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there were cubic miles of life-giving air on every side around it. This is a figure of what is happening in the spiritual world every day and in every Christian land. The great tide of the Father's universal, unwearying, inexhaustible love is beating upon us and surging around us every moment of our lives, and we shut our children up in the close stifling air of our own petty thoughts of Him, debate over little details of doctrine and church order, unchurch one another for not holding views which our Lord never mentioned. Thus our children have their spiritual instincts and aspirations checked and perverted within them. Stand back and let the love of their Heavenly Father flow freely into their hearts. Let them look into the face of Jesus Christ, and it will transform them into His image. Let them feel something of His compassion, and see what agonies He bore for their sakes. It is the presence of Christ, and the contemplation of His words and His sufferings, that create the new heart, and bring a man, even when he is old, to birth again.

There is another thought, one which may have been in your minds while I have been speaking. If it is in any sense a birth, you may say, how is it possible, now that our habits of thought and feeling have been formed? Let me conclude with a few words on this mysterious problem. There is, I believe, in every man a germ of the divine, which, if it is cared for, fed and nourished, will change him into a son of God. This germ of spiritual life is often buried deep under habits of sin, or under the cares and worries of business, or the inordinate love of knowledge, or the calls of social life, or the satisfactions of a happy home. Into such entanglements, the whole life may get so absorbed that there is no time left for God. Nevertheless the seed remains, and cannot entirely be destroyed so long as man is man, for it is a part of his rational nature. The grace of the Almighty has not been sleeping, for appeals have been made to this germ from day to day in books, and speech, in the lives of men and women, in the events that have been a man's lot, in sorrow or defeat or failure, in the coming of his children, or the approach of death. These have kept the life from perishing. Then at last on God's own day, Christ comes athwart the soul; He speaks, and the soul listens; He pleads, and the soul feels the power of the pleading; He persuades, and the soul yields itself; He reveals the love of the Father in the Cross, and the soul embraces Him. Then is seen what is surely the most marvellous of all miracles, the bands of sin and self are broken, and the man rises clean away from the thraldom of his old life, and becomes the bondslave of Christ for ever.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Birthdays of Good Men and Women.

'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.'—Ro 12^{11}.

A LIFE spent on a farm that is not too big can be very happy indeed, especially to boys and girls. I am thinking of a boy called George Williams who had his home at a delightful English farmstead. Such a jolly place it was. You would have loved the great open fireplace in the kitchen; both a pot and a kettle could hang over the fire at the same time, and there was room for a person to sit on a stool inside the fireplace. Then there was an old oak settle standing against the wall. If you sat on it and looked up you could see that the rafters were almost quite black, and you would feel that you did not wish them to be any other colour. The smoke from the fire painted them.

George was quite young—just fifteen—when he left that dear home to go to a town called Bridgewater to learn the drapery business. That was in the year 1836, so he must have been born in 1821.

It was a misty summer morning when he and his father set out for Bridgewater. Even although it was very early you may be sure his mother came down to the gate at the end of the garden which opened on to the public road and bade her boy an affectionate good-bye, and then stood watching the two figures in the dogcart until they were quite out of sight.

George was a ruddy-faced, active boy. Standing behind the shop counter he seemed born to the business. He loved it. He did more than merely sell things; he kept writing down, or committing to memory, particulars of prices and names of

customers. His pockets were always stuffed with papers.

His master knew that he had a good apprentice, and he was a favourite with the other lads. But you may be sure George's thoughts often turned to the old farm, and the dear mother who lived there.

There were twenty-seven assistants in the Bridgewater shop, and they all lived in, that is to say, there were rooms provided for them on the premises. They were supposed to go to the Congregational Church, but only George and one or two others went. He heard a message there that he never forgot. 'I first learned in Bridgewater to love my dear Lord and Saviour for what He had done for me,' he said long afterwards.

After some years he left Bridgewater to go to London. There he joined a church where he could get plenty of church work to do. There was a wonderful preacher in it, one who would not let anybody go to sleep. George loved to listen to him, and he set himself to try to get other young men to attend. He felt sure that hearing such preaching would give them something good to think about during the week and lead them on to be better men.

Every day but Sunday he was busy in the warehouse of a firm of wholesale and retail drapers, and from the time he went into it he climbed the ladder of success. His upward progress was made step by step. One of the buyers was seen cutting off a piece of silk and putting it into a drawer. His master found this out and dismissed him. George Williams got his place. But he did not become conceited; he pegged away, working in the interest of his master day after day and month after month, until through that little country lad's exertions the business became ever so much bigger.

There were a hundred and forty hands in the warehouse instead of twenty-seven as at Bridgewater. They too were boarded in the house. George Williams felt sorry for them. He knew that many of the lads were fresh from country homes like himself—homes where God was feared—and now they were drifting into the habit of never entering a church door. They spent their Sundays in a way that not only would have grieved their mothers, but was doing great harm to their own souls. George started a prayer-meeting. It met in a little upper room. At first only three came, but gradually the attendance increased until the little room was packed full of young men, all deeply in earnest. It must have been a wonderful sight.

That prayer-meeting was the beginning of the Young Men's Christian Association. Through George Williams' influence other business houses began to have their prayer-meetings; then an association was formed and given a name. During the war the name of the Y.M.C.A. was on every one's lips. Boys wrote home, telling what a blessing it was to them. They felt they had a sort of home in the huts, and at the meetings they sometimes got fitted with armour, and when they put it on they knew there was no need to fear even death.

To tell what George Williams did for the Y.M.C.A. would make a long story in itself. You are more concerned to know about the boy who left the farm one misty summer morning, without influence, without money, and became a great business man. He succeeded because he deserved success. He worked hard, and he loved his work. One thing he said in referring to his own success was that he believed that religious men who had natural ability, education, and a certain amount of general knowledge made the best men of business.

When the Y.M.C.A. had been in existence fifty years, there were Jubilee Celebrations, and at the same time George Williams was made a knight. When he read the letter telling him of Queen Victoria's pleasure, 'It is not for me,' he said, 'it is for the Association. It belongs to our Master; let us put it at His feet.' There and then he and his friends knelt in prayer, and humbly gave the glory to Him to whom it was due.

Boys and girls generally pity old people. 'Poor old man,' 'Poor old woman,' they say. They don't know how beautiful old age may be to those who watch it with understanding eyes. With Sir George Williams it was as if the glory of the old world overlapped into this. He loved children. When he was eighty-one, and visiting the seaside at Filey, he stood on the top of a sand-castle and addressed a crowd of little ones gathered round him. There was a photograph taken of that meeting, and it shows a little girl being lifted up to shake hands with him and doubtless to get his blessing. You would have liked to be in her place, would you not?

At the end, 'He did but dream of Heaven and he was there.' He was buried in St. Paul's

Cathedral, near which he had so long been in business. He had lived for the people, and in death the people claimed him.

The Shadow of a Cloud.

'The shadow of a cloud.'—Is 25^5.

You all know what a shadow is. It is the outline of a figure or form thrown on the ground or on some object. A shadow is made when something gets in the way of the light. When a cloud comes between us and the sun its shadow is thrown on the earth. When you get between a lamp and a wall your shadow is thrown on the wall. So you see that to form a shadow there must be two things—light and something that obscures or cuts off part of the light.

Now shadows are things that we are not very fond of as a rule. When the sun hides his face behind a cloud we feel dull and cold till he peeps out again. And so people have often compared troubles to shadows. It is of this kind of shadow I want to speak to-day.

There are two sorts of trouble shadows in the world. There are the shadows God sends, and there are the shadows we make.

1. First let us look at the shadows God sends. What are the names of some of them? Difficulties, disappointments, sorrows. Sometimes you hear people talking as if boys and girls had no troubles at all, as if their days were one long blaze of sunshine from morning to night. But I don't think that is the case. Boys and girls are perhaps able to forget their troubles sooner than the grown-ups, but I think that while the troubles are there, they are just as big to the boys and girls as the older people's troubles are to them, and just as hard to bear.

A great many people are puzzled to know why God sends us these shadows. 'If God loves us so much,' they say, 'why does He send us things that hurt us?' And they forget that it is just because God loves us so much that He does send us troubles. Some things grow best in the dark. If you want to grow a hyacinth in a pot, after you have planted it you must shut it up for some weeks in a dark cupboard. And God knows that some beautiful things would never grow in our lives if the clouds did not hide the sun. If we lived always in the sunshine we might become lazy and selfish, or proud and hard. But God sends the shadows to make us brave and strong, sympathetic and kind.

The big question for you and for me is—how are we to deal with those shadows that God sends? Some people fret and rebel against them; others persist in looking at nothing but the shadows, and so they get into deeper and deeper gloom. Both those ways are foolish. When we are in the shadow we must remember to make use of the shade to grow the beautiful things that won't flourish in the sunshine. And we must keep remembering that there can never be a shadow without light, and that somewhere on the other side of the shadow is sunshine. There is a verse which says:

> The inner side of every cloud
> Is bright and shining;
> I therefore turn my clouds about
> And wear them always inside out
> To show the lining.

On the other side of the cloud that looks so dark the sun is shining. Don't forget the bright side of the cloud.

2. But what of the shadows we make? Well, you know everybody carries a shadow about with them. They can't help it. Wherever you go, your shadow goes too. And so I think that wherever we go we shall always find little troubles and annoyances.

But there are two things we can do with these shadows.

First we can see that they are not exaggerated. You know that when the sun is low or we are a long way off from a street lamp our shadows grow to an extraordinary size—quite out of proportion to ourselves. Our legs look yards long and our body is drawn out like a telescope.

There is a mountain in Germany called the Brocken. It is nearly a mile high, and at sunset a great wall of mist hangs over it. If you went up there towards sunset and stood at a certain spot on the top you might see what looked like the shadow of a huge giant thrown on the clouds. And then you would notice that when you moved the giant moved, and you would discover that the likeness of the giant was nothing but your own shadow very much exaggerated. So don't exaggerate your small worries. Don't make them ten times bigger than they are. That is the first way to deal with the shadows we carry about.

And the second way is—keep your face towards the sun. If you do that, do you know what will happen? Your shadow will be behind you, and that is where it ought to be. Don't keep walking in your own shadow, and looking at your own shadow. Don't brood over your troubles. How can you help feeling sad and gloomy if you do?

The sun's in a cloud,
The morning is dreary,
The way is too long,
The feet are too weary,
The friend is not kind,
And smiles are not shining,
The roses and robins
Are paling and pining.
That hour is the saddest
From May day to Yule
When little Dolores
Is going to school.
What is the reason? She turns from the light,
And walks in her shadow from morning till night.

The sun is the brightest,
The morn is the clearest,
The burden is lightest,
The friend is the dearest,
The flowers are all waking,
The way is not long;
The birds are all breaking
At once into song.
That hour is the gladdest
From May day to Yule,
When little Allegra
Is going to school.
What is the secret? Wherever you find her,
The shadow of little Allegra's behind her.[1]

There is just one thing more I should like you to remember. Don't make shadows for other people. Never stand in anybody else's light and shut off the sunshine from them. I have known people who were like cold, damp shadows whenever they entered a house, and all because their tempers were black and horrid. Don't be shadows to other people; don't make the world darker or colder for anybody. Aim rather at being sunbeams, and then you will cheer and bless wherever you go.

Three Great Trees.

'A great tree.'—Lk 13^{19} (A.V.).

'A great tree.'—That is our text this morning. I am just sorry it is not '*three* great trees,' for I am going to tell you this morning of three great trees, each of which is great in more ways than one.

The trees of which I am going to speak are alive at this moment, so far as I know. They are all to be found in the north-east corner of Scotland, and they are growing not so very far apart. You could see them all in one day if you had a cycle, for the first and the second are growing within a mile or two of each other, and the third is distant only about thirty miles from the first.

1. The first great tree grows at the edge of a wood close to the road. You can hardly fail to notice it as you walk past. If your eyes are sharp you will look twice at it, and then you will exclaim, 'How very queer!' No wonder! This extraordinary tree is not one tree, but two trees in one. About a foot from the ground the trunk, which is that of a beech, divides in two. One-half goes on growing as a beech, but the other turns into an ash. You can pick out its stem at once in contrast with that of the beech, and if you look up you will see far overhead branches of ash leaves and branches of beech leaves mingling in the friendliest fashion. How did these trees come to be one? Who can tell? They are old trees now, and they have been sharing the same roots for many and many a year. There is no quarrelling who shall have the most sap, or who shall get the greatest amount of sunshine. They have shared and shared alike all their lives, and that is why people stop to admire them to-day.

I wish we were all as ready as that tree to share our good things. I am afraid some of us are more like the little girl who had a sister a year older than herself. Whatever the older sister got the younger insisted on having also. Her favourite words were, 'Me too!' One day the older girl was ill and the doctor ordered her medicine with a particularly horrid taste. Little sister saw the bottle, and she saw mother measuring out a spoonful into a glass for the invalid. As usual she cried, 'Me too!' And mother thought it would be a good lesson for little sister, and she knew the medicine would do her no harm, so she gave 'Me too' an overflowing spoonful. After that 'Me too' was less heard in the nursery.

Now which do you admire most—the twin trees or little 'Me too'? I know which I admire, and which I wish you to copy.

[1] M. A. Lathbury.

2. The second tree is a lime tree. It is growing in the grounds of a famous castle, and it is almost as famous as the castle itself. It is carefully preserved and has a railing round it, and the Duke who owns it is tremendously proud of it. Well he may be! How big do you think it is? Well, you may not believe me when I tell you, but it covers half an acre of ground. It is so huge that they say 1000 men can stand under its shade. How did it manage to grow so great? I can tell you in three words—by being humble. When it spread its long branches it did not lift them haughtily to heaven, it bent them meekly towards the earth. And these branches as they swept the ground took root and sprang up again around their parent tree, so that besides the great main stem there are countless smaller stems steadying and supporting and feeding that great tree. Like all truly great people that splendid lime is humble. You see, you never can be truly great unless you are first truly humble.

They tell a tale of a certain royal princess who is living to-day. When she was a young girl she was crossing a gangway from a ship to the quay, and her foot slipped. She would have fallen but a sailor on the ship put out a hand and steadied her saying, 'Take care, Miss!' The princess, I suppose, was rather cross about having tripped, and she turned round and said sharply, 'Don't call me "Miss"! Remember I am a *Princess*.' The sailor looked rather abashed, but the Queen, who was walking behind her daughter, had heard the rebuke. She turned to the sailor and said graciously, 'Thank you very much indeed for your kindness. My daughter, as she says, is a princess; but we hope some day she will be a *lady*.' That wise Queen knew that to be proud was to be merely small, and to be humble was to be really great. Boys and girls, which do you admire most—the giant tree or the silly princess?

3. The third tree is an oak. To my mind it is the greatest of the three great trees, although you may not agree with me at the first glance. It grows, like the first tree, near the highroad. But, alas! it does not stand up straight and tall. A winter's gale has blown it over, and it lies on its side with three-quarters of its roots sticking up in the air. Its leafy top too has been sawn away, for it fell across the road, and so it has only about twenty feet of trunk left. Do you think it has given up and ceased to grow because it has lost all its head and most of its roots? Not a bit of it! It is as busy as ever sending out branches and leaves on the piece of trunk which remains.

And so I think that tree is the greatest of the three trees because it is so brave and plucky. You would have quite excused it if, when the wind knocked it over and the saw beheaded it, it had said, 'It's no use growing any more. I'm done. All I can do now is to die.' But that oak was no ordinary oak. It had plenty pluck, and with its six remaining roots it set to work to make itself over again.

Boys and girls, I want you to imitate that oak. Never acknowledge you are beaten. Stick in! What are difficulties and obstacles? They are just chances to show your mettle. Keep smiling, and keep going on when it would be easier to sit down and weep. Though you should lose everything else in the world, *never lose heart*. That's pluck. And it is pluck that wins in life. You admire it, I admire it, every one admires it. And, let me tell you a secret, God admires it most of all.

The Christian Year.

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

Christianity is Christ.

'To me to live is Christ.'—Ph 1^{21}.

The distinctive fact in Christianity is Christ. Three points deserve prominence.

1. The personality of Jesus Christ belongs to history, not myth. When we ask the precise reason why Christianity prevailed as a world-religion, whereas the hero-cults of antiquity have so utterly perished that to-day they have no votaries at all, the answer to a great extent lies in the circumstance that Dionysus, Herakles, Attis, and the like were purely legendary figures impossible to localize in any situation known to have been historically real, but Jesus Christ lived and died. His rivals failed to appear within the lists of time. No witnesses came forward testifying that they had associated with Serapis or Isis in life's common ways, had listened to their words, or made acquaintance with their character and found that their life answered consistently to their doctrine. Jesus, on the contrary, was presented in the personal testimony of those who had known

Him. 'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.' Built thus on the actual, His Gospel could outlast the storms of speculation. The soil of fact, to which its roots went down, afforded stability and growth and ever-renewed vigour.

It has occasionally been complained that the Jesus of the Apostles' Creed might, except for a trifling historical reference like the mention of Pontius Pilate, be quite well identified or at least co-ordinated with any of the contemporary nature-deities, say the Babylonian Tammuz. But even in the Apostles' Creed, in spite of its not over-successful attempts to identify Jesus in a fashion satisfactory to the Christian mind, the strongest emphasis is laid on history; and in the New Testament, especially the Gospels, the first interest of every writer is beyond dispute in facts. A deep gulf therefore separates Jesus from mythic sun-gods or deities of vegetation, whose alleged experiences are but imaginative transcripts of natural processes interpreted as the fortunes or adventures of gods and goddesses who, like leaves or grass, die in winter to revive again in spring. This is to say nothing of the rude, foul, or unintelligible elements which these mythic stories may contain.

2. The History of Religions contains no parallel to the self-consciousness of Jesus. Unless we toss the Gospels overboard, it is certain that our Lord's attitude to God, to men, and to His own significance for the world is an unprecedented attitude. What we know of Buddha or Mohammed, to take the chief examples, shows nothing in the least analogous to His sense of Divine sonship, His experience of God's love, His perfect fulfilment of vocation. Unquestionably Jesus seems to conceive of salvation as dependent on Himself; He seems to call men less to His teaching than to His own person as the embodiment and guarantee of the truth He proclaims; He seems implicitly to take God's place in relation to the soul, and to make personal devoted love to Him the equivalent of faith in the redemptive sense of the word. He seems to do all these things, and there is no reason to doubt that actually He did them.

But nothing in the least resembling this is characteristic of the method pursued by the great religious teachers. No other religious leader can be named who displays a tendency to identify with himself the truth proclaimed by him, or to claim that in him revelation is so focused and concentrated as to be charged with power to save. In the case of Jesus, however, His conscious sonship is felt by Him to be the supreme reality; and in the light of it He recognized clearly the work God had laid upon Him. It was not that He knew Himself as Messiah, and from this rose to the certainty that God was His Father; the connexion of the two facts is just the opposite. He is Son of Man, visible Head of the Kingdom of God, in virtue of the still deeper consciousness that He is Son of God. The roots of His vocation lie in the uniqueness of His relation to the Father. But eventually we cannot separate these two aspects. The higher in the scale of being a human character may stand, the more completely vocation and personality coincide, and in the case of Jesus the coincidence was absolute. 'It is, in fact, the *differentia* of Christianity as a religion,' writes Denney, 'that the distinction which can sometimes be drawn between a person and the cause for which he stands is in it no longer valid.'

3. In Christ there is given the personal presence of God, in redeeming power. The term 'incarnation,' which to certain minds has recently become suspect, will no doubt recover its place in due course, since it represents an idea with which the religious mind, at its highest, cannot dispense. We may use it here without concern to indicate the fact that in Jesus Christ, who lived a man's life, we confront the redemptive agency of God in a degree that transcends all we could ask or think. Nor is incarnation only a metaphor. As Canon Streeter has observed, 'if the essential, distinctive, and most fundamental quality of the Spirit we call God is love, this is a quality which can be exhibited directly and undisguisedly and without any admixture of symbolism and metaphor in a perfect human life and character.' Christian faith is built upon the conviction that in Jesus' life, death, and triumph the pathway between the Father and His human children has been opened up, and opened from God's side. We claim for the Gospel, as a vital and unique element, this perfectly moralized thought of mediation through incarnate love. Jesus meets a world of sin not as the supreme prophet merely, but as One fully aware that in the relationship of God and man everything turns upon Himself.

Incarnation doubtless is an idea as old, or very nearly as old, as religion itself. That gods, moved by desires selfish or beneficent, could temporarily assume human form, was

widely believed. In Scandinavian, Greek, and Indian mythology this thought frequently recurs; but it really affords no analogy to the Christian message, if for no other reason than for this, that the presupposed idea of God is so imperfectly ethical that Deity can with equal facility unite itself to either human or animal nature. In Hinduism, for example, the thought of incarnation is specially associated with the god Vishnu, who during the series of his numerous *avataras* may assume the guise of fish or tortoise. If it be replied that he is completely manifested in Krishna, constituting in this form a full satisfaction and epitome of the cravings and experiences of the Hindu soul, we must yet consider that all this stands in no positive relation to historic fact. What the mythology does bear witness to is the need of a personal Redeemer operating within human life, and through it revealing God; precisely this actuality is lacking. Krishna, as a self, is no part of the historical record, and in the vague fantastic outlines of the picture it is impossible for us to envisage any authentic character, deeply based in credible experience. To gain the world, the truth of God as He is must embody itself in a tale of morally verifiable meaning, with for hero a self-accrediting personality.[1]

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Atonement.

'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.'—1 P 2^{24}.

When we read the Scripture aright, we see that atonement has its spring and energy within the Divine, holy Love itself. When, accordingly, that Love loads itself with the sin of man, and carries it in unknown anguish, atonement has been made, salvation has been won, God has reconciled the world to Himself. The whole meaning of the atonement, and all its issues and consequences, are far beyond the experience even of the ripest faith, or of the whole community of the redeemed. God alone can comprehend in its fulness what God alone has wrought. Nevertheless, enlightened by the experience of salvation, through that atoning deed, we may grasp certain aspects of its wonder and its truth.

(1) In the first place, if God bear the sin of men, then the nature of sin has been exposed with a completeness which no doctrinal statement could attain. It is an offence against the infinite Love. What sinners assail is not impersonal Law, but the living God Himself. The blow is struck at His heart, and it gets home.

(2) In the second place, if God bear the sin of men, the judgment, which is sin's inevitable consequence, has been laid upon His heart and has been lifted away for ever. The guilt of sin committed, as it is, against the living and holy God, cannot be borne by the sinner himself. Not the sinner's utmost woe, not even the punishment of all the guilty souls that ever were, could be the equivalent of that judgment which sin deserves, and must receive, if the moral universe is to remain unshaken in the estimate of a holy God, and in that of an enlightened human conscience. Love, no less than Holiness, requires that sin shall be judged if men are to be redeemed. Love alone can bear that judgment which itself demands. When Love carries in its heart the guilt and shame of the world, sin is judged, and the holiness of God is vindicated.

(3) In the third place, if God bear the sin of men, sacrificial Love has been proved victorious. In the world where man's self-assertion and selfishness sought and claimed the victory, they have been defeated, once for all. Love has triumphed in the very act in which it laid upon itself the need of men, and bore it through nameless experience of Divine sorrow. In the centre of the moral universe, enthroned above all cosmic powers and principles, is seated vicarious suffering Love.

To begin to discern these things, to apprehend, even in some measure, our need as sinners, sin's exceeding sinfulness, the awfulness of its judgment, and the deathless energy of sacrificial Love, is the beginning of our salvation. To enter ever more deeply into them, to repent with growing grief and hatred of sin, to cast ourselves in our guilt and helplessness more and more upon the everlasting mercy, to open our very souls to the constraint of dying Love, and to live ever more simply and fully as its subjects, its witnesses and its vehicles—*this* is to become, in ever-enlarging measure, partakers of the great salvation.[2]

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Living Christ in Ephesians.

'The Lord Jesus Christ.'—Eph 1^{1}.

It is with Jesus as the Christ that St. Paul deals in this Epistle, rather than with Jesus as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. That St. Paul's language about the Christ presupposes His Divinity may be entirely true. As has been often pointed

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Originality of the Christian Message*.

[2] T. B. Kilpatrick, *The Redemption of Man*.

out, such language as that of the opening sentence —'Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ'—seems itself to presuppose it. If the Messiahship of Jesus is sufficient to account for such language, Messiahship must involve far more than the Hebrews were accustomed to believe. Moreover, St. Paul certainly believed that our Lord was One who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, and that He was in the form of God before He took upon Himself the form of a servant. But the full and formulated doctrine of the Person of Christ belongs to a time far later than St. Paul's, and we should not anticipate it in interpreting his words.

What is it then that, as Christ, Jesus has done and does for us? We will begin with the facts of His earthly life.

1. Now it is not St. Paul's way to dwell in detail upon the facts of our Lord's earthly life. It was the Lord living and glorified who had revealed Himself to St. Paul, and with whom St. Paul was chiefly concerned. There is perhaps no Epistle of which this is more true than it is of the Epistle to the Ephesians. But we may easily exaggerate St. Paul's want of interest in our Lord's earthly life; there are instances even in this Epistle where the thought of our Lord's earthly life may lie behind his words, and they are of some interest.

Look first at the passage of the Epistle where St. Paul first turns directly to the position of the Gentiles (2^{17-22}). Note first the words in which he says that our Lord came and preached peace to those that were far off and peace to those that were nigh. Is it quite clear that, as Dr. Robinson urges, in these words, 'We have a reference, not to the work of the Lord Jesus on earth before the crucifixion, but to the work of the exalted Christ in announcing the peace which His death had made'? No doubt it may be so: though the language in this case seems somewhat strange, the strangeness may be explained by the fact that St. Paul is adopting Old Testament words; and the preaching of the Apostles in the power of the Spirit of Christ may be rightly described as the coming and the preaching of the Lord Himself. But the action of the Lord certainly forms one great whole. The Gospels, as St. Luke says, tell us what 'Jesus began both to do and to teach' (Ac 1^{1}), and the Acts what He further did after His Ascension; and St. Paul's language may cover both parts of His activity. St. Paul was surely aware that the Lord in His earthly life did preach peace to those who were afar off as well as those that were nigh. In the first place, He appealed to the outcasts, who, like the Gentiles, were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and whose spiritual position He practically identified with that of the heathen (Mt 18^{17}). In the second place, notably in His sermon at Nazareth, our Lord clearly seems to anticipate the inclusion of the Gentiles within the body to which the blessings of the kingdom belong, provided that they exercise that faith which the people of Nazareth are refusing. Both the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian are examples of people who receive supernatural blessing through their faith in the promises of God made by His servants. In the teaching of the Lord, as in the teaching of St. Paul himself, it is faith, and not obedience to the words of the law, which enables men to receive the blessings of the kingdom.

2. Secondly, we should observe the words in which St. Paul says that the Gentiles are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone. We are, of course, at once reminded of the Lord's own words as to the foundation upon which He will build His Church, and of His reference to Himself as the corner-stone. This reference follows immediately upon the parable of the wicked husbandmen, who murdered the son and heir of the Lord of the vineyard, the parable which concludes with the words, 'What therefore will the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen and will give the vineyard unto others.' We see again how close is the connexion between St. Paul's teaching and that of the Lord. St. Paul's doctrine of the universal headship intended for Christ is one with our Lord's teaching that He is the 'Heir.' Moreover, the very reason why the Church must be rebuilt is that it is faith in Jesus as the Christ which is the essential thing, and not obedience to the Mosaic Law; and from this it follows that Gentiles may be members of the Church as well as Jews.

3. Thirdly, we should observe the words in which St. Paul says that 'our Lord made Gentiles and Jews to be one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained

in ordinances' ($2^{14.\ 15}$). We need not at this point consider the rather difficult thoughts as to the relation of Christ's death to the law, which appear in other Epistles, and may here also be in St. Paul's mind. Two things at any rate are clear. In the first place, the separation of Jews from Gentiles did centre round the law. Though the Church was open to all even before the Lord came, the necessity for those who would join it of obedience to the law formed for the vast majority of Gentiles an obstacle practically insuperable. In the second place, it was our Lord who took this barrier away. Not only did His teaching 'make all meats clean' (Mk 7^{19}); its whole trend, like that of the prophetic teaching, was to discount the importance of all that was not really included in the dictates of holiness and love. Finally, by opening a new way to the Father, He rendered the old means of approach no longer necessary. As St. Paul says, He reconciled them both in one body unto God through the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby. At the Conference of Jerusalem it was precisely this consideration of the new way made to the Father, to which St. Peter referred as rendering it no longer reasonable to insist upon the observance of the law. 'God,' he says, 'made no distinction between Gentiles and Jews,' cleansing their hearts by faith. 'Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.' Those are the abiding refutations of legalism, ready for it whenever it lifts its head. Let the legalist say what he will about the obligatory character of the things upon which he lays such stress, God, in the bestowal of His spiritual blessings, makes no distinction between those who observe them and those who do not. Moreover, the legalist himself does not really trust them. He looks to be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, as others do.[1]

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Fulness of Life.

'I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.'—Jn 10^{10}.

When the Son of God took our human nature upon Him, He entered into the whole of our human life, and made all human experience His own—except sin, which is not truly human. He came that men might have life, and might have it abundantly; and while His chief purpose was to restore that highest form of life which is fellowship with God, He cared intensely for the soundness and sacredness of those human relationships which are an essential part of the life of men. His victory was won in the spiritual sphere, but that victory embraces body, soul, and spirit, and the things which men call secular share in its fruits. Therefore the whole Church was a great brotherhood, and its sacraments told of fellowship among men, as well as of fellowship between man and God. The old barriers were broken down, for all humanity is summed up in Jesus Christ. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female. Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.' Race, class, sex do not count: Christ is all and in all.

How, then, can we set about our duty, and what steps can we take to follow the example of the Church in its best days?

1. We must claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice. Truism as this seems to us, there is an immense number of Christian people who either disregard the claim or offer mere lip service to it. Our first business is to convert the Church to a true idea of what conversion means. It is perfectly true that conversion is the primary work of the Church; but even now it is commonly supposed that conversion begins and ends with the interests of a man's own soul, and that the goal to which a man is turned is an enlightened self-interest—viz. his soul's eternal welfare. The point to be made clear is that Christian conversion means a turning from self to Christ: it is the acceptance of our Lord as the Saviour who saves us from selfishness, and as the King who demands our whole-hearted allegiance. If He is to be King anywhere, He must be King everywhere. We cannot possibly exclude our politics, our social relationships, or our industry, from His sovereignty. We must at least try to apply His principles at every point.

2. We must therefore make up our minds what are the Christian principles which rule social practice. On most of those principles we are agreed. A brief statement of them may be found in the report of the Committee on Christianity

[1] H. L. Goudge, *Three Lectures on the Epistle to the Ephesians*.

and Industry appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

(1) The Gospels draw a clear distinction between life and the means of living. Avarice, the inordinate desire for gain, is regarded as a sin not less grave than some others which are to-day more generally condemned. There is an austere and reiterated warning against undue preoccupation with what we should call 'economic considerations.' Wealth is a responsibility for its owners, not a luxury to be used as they please.

(2) Every human personality is of infinite and equal value, because all are children of the one Father. Therefore it is wrong to use any human being for less than a human purpose. So far as an industrial system treats men or women as mere instruments of production, that system stands condemned.

(3) This emphasis on the value of individuality is balanced by the emphasis on the fact that Christians are members of a society. As we are brethren, the principle of working together for the common good is clearly more Christian than the principle of competing one against another for private profit. According to the doctrine of the New Testament, work is a duty laid upon all; the members of a Christian community should aim at giving rather than getting, and they should seek the service of others rather than the personal profit of themselves. 'The doctrine sometimes advanced that a man is free to do what he likes with his own, that all men are justified in following their own pecuniary interests to the fullest extent allowed by law, and that social well-being will incidentally but certainly result from their efforts to further their own self-interest, is definitely anti-Christian.'

(4) The New Testament emphasizes the duty of the society to its members. 'The social order must be tested by the degree in which it secures for each freedom for happy, useful, and untrammelled life, and distributes, as widely and equitably as may be, social advantages and opportunities.' Quite clearly there are problems with regard to infant life, to housing, to the payment of an adequate wage, to unemployment, etc., the responsibility for which lies upon the whole community, and no member of the community can absolve himself from the duty of at least helping to solve them.

3. Even with regard to these principles, about which all Christian people must surely be agreed, the Church needs to give a better witness than it has given in the past. If it were alive to its duty 'it would point out to its members that if they are living idly, whether on charity or on inherited wealth, when they are able to work, they are committing a sin; that luxury and waste in any class of society are not only correspondent to, but largely responsible for, the want and destitution which are a blot on that society, and that this connection of cause and effect needs to be clearly indicated to those concerned. When it saw men making large fortunes out of public necessities it would remonstrate with them. When it saw one class taking advantage of another and more helpless class, it would point out that this was wrong. Nor would the Church confine itself to warnings of a negative character. It would emphasize the duty of strenuous and honest work, the obligation of all men to observe a high standard of honour, of public spirit, and of humanity in their economic transactions, and their moral responsibility for the organisation of industry and for the standard of social life obtaining in the society of which they are members. Above all, it would seek to impress upon them the conviction that industry is a social function carried on for the benefit of the whole community, and would teach them to seek satisfaction, not in evading their share of the common task, but in discharging it more faithfully.'[1]

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Courage!

'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.'—Mt 9^2.

Three times the phrase 'Be of good cheer' is used in the Gospels by Jesus. The literal translation would be 'Courage.' It is the call from despair to hope. It is the incentive to heroism. It is the inspiration to a new awakening.

You will find the passages in Mt 9^2, 'Courage, my son; your sins are forgiven you'; Mt 14^{27}, 'Courage; it is I, have no fear'; and Jn 16^{33}, 'Courage, I have conquered the world.' They are thus spoken to the sinner, to the frightened and wearied, and to the afflicted and persecuted worker. It is the gospel of good cheer as preached by the Founder of the Christian faith.

The classical use of the term in Aristotle and

[1] J. A. Kempthorne, in *Some Christian Essentials of Reconstruction*.

Plutarch means 'Collect yourself; have your wits about you; be ready for action.' That is a warning. Christ's use of the term was an inspiration. The inspiration includes the warning. I would rather have the inspiration with the warning than the warning without the inspiration. That is why Jesus is better than Aristotle. Jesus always inspires, because He is the only teacher in the world who is able to look into the future with hopefulness. And without hope the world falls into a dismal despondency.

1. Christ's first use of the word was to an individual. 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' But for sin the earth would be like heaven. Every age has had its saviour and its panacea. In every case except one the saviour and the panacea have been spelt with a small letter. There has only been one Saviour. Another will never be needed. Christ is the only One who has been able effectively to say—and He waits to say it to you—'Thy sins be forgiven thee.'

Be of good cheer, then, my brother, it is possible for you to rise above your weakness, your passion, your sins. Christ can impart unto you the power to rise above your circumstances, to master yourself, and to transform your troubles into blessings, and to be glad. That is why the Gospel is called 'Glad tidings.' Christ's message to every individual is of forgiveness.

2. The second use of the term is to a select company of men—the disciples, troubled, tired, frightened, as they were pulling their small craft across the boisterous lake in the midnight darkness. But 'He saw them toiling in rowing.' He knew every stroke of the oars, saw every swelling of their muscles, beheld every sweat-drop fall from their perspiring heads. He saw and heeded, though they thought He did not. At the moment when they were about to give up in despair He called out to them, as He also appeared by their side, 'Courage; it is I, be not afraid.'

And there is the promise of the perpetual companionship of the Saviour with those who are doing His will; for those men were in the path of duty; it was for Him they were rowing; they could have turned about and gone with the wind homeward; but they toiled on, and in toiling they 'had the vision splendid.'

Beware, however, of the kind of courage which Peter exhibited when he attempted to walk on the water and sank. Courage is fearlessness and fearlessness with consecrated intelligence is faith. The faith which the presence of Christ always brings is that which 'laughs at impossibilities, and cries it shall be done.'

3. The third use of the term was to a company which represented the human race. 'Courage; I have conquered the world.' That was a daring assertion to make. It was either blasphemy or audacious faith. We know now that it was the audacity of faith. The audacity is seen in that it was made on the very eve of His crucifixion, which in the eyes of the world was the indication of His failure. But with the full knowledge of what Calvary meant He actually in sight of it declared the ultimate success of His mission as if it were an actual realized fact. 'I have overcome.' 'I have conquered the world.' The purpose of it was that as they would be exposed to trials after His departure they should ever remember His exhortation to steadfastness and ever believe in the sure success of their cause.

There you are, then, brothers—dare to be, do, suffer, die, if needs be, but never lose your faith. Meet your trials with gladness, and your tribulation with cheerfulness, and you, too, will be a conqueror who will put Alexander and Caesar and Napoleon to shame. You have already put the Kaiser to shame. 'This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith.'

Now, as conquerors wear the jubilant garb, carry the cheerful countenance, show the exultant spirit, and shame the world's levity. So, by the sacred fulness of your joy, 'Be of good cheer, courage.'[1]

[1] Fred A. Rees, *Honour and Heroism*.