

The *first* note of the message is a call to God's Presence, that there by Him they may be searched, and that He may discover to them what there is in the life that hinders an unbroken fellowship with Him, and an undeviating walk in the order of His will. The *second* note of the message is, that when God points out the thing in the life that ought not to be there, there be at once the honest, thorough confession of it, with a readiness to have it once and for ever taken away. This cleansing of the life, in what we venture to call even a crisis of cleansing, has been a very blessed discovery to many. The *third* note of the message is, that to the man who yields his cleansed life to Christ to be kept clean, and to be used as a vessel meet for the Master's use, there will be a discovery and a blessed practical experience of Christ's keeping power. Other pens in future articles will emphasise this; but in this paper on the point of departure it cannot be overlooked. The *fourth* note in the message deals with the doctrine of the endowment of the Spirit of God. The movement has certainly done something to turn the mind of the whole Church to the mission of the Comforter, and given to

many Christians a new realisation of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The *fifth* note of the message is, that all the endowment available is to be spent in alliance with Christ in His gracious purposes toward the world. No movement in modern times has been more practical than the Keswick movement; and in some of the most accredited missions to the heathen, more than sixty per cent. of the missionaries received their missionary impulse through Keswick teaching.

In the teaching here expounded there is, in one sense, nothing new. It is as old as the word of God, and it has had its representatives in every century of the Church's history; but while there is nothing new in the truth, there is a great deal that is new in the practical experience of it in the life. When God in His great mercy brings a man to His Presence to be searched and cleansed and thoroughly adjusted; when He discovers to Him the infinite resources that are in Christ available, reachable, and ready; when he yields his life into the hands of Christ, whose fulness has been discovered to him, his whole being undergoes such a change that his life enters into a realm that makes it practically a *new* life.

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## The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus.

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### III.

BEFORE inquiring further, whether in the teaching of Jesus the idea of the kingdom of God really denotes throughout nothing but the future heavenly state of blessedness which will begin on the dissolution of the present earthly world and the execution of the great final Judgment, we must take into consideration the relation in which this conception, the kingdom of God in the sense hitherto discussed, stood to the entire system of His religious teaching.

It formed but a part of this system, not the system itself. Alongside the instructions and exhortations of Jesus relating to the future, to His Second Coming, the final Judgment, the life of heavenly blessedness, there is a great body of such doctrines and injunctions referring, at least directly, to the present, to the present right relation of men

to God. As Jesus Himself, during His earthly life, was conscious of His own living, close fellowship with God, so He sought to bring other men also into like fellowship with God, for this purpose to unfold to them a right view of God's nature and saving purpose, and to explain to them the true character and practice of such a piety in them as would be acceptable to God.

I will not here discuss at length the whole of this important line of teaching on the part of Jesus, but merely recall briefly the main points. Jesus starts everywhere from the assurance that God is a Father, concluding on the one hand from this assurance that God sustains a fatherly relation to men, and on the other that men are to stand in a childlike attitude to God. God is filled with loving thoughts to men; He does good to the evil

as well as to the good (Matt. v. 45); He knows and satisfies the needs of men (Matt. vi. 32), and can give only good gifts to His children (Matt. vii. 9-12); even on the sinner, when he returns in penitence to Him, He exercises, not judicial righteousness, but a father's pardoning grace (Luke xv. 11-32). Men, therefore, should now have full, unlimited confidence in God, and in their prayers seek in faith God's power and help (Luke xi. 2-10, xii. 22-32, xvii. 5 f., xviii. 1-7; Mark ix. 23, xi. 22-24). Moreover, they must, in obedience to God, show to their fellow-men, their brethren, such love as God shows to men: prevenient, forgiving love (Matt. v. 39-48, vii. 12, xviii. 21-35; Luke xiv. 12-14); they are to seek their greatness, not in ruling over one another, but in serving one another, and that at the cost of sacrifice (Mark ix. 35-37, x. 42-45; cf. John xiii. 12-17, 34, xv. 12-17). Righteousness (*i.e.* piety) of this kind must govern their entire disposition; for God looks at the disposition, and all righteousness of mere outward conduct has no value in His sight (Matt. v. 21, vi. 1, xii. 34-37; Mark vii. 15-23; Luke xvi. 15). This requirement of real righteousness, Jesus made with the greatest emphasis. While teaching definitely that God is ready to forgive the penitent sinner, He taught with equal energy the necessity of earnest repentance in order to the obtaining of God's goodwill and salvation (Mark i. 15; Matt. xxi. 31 f.; Luke xii. 57-xiii. 9, xiii. 22-27). He proclaimed woe and denounced perdition on all who in their worldly walk or outward semblance of righteousness despised His call to repentance and true righteousness (Matt. xi. 20-24, xii. 39-45, xxiii. 13 ff.).

On the ground of His own experience, Jesus had the conviction that if His disciples, during their present earthly life, entered into this true filial relation preached by Him, trusted in God's saving gifts and tried to keep His will, they would enjoy a high degree of happiness at present, rise superior to all hostile powers of evil (Luke x. 19), and find refreshing rest under the trials and burdens of earthly life (Matt. xi. 28 ff.), as well as inner peace such as He Himself enjoyed in face of death (John xiv. 27, xv. 11, xvi. 33). Hence He could thank God for the salvation bestowed through His revelation on the foolish of this world, who received this revelation (Luke x. 21), and could pronounce His disciples blessed, because they were now the witnesses of the realisation of such a state as many

prophets and kings desired to see and hear, but had not actually seen and heard (Luke x. 23 f.).

Now, this entire teaching of Jesus respecting the true, happy relation, which might and ought to exist, during men's present earthly life, between God and men, as between a father and his children, did not stand in an independent position alongside His teaching respecting the future state of blessedness in the coming æon, but on the contrary was most closely and intimately connected with it.

In the first place, the conception of God as a loving Father, which formed the basis of this doctrine of the present ideal relation between God and man, was the same conception of God which underlay that ideal expectation of the future. Both the assurance that God will bring about the future state of blessedness for His own, and the assurance of the *heavenly, eternal nature* of this state, followed in the mind of Jesus from God's perfect fatherly love (Luke xii. 32, xviii. 1-8).

Secondly, the confident expectation of the future heavenly state of blessedness was the essential condition of Jesus being able to preach God's gift of salvation and hearing of prayer, even in the earthly present, and to require unreserved trust in God and complete self-sacrificing love. Only the certainty that man's true life lies only in the future state of blessedness, rendered possible to Him such an estimate of the present earthly life and the goods belonging to it,—an estimate running counter to the outward mode of view,—that He could even regard the impairing and loss of earthly life as equivalent to man's gaining of life (Mark viii. 35). His declaration to the disciples, that they had only to expect good gifts from God in their present earthly life, that they were armed against all hostile powers and all the violence of the foe, and would find all comfort and joy, was based, not on the fantastic expectation that they would receive from God, in wondrous fashion, all wished-for earthly goods and be preserved from all possible earthly evil and suffering, but on the fact that their names are "written in heaven" (Luke x. 20), *i.e.* that they are destined by God's love to be citizens of the future heavenly life. Only with the key of this eschatological idea could Jesus open to Himself and others such a view of the present world that all earthly experiences would appear as good gifts and arrangements of a heavenly Father.

Thirdly, the true righteousness, which Jesus required in the present relation between God and

man in acknowledgment of men's duty (Luke xvi. 7-10), was identical with the conduct which He required as the condition of attaining the future state of blessedness. If this identity is not a fact, there is a great inner discrepancy in the teaching of Jesus. It is especially important to note this in the following respect.

Jesus declared, to a certain extent in an extraordinarily abrupt way, that whoever would follow Him as a disciple and attain eternal life must renounce all earthly goods and sever himself completely from those nearest and dearest to him (Mark x. 21-25; Luke ix. 57-62, xii. 51-53, xiv. 26-33). It is possible to understand these words to mean, that in keeping with the eschatological form of thought and feeling in which He lived, He conceived the antithesis between the present state of the world with its corrupt goods and associations—all devoted to destruction—and the future state of blessedness to be looked for hereafter in a quite dualistic light, and on this account summoned so unreservedly to the complete casting aside of all these earthly goods and associations. Such is the view taken by Jol. Weiss (p. 42 ff.), who declares that Jesus laid down the condition of entrance into God's future kingdom "just as much or perhaps even more in a negative, ascetic sense than as an actually positive moral ideal." But at all events Jesus taught the very positive righteous requirements of unconditional trust in God, prayer even for the earthly goods necessary for daily life, and helpful, ministering love to men; and He applied this law of love with great energy, in opposition to the lax moral sense of obligation of His countrymen in such ways as these: children must show their regard for aged parents in practical help (Mark vii. 10-13), the married their mutual fidelity in unconditional observance of marriage-communion (Mark x. 1-12; Matt. v. 27 f.), subjects their duty to the prince in paying the legal tribute (Mark xii. 16 f.). He commanded men, by fidelity in the use of earthly riches, to render themselves worthy of the true riches (Luke xvi. 10-12), and instead of burying the talents entrusted to them, to lay them out in diligent toil (Matt. xxv. 14-30). Do these requirements, then, stand in flat antagonism to those abrupt sayings about complete renunciation and separation necessary for His sake and the kingdom of God's? If we take these latter sayings in a dualistic, ascetic sense, such a contradiction exists.

For we cannot despise and flee from the present world with all its goods in an ascetic spirit, and yet at the same time live in it and enjoy its goods with joyous confidence in God; we cannot utterly renounce society with all belonging to it, and yet at the same time exercise towards it the duties of fidelity and useful service; we cannot give up our property in money and means as a hindrance to attaining God's kingdom, and yet at the same time regard such giving up of property to the poor as a service of love, in obedience to the law of God's kingdom. Was Jesus Himself only unconscious of this flagrant contradiction in His utterances, while we are forced to insist that we can only fulfil *either* the "positive moral ideal" of Jesus, His ideal of filial relationship to God to be realised in the present earthly life, *or* His "negative, ascetic" requirements born of the eschatological view?

This seems to me a difficulty which we simply create for ourselves by making a few select utterances of Jesus the basis of a theory; whereas, it speedily vanishes when we seriously endeavour to understand the several sayings of Jesus in the light of His entire line of thought, and to explain the one class by the help of the means which other complementary sayings supply to us.

There is no contradiction, but complete harmony, between the requirement that a filial attitude shall be maintained towards God in the present earthly life and the recognition of the necessity of renouncing all possible earthly goods and ties for the sake of this filial relation to God. True, joyous, humble trust in God in all circumstances in life can just as little be exercised without unceasing self-denial as true, helpful, forbearing love to one's brethren. And it is quite unreservedly true, that the children of God must hold their loyal doing of right for God's sake, and their seeking the heavenly reward promised by God, absolutely superior to all seeking after gain and preserving of earthly goods. This requirement of the due order of the earthly and heavenly knows in the mind of Jesus no exception; His disciples must even risk their whole earthly life for the sake of the true life (Mark viii. 35). In this thought lies the true explanation of these abrupt demands for renunciation on the part of Jesus. He does not mean that the outward renouncing of earthly goods and ties as such, and therefore in all circumstances, is necessary for the kingdom of God's sake; but He means that it must be exercised unreservedly and completely,

when the fulfilment of the righteousness incumbent on the children of God—trust in God and love to one's neighbour, and the faithful performance of the tasks specially laid on every one by God—demand this surrender. Never must the limit be drawn: This sacrifice would be too great, this severance would be too painful to me, where *the avoiding of sin and the doing of God's will are in question*. Jesus plainly emphasised this condition in the words: "If thy hand (or foot or eye) *offend* thee (i.e. *occasion or incite thee to sin*), cut it off; it is better for thee to enter as a cripple into life than having two hands to go into hell" (Mark ix. 43, 45, 47).

Whoever observes the manner of Jesus in speaking elsewhere will not regard it as arbitrary, but as self-evident and obligatory, to insert in His particular injunctions of self-denial, although expressed in quite unlimited terms, this condition, which we gather from His other utterances to be in harmony with His mind. Jesus is fond of giving vividness to His injunctions bearing on the disposition of man by a practical application, in which the principle under consideration comes out with the greatest possible plainness in all its bearings. Such injunctions appear very abrupt and unpractical, and even in contradiction to Jesus' own conduct, if they are understood to mean that the outward conduct prescribed in them is to be observed in all circumstances. Their true meaning is only seen when we seek the inner principle bearing on disposition, which Jesus wishes to make as vivid as possible, but which in certain circumstances should be put in practice in quite other forms of outward action. Instead of other examples (to which belong especially Matt. v. 33-37 and 39-42), I will quote only the injunction, that whoever would pray should go into his chamber and shut the door (Matt. vi. 6). An outward observance of this requirement, which is expressed in unlimited form, would exclude all common prayer with others, all inward prayer on the street or elsewhere. But the meaning of Jesus is plainly to exclude all ostentatious prayer. The outward action which He prescribes is merely to teach in vivid style how the disposition is to be quite free from the desire to parade in prayer before men. But obviously Jesus makes the reserve, that this outward action is not to take place where common prayer with others is necessary, or where one cannot command a chamber for private prayer.

The case is just the same with the injunctions of Jesus in reference to renunciation, although they are expressed quite generally. The principle in view, which every one is to learn from this injunction, is, that in spirit we must put an absolutely higher value on the blessings of God's kingdom than on earthly goods and ties, and must therefore absolutely renounce the latter, even the greatest and dearest among them, when acquiring or preserving them is incompatible with the righteousness required by God. Thus, Jesus Himself and His immediate disciples had to renounce earthly possessions, home, family happiness, and other goods, for the sake of their calling to be messengers of the gospel; they were not to shun even the cruel death of the cross (Mark viii. 34), when they could purchase their earthly life only by sacrificing the gospel and the duty of their calling. And the requirement of the same outward course applies to all disciples of Jesus in all ages, in so far as in special circumstances their task is the same or similar, and they are put to the same or a similar martyr-test. But that Jesus does not enjoin this outward conduct as such, and therefore in all circumstances, that He rather requires the inner disposition, which expresses itself in this outward course in case of need, is evident from the fact that in certain circumstances, in the utterances quoted above, He even enjoined remaining in earthly social circles, and faithful and diligent employment of earthly goods held in trust. He knows quite well that outward renunciation and outward severance would be a sin, if one practised them, when, according to circumstances, his duty as a child of God has to be shown in fidelity to friends and with friends.

Even the injunction to the rich man to sell all he has and give to the poor, that he may have treasure in heaven (Mark x. 21), and the saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (ver. 25), must not be interpreted to mean that Jesus declared the possession of much earthly wealth in itself incompatible with obtaining the heavenly treasures of God's kingdom. Jesus demanded that even a rich man should, without reserve, subordinate his great earthly possessions to doing the work laid on him by God, and to seeking God's heavenly gifts; and that consequently, even the rich man with whom he had to do, and whom He held to be called to co-operate in preaching the

kingdom of God, should not, because of his wealth, hold aloof from this work of his for God's kingdom. But Jesus saw also how hard it is for a rich man so completely to subordinate his great earthly possessions to the doing of duty and the spiritual blessing of God's kingdom as to be able altogether to renounce the former for the sake of the latter. When, then, He described the *difficulty*, which is first dwelt on, of this course for a rich man as an *impossibility* (ver. 23), He at once added, that He means an impossibility with men, but not with God (ver. 27). He does not mean by this that God can save some rich men by His miraculous power, notwithstanding that they remain entangled in their perverse estimation of earthly goods; but, rather, that God can give to rich men power to overcome their attachment to earthly goods, whereas of course they lack this power as long as they

depend merely on their human strength. But God bestows His divine spiritual power on men, even rich men, not by arbitrary choice, but on every one who asks it of Him in trustful confidence.

We can, therefore, hold fast by the conviction, that in the case of Jesus there is really no discrepancy between His ideal of the filial relation in which His disciples are to stand to God and to act during their present earthly life, and His teaching respecting the future state of blessedness which is to be looked for on the one hand, and the conditions to be observed in order to participation in this future state on the other. To His mind, on the contrary, the prospect of this future state of bliss stood in an essentially complementary and explanatory relation to His doctrine of the filial relation which is to be realised in the present life.

## Short Expository Papers.

### The Spirit of Holiness.

ROMANS i. 4.

"According to the spirit of holiness."

PROF. GODET says of the above, "These words have been explained in a multitude of ways." The main point of difficulty is whether the words refer to the Holy Spirit or to the Son of God. The early commentators understood the words "*Spirit of Holiness*" of the Holy Spirit, and though such an application seems foreign to the context, it was unanimously accepted. Prof. Godet gives the same explanation. The greatest difficulty in accepting this interpretation is its incongruity with the context. As Prof. Beet says, "Of the Holy Spirit there is no hint in the whole chapter, therefore to be clear the usual title would have been needful."

It seems to me that the words "*eternal Spirit*" in Heb. ix. 14 are parallel, and if we obtain the correct explanation of the one it will be helpful to the right understanding of the other. Godet quotes Heb. ix. 14 as supporting his view that the words "*spirit of holiness*" refer to the Holy Spirit, and accepting this view gives a moral meaning to the words "*eternal Spirit*." But Bishop Westcott and Prof. Davidson, in their explanation of Heb. ix. 14, apply the words "*eternal Spirit*" to Christ

without any reserve, which explanation may therefore be considered correct with some degree of certainty. Such being the case, "*eternal Spirit*," instead of supporting the view that "*spirit of holiness*" refers to the action of the Holy Spirit on Christ, strongly supports the application of the words to Christ Himself. Jesus Christ, the God-man, is the subject-matter of the gospel. His humanity was known from His parentage, and the absolute holiness of His life was a strong proof of His Divinity, for only in virtue of His divine nature was perfect holiness possible; and, as Godet says, "the resurrection was the necessary corollary of such a life, for perfect holiness excludes physical dissolution." Should the application of the words to Christ be correct, then we have in verses 3 and 4 not only a stately parallel, but valuable teaching concerning the person of the Son of God. Christ was the son of David, but he was also the Son of God, which unique relation Christ Himself revealed by His life of absolute holiness, and which was demonstrated by God in that He raised Him from the dead. The two attributes of the Spirit of Christ, eternity and holiness, as taught in Heb. ix. 14 and Rom. i. 4, are thus in harmony with our belief in Him as "the Christ, the Son of the living God."

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