

Printed Pamphlets

“The One Who Is Coming”

Luke 12:13-14

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therefore he is no longer on the ground on which he once stood as a child of Adam; but he has been brought into another position and condition, “in *Christ*” risen from the dead. Do you say, “If only I could *feel* this”? You never will till you *believe* it. If you begin at the realization side you will never realize. Begin at the side of the *testimony of God*; viz., that His Son has died, settled the question of condemnation due to you through his death, taken you out of the position you once stood in, and given you a new position, a new place; given you *deliverance* in the power of life in Christ risen from the dead. But you say, “I feel the workings of the old man in me.” But observe, it is one thing to say it is still in me, another that I am standing *in it before God*. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God”; but “*ye are not in the flesh*.” Oh the blessedness of knowing we are “in Christ Jesus” *before God*, all condemnation gone for ever, “sin in the flesh condemned” (not forgiven) in the cross of Christ. The effect of being in this new position is seen in v. 4. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If we do not walk in the Spirit, the evil principle within us will assert its existence; but we are brought into a place of *power* as well as *security*. We have to keep the sentence of death on ourselves. If I allow self any place, or allow it to work, the Holy Ghost must occupy me with the judgment of it, instead of being free to occupy me with Christ, and to fill my heart with Him. When the evil nature acts, and the soul does not know deliverance, we find the question arising in hearts, “Can I be a Christian? have I the root of the matter in me?” In the power of life and of the Spirit I am entitled to reckon myself dead in the cross of Christ. The second great truth in chap. 8 is, that the Holy Ghost dwells in the believer, and is the power of the new man; the Spirit of God energizes the new man. We get two things in connection with this. First, He is in us, the witness to the fact that we are children (Rom. 8:16, 17); and second, He takes part in sympathy with us, because of the link we have through our bodies with a groaning creation around (Rom. 8:22, 23).

In Rom. 8:19, 20 we see creation waiting on us, waiting for the day when the sons of God will be manifested. Then it will be brought into its blessing.

Rom. 8:20 ought to be read, “By reason of Him who hath subjected it.” Creation was subjected to vanity by *Adam*; i.e. under Adam, its head, the whole race partook of the consequences of his fall. *Man* brought in the ruin; the whole creation groans.

Rom. 8:21: “In hope that the creature itself shall be set free from the bondage of corruption unto the liberty of the glory of the children of God.”

We have a link through our *bodies* with the groaning creation; but these very bodies will ere long be fashioned like unto His body of glory.

The Spirit of God is spoken of in three ways in this chapter: “The Spirit of God,” as contrasted with the flesh, with what man is in his nature; the “Spirit of Christ,” as formative of our practical state; and the “Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead,” in connection with the raising

up of our mortal bodies.

From Rom. 8:29 to end we have *God for us*. Observe sanctification is left out in v. 30, because it is not a question here of the work of the Holy Ghost *in us*; but God is *for us*, no matter who or what may be against us. A Christian is a man *in Christ*; God is *in him*, and God is *for him*. We are brought into a wealthy place. Alas! how little we know the wealth of it. Eternity will not be too long to praise Him for it all. Oh the blessedness of standing outside all that we were, and to raise the song of triumph to Him who has so blessedly accomplished it all, and at such a price!

“By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown;
Trod all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.

“Bless, bless the Conqueror slain,
Slain in His victory;
Who lived, who died, who lives again
For thee, His Church, for thee!”

“*The One Who Is Coming*”

(Luke 12:13, 14)

It is interesting and instructive to see how the blessed truth of the Lord’s coming is presented in the Gospels. I treat now of the Lord’s coming in its widest sense, not restricting my thoughts to that part of it which we call the rapture of the saints raised or changed; *that was received and communicated* by Paul as a special revelation in connection with the hopes of that of which he was the minister (Col. 1:24, 25).

I would suggest as to whether in the Gospels the coming does not derive its character and subject from the object of the Spirit in each Gospel; for instance, in the Gospel of Matthew, is it not the coming of the King, the Messiah, in harmony with the object of that presentation of Christ? Then, in Mark, is it not the Lord or Master of the servants who comes, even Himself, who it is said “Is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house *and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work*, and commanded the porter to watch?”

Then again in Luke, as in the passage before us, it is *moral and general*, bearing on the state of heart of each one in view of His return, the attitude of expectancy and watching which His approach would create in the hearts of His own. While, in John, it is the Son of the Father, the Son of the bosom, coming to discharge the debt of love He still owes to his Father and to the children of His love, in taking them to Himself and welcoming them into His Father’s house, His joy and theirs meeting in this that He has His own for ever with Himself. But in this passage in Luke, it is very instructive to see how the way is prepared for introducing the coming of the Lord. There are two great hindrances here that are dealt with by the Lord in a twofold way, and which it will be very profitable for our souls to contemplate a little. I speak now of what I believe few are strangers to, viz., *care and fear* -- two of the commonest influences at work to weigh down the hearts of God’s saints. I believe the two are closely allied to

each other; that is to say, whatever causes anxiety, or care, is that concerning which we generally have most fear; whatever settles on the heart, becoming a pressure or weight there, produces fear in connection with it. There is a care which it is right to have, a godly, proper, prayerful concern, which if we are without, we should be little better than sticks or stones; but to have what the Holy Ghost calls cares (*μεριμνα*) resting on the spirit, coming in between the soul and God, is destructive of all true spiritual growth and progress in the knowledge of God. If we have God between us and such things, they are not then burdening the soul, for then they are but new opportunities to lean on Him, fresh reasons for turning to Him. Trial is that which comes sooner or later to us all; in one sense we are never truly proved till we have been under fire. The Lord's charge to His disciples was, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation"; that is, pray that when the moment of trial comes, it may be an occasion to you to turn *to* God, instead of turning *from* God. We know well that is the moment when so many have turned away from Him, the test made manifest where they were. If the soul is really dependent and cast upon God, the testing-time is its harvest of faith. How blessed to have God between us and every care! Observe v. 30, "And your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Just think of that, your need and your Father's knowledge of it! Oh what a resource to the heart! But there is a snare here, which we do well to be guarded against. We must never suppose that our need is the *measure* of our Father's care or ability. It is the *occasion*, not the *measure*. The only true measure of His love is the Son of His bosom, whom He so freely gave in His love for sinners.

Whilst it is our delight to own how fully and graciously He knows and meets all our need, yet let us remember that there are motives and springs in His heart, of which our need is but the occasion of display. It is the Lord's object to keep us up in His grace. Cares drag the soul down, our Father *knows*. What a rest, so that we may leave *time, ways, means, everything* to Him.

Let us see how He meets the *fears*. His own words are "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"; that is, it is the delight of your Father's heart to be a Father to you; it is His *good pleasure* to do so. How blessed to think it is here the same word as that which sounded in His voice from the opened heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom is all my good pleasure." Is it not blessed beyond all expression to know that in thus ministering to His own, He is gratifying His own heart? The sense of this in our poor hearts dissipates every fear, but it does more, for not only do we cease to fear when it is *so*, but we can afford to act in the spirit and truth of His own words which follow, namely, "Sell that ye have and give alms," &c. Mark the words *sell* and *give*. It is the very opposite to the spirit of the day, which is *buy* and *get*! It is wonderful how easily saints fall under the power of the spirit of the age, and many there are who never find it out, until the storm comes with its desolation and scatters everything to the winds, as it were. Oh the reality of a *possession*, outside the reach of death, that insatiable archer, who selects the widest circle of

blessings (as men speak) on earth, as the target at which he may shoot all his arrows!

Let us ask our hearts, *what* and *where* is our *treasure*? The Lord says that where the treasure is there the heart is also. May the Lord give us the joy of knowing Christ as our treasure, and heaven as the place where our treasure is; this and this alone can set us free from present things. The sense of Christ's absence thus becomes our affliction. The place where He is not could thus never be an agreeable place to us; nothing but His presence can fill the void His absence creates. Thus we *watch*, not merely *wait*, for Him, and we watch through the long dreary hours of the far-spent night for Himself, the alone treasure of our hearts.

Alas, how little it is so with us! Alas, how little the ways and manners of pilgrims, and strangers, and watchers are seen in His beloved saints! How His heart must grieve to see His own so little in company with His affection and His love, and it is solemn to think that the poor world that lies in the wicked one, has too much cause to say something like this: "We hear it loudly asserted, and a position claimed because of it, but we fail to see it in practice, and they are but few and far between who look like unto men that wait for their Lord." May we take this more to heart, with exercised conscience and heart, may His word find such a place in our souls as to awaken us from our seeming sleep, to go forth in *conscience* and *affection*, and meet the One who hath said,

"Surely I come quickly."

The Present Prospect

The portion of scripture which our God has graciously given us as the stay of faith in the last days, contains the following blessed cheer, in the face of all infidelity, all unbelief, all revolt from the truth: "The firm foundation of God stands" (2 Tim. 2:19). Let the overthrow of the faith of some be ever so marked, *God's foundation* remains firm; this distinct abstract statement of scripture is a solid rock for faith and heart.

It is of the first importance at the present moment, in any outlook afforded by all that is passing, to place this in the foreground; for every true believer in the authority, sufficiency, and supremacy of Scripture as a revelation from God, there is nothing to fear as to the truth; undoubtedly there is much to chasten and solemnize the spirit, the times are difficult and the days are evil, opinion and speculation have displaced divine facts and truths; all this is without question very solemn, but the truth will still abide and survive; the only real question is, "Who is on the Lord's side?" In a matter affecting the truth, the word applies -- "he that is not with me is against me."

The present prospect, then, suggests two things very plainly and distinctly.

1. The positive call of God, and our duty to rise up and stand apart from the leaven of false doctrine now so widespread. It is as clear as noonday, that scripture implicitly forbids all compromise of every kind in connection with the truth of