Him, and I believe what He says is true. I believe, moreover, it is true, because He says it." You will tell me that this is reasoning in a circle. Be it so! It is a magnificent circle to reason in -- it is a divine circle. I believe what He says is true, and I believe it is true, because He says it.

I will finish with just one word more -- Satan departs. He could get no hold anywhere. He has met the Perfect Man, who has vanquished him by dependence and obedience, and Satan is bound. The Lord Jesus Christ bound him. And now, mark you, as He went forth full of the Holy Ghost to meet Satan, so it is beautiful to see that He "returned in the power of the Spirit." He went in the power of the Spirit to vanquish the devil, and returns likewise. He goes to meet the strong man in the power of the Spirit, and comes back in the power of the same Spirit to scatter blessing wherever He goes. On Calvary's cross He bruised his head in death, and in resurrection He dispenses blessing.

The Lord give us to adore the matchless grace of Jesus. Oh, the moral blessedness of dwelling on Him as Man perfect under all suffering, testing, and trial from the enemy! May

God in His infinite grace read out to us the lessons that He would have us learn, and above all things I would look to Him that He would make known to us the blessedness of those words, "It is written"; for His name's sake.

Chapter 5: *Luke 9:18-36*

The way, beloved friends, in which the Spirit of God introduces to us the wonderful scene in this portion of Scripture is very worthy to be observed. The surroundings of it, the connections in which it is placed, are all strikingly in keeping with the magnificence of the scene itself. There is one little word especially which gives character to this introduction, which, indeed, is characteristic of the whole narrative. That word is *praying*: "As He was alone praying" (v. 18).

Now, that is not merely remarkable because it sets before us the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in one part of His blessed nature, the perfection of His nature as Man, which I need not, I trust, remind you is dependence, entire dependence being the perfection of man, and that belonged only to Christ; but further, that which would mark a perfect man: a man perfect before God in this world would be one absolutely and always dependent. And that, I need not say, was what marked most blessedly our Lord Jesus Christ as Man. He was the essentially, distinctively, dependent Man.

What adds importance to that which we have here is, that in the earlier verses of this chapter (which you can study for yourselves at leisure) you will find another part of His glory set before us in a very distinct way; that is, His glory as Jehovah-Messiah. He fulfils everything that belonged to Him as Jehovah-Messiah. He fed the poor with bread. He ministered to the need of the poor of the flock as only Jehovah could do. He could, in the largeness of who He was, open His hand, and satisfy the need of all that were in that condition before Him. Christ is not only Man, but Jehovah; He is not only Jehovah, but Man.

As Man, then, He is dependent; and that is what the Spirit of God distinctly marks in connection with His glory here. The highest part of His glory as Man is reached in this chapter. It was an upward journey that He took until He arrived at Mount Tabor. What is generally said -- "He went from the manger to the cross" -- is true in one sense, but not in another. More correctly expressed, He went from the manger to the very highest position of glory as Man here in this world. He went from Bethlehem to the bank of Jordan; He went from Jordan's bank to the mount of transfiguration; and then He descended from the mount of transfiguration, from the highest point of glory as Man, into the dust of death, into Calvary's depth of woe.

It is exceedingly blessed, and very instructive too, to get these facts distinctly before our souls; and surely if there is anything to which God would call the hearts of His people in these times, it is this: What is our resource? "Praying!" Assuredly it is in prayer. Prayer is the expression that the

hope of the one who is praying is outside all visible things. The meaning of prayer is, that you can do nothing. The ground of all prayer is, that you have lost every resource but God. I do not believe we truly pray until we realize this. As long as we can arrange for ourselves we do not pray. We address ourselves to the difficulties before us, and we try to deal with them; but when we have come to our wit's end, then we turn to God.

I have often been struck with that psalm which speaks of those who go down to the sea, and do business in great waters. When they are brought to their wits' end, and can do nothing for themselves, then they cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He delivers them out of their distresses. He never heard a cry of need from any one without answering it; not perhaps in our way, but in His own. There was only One that cried, and was not heard, and that was Christ. There was but one perfectly righteous and dependent Man on this earth that cried and was not heard; and that was Jesus on the cross. "O My God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not." That was the solitary exception to all God's known ways down here.

Oh, what a blessed thing it is to have this put before our souls in Scripture! to have God calling us back to this simple position before Him with regard to everything we find in the Church and in the world at this moment; to be cast upon God; to solve the difficulties on our knees, as it were; to wait, and watch, and trust, and pray. That is our resource, and that, moreover, is the way out of the strait place we are in. Be assured of it, beloved friends, the exercise of heart in it all is that which brings glory to God, and deepest blessing to ourselves. And here is the great example in the Lord's own perfection set before us. He was alone praying, and that is what introduces this scene of glory, when the Lord Jesus Christ gives a picture of the coming kingdom. Oh, the blessedness of this picture! Could anything surpass it? The essentially dependent One Himself glorified as a Man on the holy mount!

It has been rightly said, that at verse 18 of this chapter we have a complete break in the gospel. Another subject entirely is entered upon, and it is introduced in this way: He says to His disciples, "Whom say the people that I am?"

You will observe, beloved friends, how the question of Christ's person is always the touch-stone. That is the point around which everything, as it were, revolves: "Whom say the people that I am?" And now you find that two very important things come out here. One is that all around is *speculation*. That is what is in the world to-day about God's Christ and God's truth -- speculation. God in His infinite mercy keep us from *that*! But that is what you find here. "Whom say the people that I am?" They answer, One says you are Elias, another, that you are one of the prophets. That is to say, it was all a kind of speculative reasoning (curiosity, if you please), but nothing certain or divinely reached at all.

This is exactly what you have now. The air of this world is rife with questions about the truth of God and Christ. That is the kind of atmosphere that surrounds professing Christendom at this moment. There is nothing positive. There is, until you arrive at the divine area, no divine certainty either about Christ or the truth. The very things that mark the period

we are passing through are uncertainty, speculation, reasoning of every kind. It is so much so, that if a person stands upon the ground of certainty, people say, "Oh, you must take care; you must not be too dogmatic!"

But, beloved friends, you cannot be too dogmatic if you have the truth. The grand point is, whether we have the truth. And who, I ask, is to bear witness to that? It must be God's record, beloved friends. If it is not this Book in our hands, if it is not the Scriptures, the Word of God, you may get the cleverest conclusions, the clearest deductions, the wisest thoughts conceivable brought together; but if you have not the Scriptures, you have not certainty. If you have Scripture, you have certainty.

And observe another thing in connection with all this: there is *simplicity* in the Scriptures. You will find the great truths of God's revelation remarkably simple. There is a magnificent simplicity in the things of God. In the things of man there always exists a certain amount of haziness; but beautiful simplicity characterizes the things of God. I admit this, that, be it ever so simple, there is no power to take it in except by the Spirit of God. And I am perfectly convinced of this, that in proportion as our minds are at work in the things of God, we are outside the direct teaching of the Spirit of God. There is nothing more hostile to the simple instruction of the Holy Ghost than the human mind. The teaching of man may be all very good and very right, but it is not the Spirit of God taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to us.

But the Lord says, "Whom say ye that I am?" He leaves, as it were, the outside circle, and brings it down to a very much closer circle, very much nearer to ourselves: "Whom say ye that I am?" How beautiful this is! The man that is taught of God answers at once. There is no hesitation, no uncertainty, no fear, but a distinct utterance, "*The Christ of God.*"

There is an instance, of what I was speaking to you about just now -- having divine certainty. This one knew Jesus; he was taught of God. It was not flesh and blood, as we know from another gospel, that revealed this to that man. Man never reached that truth; never scaled its heights, nor fathomed its depths. Flesh and blood, in this connection, means that which comes within the region of man as he is now constituted; man in his present condition; a poor, wretched, feeble creature. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50). So here, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee" -- you have no power to discover this by man's wisdom -- "but My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17).

There you have one of the most remarkable instances of the absolute certainty that the soul taught from on high has. Peter says, "*The Christ of God.*" Do you think he was afraid to say that? Was there any uncertainty? He *knew* it. How? Not because of the effect in his own heart; not because there was happiness in his own breast. It was a revelation to him. And that is what all truth must be -- a revelation out of Scripture by the Holy Ghost to faith. That is to say, what is revealed from God in Scripture is understood by the teaching of the Holy Ghost. And so Peter had certainty. He knew God, and could say without any question, "*The Christ of God.*"

Now note, in connection with the break at this point, that the Lord Jesus takes a new title, which ever afterwards adheres to Him. Tell no man, He says, that I am the Christ of God, the Messiah; the time for that testimony is past. "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (v. 22). That is the new title which He takes now, "the Son of man"; because they refused Him, rejected Him. He was going to be crucified where He ought to have been crowned; and He sets before us here, not His atoning sufferings, but His martyr-sufferings.

I think I can make that very simple to you from Scripture, because, after it, He speaks of our following Him. We could not follow the Lord Jesus Christ in His atoning sufferings. Thank God, we are privileged to follow Him in the path in which He walked as a martyr, and it is so He speaks here: "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected . . . and be slain." In that connection He at once brings out the path. He says, There is a path suited to the position I take. And instead of taking His place as the Christ of God, and receiving the glory that belonged to Him as Messiah; instead of being exalted as the second psalm presents Him, He takes another title, and sets His face towards martyrdom.

In the second psalm you find God's Anointed; in the eighth psalm you find the Son of man. The Lord Jesus Christ is not only entitled to the inheritance, but He has Himself an additional glory, because, besides being the appointed Heir, He is the Redeemer-heir. He takes the inheritance with all the load of defilement, and redeems it, thus becoming entitled to it. This, of course, brings in resurrection, the great evidence of the accomplished work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

His sufferings referred to here, then, are all martyr-sufferings; how He would be treated by men -- hated, scorned, cast out.

There is another word in this place which is very solemn for us all: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (v. 23). Let us ponder well and deeply the words, "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily." "DAILY"! In this lies the test. How truly it has been said that it is terribly difficult to go on every day denying oneself, and no one knowing anything about it. Ah! it is not for me to say a word against the martyrs that in other days went to the stake, and sealed their testimony with their blood; for verily this is not the day of martyrdom. The spirit of martyrdom scarcely exists in this age. Compromise, not martyrdom, is the spirit of today. But, beloved friends, even giving all honor to the memory of the men who suffered, bled, and died for the truth as known by them, yet that was an easier thing compared with this. A man might go once for all heroically to death for the maintenance of the truth, and his name be handed down to generations, and a monument be erected to his memory; but daily taking up your cross, daily denying yourself, is a very different thing.

Are we content, beloved friends, to take up our cross? Are we content to daily deny ourselves? Alas! how this finds us out, exposes us to ourselves. I have often trembled as I thought of the readiness of the heart to pursue an entirely opposite path,

and, instead of daily taking up the cross, exhibiting a daily readiness to embark in whatever will contribute to our gratification. Have you, beloved brethren, discovered the deceitfulness of your hearts in this? Not only do things attract in the world, but the heart within us is capable even of this: a willingness to transform the Church into a world for itself, a world where you can gratify your thoughts and desires just as much as the poor worldling gratifies his in the world outside. The *principle* is the same.

But how different the daily cross and denying yourself; and, as some one has said, denying yourself is a far harder, a far more cutting principle than self-denial. It is a knife that penetrates deeper down into the quick, as it were, of the soul; a daily, yea, hourly and momentarily martyrdom, without applause or praise from men; not a single ray of glory attaching to it; not an atom of commendation, not a word of encouragement; all, as it were, a secret death under the eye of God. How different to the path of nature and flesh! It is truly a hidden path; but what moral beauty it has for faith! Of it we may well say, that it is indeed "a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lions whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it" (Job 28:7, 8).

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (vv. 23-25).

You see it becomes a question of one of these two things: either giving up everything for Christ, or going in for everything apart from Him. It is thus that the Lord brings this out here; and then, in order to stimulate faith, He takes Peter, James, and John up into the mount, and gives them a sight of the glory of His future kingdom.

There are three things connected with this wonderful scene. The first is, He is transfigured. I think it is beautiful that, in connection with the transfiguration, the Lord Jesus is presented in the act of praying. "As He prayed," we read. It was not that He wrought miracles or displayed the magnificence of His Jehovah-Messiahship. It does not point to His wonderful works of power, though doubtless these were also wrought by Him; but it was not at such a moment that He was transfigured. Why is it said, "As He *prayed*, the fashion of His countenance was altered"? Was it not that this very glory reflected the perfection of the perfect Man before God? This, I believe, is the reason of its being set forth here. When Christ was in that attitude which, above all others, presented Him in the absoluteness of His own perfection as Man, He was transfigured. How blessed to dwell upon such words written of Him: "As He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening" (v. 29).

It is blessed to observe how, in the Gospel of Luke, in all the great events of the Lord's life -- at His baptism at Jordan, here at the transfiguration, then again in His agony in Gethsemane, also when choosing His apostles -- all through those great scenes and events of the Lord's life, the Spirit of

God lays express emphasis upon this fact, that prayer was what marked Him in them all. He was the perfect Man cast upon God in absolute dependence.

So, then, in those words in which the transfiguration is introduced, "As He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening," the first great object set before us is Himself.

Next we have the companions of Jesus on the mount, Moses and Elias; and they appear in glory. Now, beloved friends, that is very blessed. They were in the same glory with Jesus; but a glory which was, in figure, in type, kingdom-glory -- the glory of Christ's coming kingdom.

Moses and Elias, I believe, speak to us in a double way; they speak to us *dispensationally* and *morally*. Moses was the giver of the law. "The law was given by Moses." Elias was the representative of the prophets; so much so that, when Israel had departed from God, and given up the law, Elias remained as sole representative of it in his witness to the people. These two great witnesses, then, the law and the prophets, are brought in here for this reason: everything was about to disappear, and Jesus would be left alone. At the end everything goes. Moses is gone, Elias is gone, and Christ alone is left, and remains for evermore. This will bring to your recollection that scripture, "The law and the prophets were until John" (Luke 16:16). That is to say, those administrations by which God was testing and dealing with man -- the law, which came with its claims upon man; and the prophets, which always called the people back to the observance of the broken law -- these subsisted and had their place until John. When he came he ushered in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was Christ's forerunner; there was something more bright and blessed and lasting coming. John says, One is coming. Are you ready for Him? "Him that cometh after me," are you ready for Him? God is coming. Are you ready for Him? That was the character of John's witness. But the law and the prophets, in figure, in type, are brought in here in connection with the kingdom in order to show that they pass off the scene; but that Jesus, thank God, remains for evermore.

There is, I believe, a moral reason as well as a dispensational reason why they are here introduced. Because they represent not merely the law and the prophets, but they also illustrate what will be found at that blessed moment when the saints are changed and raised. Yes, beloved friends, when the Lord Jesus Christ is in His glory, the saints, raised and changed, shall be with Him. Moses must have been raised, for he had died. True, the place of his burial was not known to any man, for God buried His servant; and Israel were preserved, perhaps, by that very fact, from turning Moses into an idol. God buried him, and no man knew the place of his sepulcher. Elias was taken to heaven without dying; so that you have the figure exactly of the two classes: those who shall die, and those who shall not pass through death. "We shall not all sleep" means that we shall not all die; "but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). Moses and Elias represent the heavenly company, raised and changed saints, who shall be in the glory with Jesus. Oh, the blessedness of it -- in the very same glory!

They appeared in glory; He glorified; they glorified with Him. Further observe one peculiarly blessed feature of this record; namely, that they are perfectly at home in that scene. All the groupings given us by the Holy Ghost in the inspired narrative point to this.

Now, beloved friends, let me ask you, What suits a man on his way to such a scene and such glory as this? Do you believe, in the bottom of your souls, that money, or power, or fame, should occupy the thoughts or affections of men and women with such hopes and prospects confessed as before them? Oh, the awful love of present things that hold with tenacious grip the heart of man!

Now there is another thing. We have the nature and character of their intercourse. Look at it for a moment, beloved friends: "There talked with Him two men" (v. 30). Could anything be more wonderful? You know it is very blessed when God speaks to us, when His voice is heard. And I suppose that He always takes the initiative, that He is always the first speaker. We never speak to Him until He speaks to us. I often think that if we do not speak to Him it is because we have not heard Him speaking to us. We must hear His voice before we can let Him hear our voice. "There talked with Him." Observe, moreover, the intimacy and nearness, the closeness, the happiness of it, the absence of all reserve and distance! Could anything be more beautiful than that? God, indeed, talked with Abraham, and it is perfectly true that Abraham did plead with God for the cities of the plain; but, blessed man as he was, he knew nothing like this. It was not equal to the glory of this. There talked with Jesus on that mount, and in all that glory, two men. What was the subject of their conversation and intimacy? They "spake of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem" (v. 31).

What a fitting theme for glory! What a fitting theme to occupy the attention of the saints in glory! Have you thought how His death will form part of the wonderful subject that will occupy the attention and adoration of the saints of God for ever and ever? Have you thought of how the cross will never be forgotten? How that the glory with all its brightness will never obliterate the cross? In one sense the glory rests upon it. The basis, the foundation, of the glory is the cross. The cross is the grand foundation upon which the whole of the glory rests. And so how suitable it was that, in this glory with Jesus, in all this intimacy with and nearness to Him, they should speak of "His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

Have you ever been struck with the illustration given us in Scripture of how the cross is the basis and foundation of the glory? Do you not remember how that the trumpet of the jubilee sounded upon the great day of atonement? There was only one day in the whole year on which the blast of that trumpet swept over the land of Israel; and that trumpet-sound brought with it restitution, comfort, and recovery to all who were in distress in that nation; but it sounded only upon the great day of atonement. What a remarkable illustration it is of that of which I have been speaking! When the sound of that trumpet was heard every bondman was freed, and returned to his former position; long-lost property reverted to its owners; and poverty and wretchedness were abolished in Israel. But

what was the basis of it? *The blood of atonement*. And so it is here. The glory of God rests upon the cross. "Who layeth the beams of His chambers in *the waters*." The beams of the chambers of glory, as it were, rest upon the deeply laid foundations of death, into which the Lamb of God went, so that everything should be established and made sure *there*. What could be more blessed or comforting than that? They "spake of His decease, which He *should* accomplish at Jerusalem."

Well now, let me be very brief on the second point. You will always find, if God tells us His thoughts, if He is pleased to show us what is in His mind in relation to His Son, that there is accompanying it that which brings out what we are. Here we find Peter, James, and John asleep. Oh, how little up to the thoughts of God we are! Asleep in the presence of His glory, as they afterwards were in the presence of His sorrow. They could no more keep company with Him in sorrow than they could keep company with Him in glory: "Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep" (v. 32). If we know our own hearts, we know what that is. Well may we sing --

"Thou soughtest for compassion,
Some heart Thy grief to know:
To watch Thine hour of passion;
For comforters in woe.

"No eye was found to pity,
No heart to bear Thy woe;
But shame and scorn and spitting --
None cared Thy name to know.

"Man's boasting love disowns Thee;
Thine own the danger flee,
A Judas only owns Thee,
That Thou may'st captive be."

How striking are the words, "But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep." I have no doubt that dispensationally they represent the spirit of slumber that now rests upon Israel. The nation is in a moral slumber. This is their state now, but there is a moment coming when they shall be awakened, and shall see the Lord's glory. He will wake them up. He can call them together. No one knows where they are now, dispersed to the four winds of heaven, "a nation scattered and peeled." Does not that vividly express the present condition of Israel? But they *will* awake, and see His glory. They will ere long gaze upon the smitten One. "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12:10).

We have here also the natural feeling of man's heart coming out, as if it had been said, How blessed to perpetuate this state of things. Peter says unto Jesus, "Let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said" (v. 33). He would put them all on an equality with Christ. He desired to put them all together on the same level. Beloved friends, how wonderful {i.e., amazing!} Whether asleep or awake, man, as such, is always out of keeping with God's thoughts. Their being asleep showed them to be not up to the scene. When awake they were still not up to it. Nature cannot enter into God's thoughts, but is always out of tune with them.

That brings us to the third point here, and this is the Father's voice. "Let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them" (vv. 33, 34).

That cloud no doubt was the Shekinah, the token of the divine presence. Now, their entering into the cloud was entirely new. No such thing had been known before. The cloud had journeyed with Israel, tarried upon the tabernacle, had been their constant companion; but they had never entered into it. The cloud that went before them removed and stood between them and the chariots of the Egyptians, and was a cloud of protection for them in past days; but they had never as yet entered into it.

"And they feared as they entered into the cloud" (v. 34). I believe that refers to Peter, James, and John, who represent the earthly saints. They fear when they see the heavenly saints entering into the cloud. But there came a voice out of the cloud, the Father's voice. Ah! there was only one voice that could come in to vindicate the Son's glories. How blessed is all this! It was at such a moment as this that there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son: hear Him" (v. 5). Oh, beloved friends, do not your hearts rejoice to hear the Father thus express the infinite delight of His heart in that Son? "This is My beloved Son"!

Now, to me it is most blessed to think that He does not say, This is the Son: adore Him, worship Him. That would be perfectly right; for it is written, "When He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. 1:6). Perfectly true it is that the Son is worthy of equal homage with the Father, "worthy by all to be adored"; but He does not say that here. He does not say, This is the Son: fall at His feet, and praise His name. All this, of which He is worthy beyond all human thought or power of utterance, would not express what is so blessedly and tenderly set forth in the words, "This is My beloved Son." Ah! how God delights to reveal the depths of His heart in relation to Christ. "*My Beloved Son*" gives us to see the Father's heart about that Son. "My beloved Son" lets us into the secret of Who fills that heart. "This is My beloved Son: hear Him." How these words not only, as we have said, express the Father's affections, but how entirely do they demonstrate Christ as supreme! And what a response is accorded to that by all who know His love! How good it is for our poor hearts to know what the blessed God feels about Jesus! Ah, beloved friends, be assured there is no subject with such power to sanctify and enrich the soul as this. Let us try and think of the unspeakable grace of our God in permitting us not only to know His thoughts about the Son of His love, but to share them with Him. Oh, what grace! Is there nothing in that for our hearts and affections? Nothing in that to carry us above this poor, wretched world?

"This is My beloved Son: hear Him." Thus He sets the alone *Object* forth; and be assured, beloved friends, the Father would have that blessed Object to be everything to us. Of Him we may well sing --

"He fills the throne -- the throne above,