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In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Charles Wesley.

'It is good to sing praises to our God.'—Ps 147[1].

LONG ago the boys of a family used to be thought much more of than the girls. If they were sent to the University their sisters had to stay at home to do sewing or to help to keep the house tidy. But in spite of circumstances some of those girls turned out to be specially fine women, stronger characters, in fact, than their brothers.

So it happened with a baby girl who was born as long ago as 1669. She was the youngest of a very large family. Naturally enough there were no special rejoicings over her birth; now, however, after more than two hundred years she is spoken of as a queen amongst women.

Her name was Susannah. You can quite imagine a girl called Susannah being sedate, grave, and sweet, almost like an old-fashioned Quakeress, can't you? She had a very beautiful face, and was both clever and good. Then she had the intense earnestness of one who really loved God, and what made that earnestness a powerful thing was the fact that she thought things out for herself and stuck to her own opinions.

She became the wife of a clergyman called Samuel Wesley, and, like her mother before her, had a very large family. Two of her boys were called John and Charles. They both became famous men, and owed everything that was best in them to their mother's training.

Although Mrs. Wesley had to toil from morning to night, she never allowed herself to become a household drudge. She buried her talents; but she kept her mind free. We come to know that from the story of the religious meetings she held in the Rectory kitchen. At first only the servants and children came, then some of the neighbours begged to be allowed to join them, until in a short time there were as many as thirty or forty packed into the kitchen. Her husband did not like the idea of her speaking in public; he thought it an unbecoming thing for any woman to conduct such a meeting at all. But by a few very convincing words, such as Susannah Wesley could speak, she succeeded in making him accept the innovation.

Her boy John was about nine at the time. How the sight of his beautiful mother speaking to the country people must have impressed him! It is possible that at one of those home meetings he pledged himself to try to do what was right in the sight of God. Charles was at first not so seriously minded as John. You boys and girls will understand something he said when he was a student—'Diligence led me to serious thinking'—for you know that if we do our work earnestly we are sure to be led to want to know more and more; and then we cannot help thinking seriously about all sorts of things.

Charles Wesley was anything but a prig. He was, in a way, more lovable than his brother John. John was masterful, he could dominate his fellow-students; Charles made his companions love him. He and some of those he had influenced formed themselves into a sort of club. They pledged themselves to live by rule, and to meet frequently for the purpose of helping each other. They would keep all laws with diligence—the Law of God, the law of the Church, the laws of the University. They were nicknamed the 'Godly Club,' but they did not care; they were 'Methodists,' and thus did the term you all know grow out of the meetings Charles Wesley held with his little company. Amongst the original band was Whitefield, who afterwards became the great Methodist preacher. John Wesley too joined, and became a leading spirit. He came to be thought of as a greater preacher than his brother, and in other ways he filled up what Charles lacked. But the real founder of the Methodist body was Susannah Wesley, the toiling mother of the Rectory. Writing to one of her boys when he was at school she said: 'I will tell you what rule I used to observe when I was in my father's house and had as little, if not less, liberty than you have now. I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion. Not that I always spent so much, but I gave myself leave to go so far but no farther. So in all things else; appoint so much time for sleep, eating, company, etc.'

Charles Wesley had a power all his own when he preached. Often he addressed vast crowds in the open air. Sometimes the tears ran down his cheeks as he told the people about the love of

Jesus Christ for poor sinners. And he could make a congregation sing as they had never sung before. No wonder! He gave out hymns that he had written himself; they expressed his own experience in words that were in themselves music, for he was more than a preacher; he was a poet. In those days few of the hymns sung would have interested boys and girls, they would not have enjoyed singing them. But think of a great audience of 15,000 to 20,000 rejoicing in a knowledge of the love of Jesus Christ, joining in such a hymn as

Oh for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise;
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!

Jesus, the Name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

The crowd influenced Charles Wesley as he preached. Sometimes he stopped speaking and asked the people to sing a hymn until his message came to him.

He was one of the immortal hymn-writers of our religion, and he brought to the worship of the eighteenth century the very thing it needed—a note of a 'revival' enthusiasm. The boys and girls must have thought about heaven and the singing there when, standing beside their parents they looked upon a throng such as they had never seen before, and heard singing that was like 'the sound of many waters.'

'He was a great Christian,' said Lord Salisbury after the death of Mr. Gladstone, and so spoke a great friend of Charles Wesley when he passed away.

He loved children else he could not have written the little hymn that is such a favourite with you all. Your fathers and mothers love it too.

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.

Why sit still?

'Why do we sit still?'—Jer 8^{14}.

Perhaps you think this is a funny sort of text and not a bit suitable for boys and girls. There is a question you are much more accustomed to hear, especially if you are very small—'Why do you *not* sit still?' You have been asked to be quiet for a short time while mother tussles with her weekly bills, or father writes a business letter, or big brother works out a difficult sum; and you do try very hard for a minute. But something tickly seems to come in your legs, and before you know it you are fidgeting about on your chair or bobbing on and off it, until the grown-up person says in a rather annoyed tone, 'Can you not keep still for five minutes?' Well, of course you can't. Moving about is just part of the way you grow, and you can no more help moving than you can help growing. The best thing to do is to get something quiet to do, something that won't disturb the big people—a story book to look at, or a dolly to dress, or a puzzle to puzzle out, and then the fidgeting and the bobbing will stop without your knowing it.

And yet I think boys and girls need very much to ask themselves this question, 'Why do we sit still?' Because very often we sit still when we should be jumping up and getting busy.

1. Sometimes we sit still when there is somebody to help, and that is not a good sort of sitting still. The other day I travelled in a tramcar with two well-dressed little girls of ten and twelve. It was a busy hour and the car filled rapidly. By degrees most of us who were young and strong had given up our seats to older people, but these two little girls sat still. At last there entered a sweet, frail old lady with silvery hair and cheeks like a rosy apple, *and the little girls still sat still.* And a quite middle-aged woman with a tired face rose and gave the old lady her seat.

Now I expect these children weren't really selfish or unkind: they just didn't think. But I want you to take trouble to think. Get into the way of looking out for the good turns you can do. You would be surprised how many there are if you just watch for them. Don't sit still if there is an errand to run, or a door to open, or a bundle to carry, or somebody to help out of a difficulty.

There is a fine story told of the Prince of Wales when he was in France with the King a few months after the war began. King George had been reviewing troops at various points, and the Prince had accompanied him wherever he went. One day the King had been distributing decorations to the troops at some distance from General Headquarters. The day was very wet, and before the royal party got back night had fallen.

On the return journey a slight accident befell the Prince's car, but it was able to proceed slowly. By and by it passed a lonely soldier trudging along in the rain without either cap or coat. The Prince at once stopped the car and questioned the man. When he found that the poor fellow had been left behind by a supply train he not only insisted on taking him back to Headquarters in his car, but he gave him his own coat to wear. It is just these little thoughtful kindnesses that have made our Prince so much beloved.

'Tom,' said a father to his lazy son, 'did you ever see a snail?' 'Yes, Father,' said Tom. 'Ah, then you must have *met* it, for you could never have *overtaken* it!' And I'm afraid some of us are slower than snails when there is some little helpful kindness waiting for us to do.

2. But there is another bad way in which we sometimes sit still, and that is in not interfering to prevent wrong or injustice. You would not go the length of tormenting a kitten, or hitting a fellow smaller than yourself, or spreading a nasty story about somebody. But do you try to rescue the kitten the other boy is tormenting, or stand up to the bully who is fighting that little chap, or refuse to listen to an unkind tale? Sometimes we can do as much harm just by sitting still and looking on as by actually doing the hurt.

And, boys and girls, the world is full of wrongs that are waiting to be righted just because people are too selfish, or too lazy, or too comfortable to trouble themselves to rise and right them. Some of these wrongs are waiting for you to deal with. Will you just sit still and let them be, or will you resolve, with God's help, to do your little part to put them right?

The Little Big Things.

'He commanded that something should be given her to eat.'—Mk 5^{43}.

Our text to-day is a wonderful ending to a wonderful story. In some ways it is the most wonderful bit of that wonderful story. I wonder why!

Of course you have all heard the tale. You know how one day whilst Jesus was talking to a crowd of people a man pressed through the throng, and flinging himself at Jesus' feet begged him to come and save his child who was even then dying. His name was Jairus and he was a great man in his own way, for he was what the Jews called a 'ruler' of the synagogue—that is to say, he was chairman at all the church meetings. As the Jews were very proud of their churches and their religion, that meant that he was a much-thought-of man. Some people believe that the synagogue of which he was ruler was the synagogue of which we hear in another miracle—the synagogue which had been built at Capernaum by the Roman centurion whose sick servant Jesus healed. Perhaps Jairus was one of those who pleaded with Jesus on that occasion for the cure of the centurion's servant. Perhaps that was why he came to the Master again when the physicians told him that there was no hope for his child. She was his only child, and we know that he loved her dearly, for when he spoke of his 'little daughter' he used a pet word, a term of endearment—'my little girlie' he really said. He felt sure that even now, although the case was desperate, Christ had but to lay His hand on the child, and at His touch her sickness would pass away, and she would be his healthy, merry, happy little daughter once again.

You remember how Jesus went at once to help, and how the crowd, who were curious to see what would happen, followed. You remember how the procession—for it was almost that—halted because one of the crowd, a woman who had been ill for years, touched the tassel at the corner of Christ's robe and was immediately cured of her illness. You can imagine how impatient the anxious father must have been at the interruption, how he must have said to himself, 'This woman could have waited, but every moment is precious if my child is to be saved.' And whilst Jesus was still speaking to the woman you remember how there came a messenger from the ruler's house saying, 'There is no use troubling the Master further. The child is dead.' It must have been a terrible moment for the poor ruler, when he heard that he was too late. But Jesus, we are told, paid no heed to the words of the messenger. He just said to the ruler, 'Fear not, only believe.' He turned to the crowd and asked them to come no farther, and then he picked out three of His disciples to accompany Him, and went on with the ruler to his home.

He did not need any one to tell Him which was the house, for long before He reached it the cries of the mourners marked it out. In Palestine you must know that when any one died the custom was to announce the death to the neighbourhood by

loud weeping and wailing. So when Christ arrived on the scene He found the usual crowd of friends and neighbours wailing and beating their breasts and lamenting the lost child. To these He said, 'Why do you weep and make such a tumult? The child is not dead, she is only sleeping.' But they laughed Him to scorn. Sleeping indeed! They knew better than that, they did! And so Christ turned out of the house that scoffing unbelieving crowd of men and women, and taking with Him only the three disciples and the child's father and mother He went into the room where she lay.

He took her little cold hand in His warm, strong grasp, and He spoke to her two words, 'Child, arise!' just as your mother sometimes wakens you in the morning with the words, 'Child, it's time to get up.' And at His touch the little girl opened her eyes and sprang up, feeling as well and happy as any of you do when you are called to rise on a sunny summer morning. She was brought back not merely to life. That would have been marvellous enough. But she was brought back to health. She did not have to rise and feel her legs shaky, she did not need to have breakfast in bed for weeks, nor did she require tonics from the chemist and a change of air to make her cheeks rosy. She was absolutely well all in a moment.

Then came what I think the most wonderful bit of the story—the bit we have chosen for our text—Jesus told her father and mother to give her something to eat. Was that more wonderful than bringing her back to life? Yes, in a way it was. You see, when you think that Christ is the great Son of God it seems quite natural that He should perform a splendid miracle. But when you think that He is the great Son of God it seems extraordinary that He should remember that a little sick girl who has been living on practically nothing for days, but who has suddenly become quite well again, must be very hungry. The child's father and mother were so overjoyed and excited that they never thought of anything so ordinary and commonsensical as food. But Jesus, who thought of everything, especially of all the little things that other people considered of no importance, remembered that Jairus' 'little girlie' needed a good meal.

Now I wonder if you have ever noticed that the greatest men the world has known have been the men who remembered the little things that less great men forgot. They were busy all day with big things, but in the midst of their busyness they found time to remember the little things. And it is the little things, after all, which often matter most in life.

To-day there lives in a certain famous Scottish town a certain famous man. If I were to tell you his name you might not recognize it, but some of your fathers and mothers would. Shall I tell you the greatest thing I ever heard about that man? It was what some people would call a very little thing indeed. He was born in a little manse in the Highlands of Scotland. He was the eldest son of the house, and he had a great many brothers younger than himself. They were all very clever, and by and by when they grew up they scattered far and wide over the kingdom. But every year in the summer time they came back for a few weeks to their little old home, for they had a mother whom they all dearly loved. They spent those weeks fishing, golfing, cycling, walking, or lazing in the sun; and they all had a jolly time together. But it was the greatest and most famous among them who remembered the little things. He took off his coat and he mowed the lawn. He got the shears from the tool shed and he trimmed the privet hedge. A visitor remarked to his mother how neat the garden looked. 'Oh yes,' she replied, with a smile, 'that's Robert. The others never think of little things like that, *but he always remembers.*'

Boys and girls, Christ always remembers. Shall we remember too?

The Christian Year.

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

The Old Testament and the New.

'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.'—He 1[1].

In what respects is the redeemed life enjoyed in Christianity a greater and higher thing than Old Testament faith at its most advanced point? The following considerations seem worthy of special note:

1. There is a new certainty of God. The assurance of God's almighty love conveyed through Jesus, and specifically through His death and triumph, is much more than the conditional certainty (as we may call it) which was all that Hebrew saints attained to. The opening verses of

Psalm ciii. give incomparable expression to the gratitude and trust of the devout heart; but it is permissible to feel that if the writer had had his family massacred, or had been carried off into exile, his consciousness of Divine favour, and quite definitely of Divine forgiveness, would have been seriously undermined. But the fact of Christ has given men 'boldness and access'—the joyful mood of those who have been completely reconciled to God. They have received an initial and irrefragable assurance of God's love which can be laid down once for all as the foundation of life. How far Christians have been able to live at this level is another story; but what differentiates the New Testament from all other books is that there we envisage the believed facts which released this triumphant gladness in men's hearts; we also see some men—St. Paul is one—whose faith was truly worthy of the glorious revelation by which he was confronted. It is significant that the New Testament contains nothing like the Book of Job. Something has happened to make men sure of the Father.

2. In consequence, fear of the world has vanished. Not that the Hebrew sense of human fragility is gone; even St. Paul can shudder for a passing moment at the thought of death, of being, as he puts it, 'unclothed.' But that frail sense of weakness in presence of the world and its destructive powers is swallowed up and lost in the exulting conviction that God's redemptive energies cannot ever be frustrated by any tragic fault of man or nature. The resurrection of Jesus, which must always be construed as morally correlative to His perfect trust in God, is a test case; it has revealed immortality in being; it is felt as exhibiting the Divine Love as omnipotently victorious, in a crucial instance, over all hostile forces, death and demons equally; it is under the canopy of this Love that the believer now lives, and not the believer only but the whole world. Christians were fortunate in having *perceived* this love, and taken in the wonder of it; but once seen to be there, it was objectively real and active, blessing the entire family of mankind. If even the Crucifixion could be transmuted into a medium of universal good, love, the apostles felt, was at the heart of things. Not even God could change the past fact of Jesus' death or abolish the wickedness of those who caused it; but He could change its value, and its value *was* changed radically when men came in faith to interpret it as the sublime manifestation of Divine Love mediated through utter human fidelity. A new light thus fell upon the omnipotence of God, which gave mastery over the world.

3. The hope of a blessed future life is carried on to its completion. The new disclosure of God necessarily reacted upon eschatology; for in view of the Father a present redemption must contain implicitly the promise not of its perpetuation merely but of its perfecting.

The Christian Gospel of immortality put first things first. It laid its finger on communion with God, experienced here and never to be broken, and including as part of its own implicit meaning the promise of life everlasting. Apart from this, nothing more than survival (which many faiths have offered) can be looked for, not life in perfected form. What Scripture fixes on is the centrality of God, as the Father who will not let His children go; and the implications of this for dying men. The one question that interests Christianity is whether men do or do not attain to the destiny contained for them in Christ. It is a destiny no human powers can achieve, but we may have it as a Divine gift. And the future existence is not, as in so many eschatologies, conceived as a mere prolongation of earth. Both ethically and teleologically it is a glorified and transformed type of being, from which all moral hindrances and antagonisms have been eliminated. Thus the Christian hope closely resembles the Platonic in its keen feeling for the intrinsically unsatisfying nature of the present world; it differs by refusing to reject the finite, which, it holds, must be the medium and element through which we realize and enjoy the infinite and eternal.

It would, of course, be vain to argue that Christianity was the first to teach a blessed future life. Hebrew faith, more especially in post-canonical writers, had developed its devout individualism in a sublime form of eschatology. But the Christian hope was bound to gain through the new grasp of the Father. The contents of hope itself were enriched, and certainly not less the grounds on which it rested. Jesus' own belief in immortality is a fact of the very first magnitude; He who knew God best and loved Him as no other has done, was surest of the life to come. As already noted, His victory over the grave, and His revelation of Himself to believers as the Living One

must be construed as furnishing the crucial instance of what may be called immortality in being. In principle, this broke the destructive forces of nature at their most formidable point of incidence, and inaugurated a new career for those whom the Father has in His keeping.[1]

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

'Not of Yourselves.'

'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.'—Eph 2^8.

The Apostle is speaking about salvation. It is a great word. It is the word of the Gospel. The Gospel of Christ is a gospel of salvation. And throughout the New Testament three things are said about it—we need to be saved, every one has to see to his own salvation, no one can save himself.

1. We need to be saved. It is true that there are those amongst us who are fairly contented with things as they are; they have not awakened to their need for anything higher. But no one can call this earthly life ideal, and there are many in whom the longing for a better and nobler one becomes the master craving of the soul. Some live basely, brutishly, exploiting their fellows, increasing the sum of human misery for their own selfish ends, indulging in the lusts of the flesh, and loving the things of this world; but there are others whose gaze is ever wistfully fixed upon eternity, and who earnestly long for deliverance to come. But death will not bring it. Death might be the end of everything, but it would not be deliverance in the sense our higher nature prays for. What we want is emancipation from what we are as well as from what we suffer; and, apart from this, death would only be the utter and final defeat of all that is good in our experience and aspirations. How we yearn for perfect freedom, perfect life, perfect love, perfect good, perfect bliss! How ashamed we are of yielding to sin, and yet how impossible it is to shake off the yoke! How we want to be clean before God, to have done with the burden of the evil past, and rise into perfect oneness, unbroken harmony, with the eternal good!

2. Every one has to see to his own salvation. 'I remember,' says R. J. Campbell, 'being much struck many years ago on first reading Newman's *Apologia* with one remarkable personal confession it contained. Referring to 1843, when, as the distinguished author says, he was on his death-bed as regarded his membership of the Church of England, he was appealed to, very naturally, by some of his old friends and followers for guidance as to what they ought to do. His reply to the reproach that he refused to give such guidance is that at the time in question his first concern was the salvation of his own soul, and that until he knew where he was about that he was not in a state to advise other people. Those words made me think. I cannot say that I agreed with them; rather I viewed them with disapproval; but I should not do so now. I am convinced that Newman was right, and that the first business of any man is his soul's salvation. This is growing clearer to me as I grow older, notwithstanding the fact that such large numbers of people at the present day seem altogether indifferent to the subject.'

3. Now it is obvious that only two ways can be suggested of securing this salvation. One is our own persevering effort, and the other is the operation of Divine grace. There is a place for both, but the former is helpless without the latter. You might as well talk of a deaf and dumb child becoming a member of cultivated society by his own efforts; the efforts are needed, but would be quite useless if no intelligent guidance were forthcoming to stimulate the mental faculties into activity and overcome the sense disability.

When intellect and moral endeavour combined have done their utmost this still remains a disappointing world. Human nature cannot save itself; it can only be saved by the incoming of God in spontaneous redemptive action, breaking through all barriers and lifting His lost child back to Himself. We cannot earn this grace; we can but receive it. If the soul can rise no higher than morality can take it, it will never look upon the face of God; but by faith in the regenerating power of the living Christ it can ascend to the highest heights of the life Divine and enter upon the eternal glory.

Nothing we can do can win us the life eternal; it must be a free gift or we cannot enter into it. The proudest achievement of human intellect, the most rigid adherence to human standards of excellence, fail us here. It is a thing in itself, inaccessible to anything but faith; it comes to us, we do not climb to it. A thousand miles is just as far

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

from infinity as half an inch; a millionaire is no nearer being of royal blood than a pauper. It is of the grace of God, and not otherwise, that we arrive at the goal which is beyond and above all questions of merit and demerit, good and evil, right and wrong, beyond and above morality itself. We accept the righteousness of Christ, we never can earn it.

Naked come to Thee for dress,
Helpless look to Thee for grace.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Salvation by Grace.

'By grace are ye saved through faith.'—Eph 2^8.

The verse tells us what grace does. It is not sometimes quite realized that grace does anything. It is sometimes regarded as a sweet sentiment, a soft disposition, a smile of good nature. But that is an absolute caricature. 'Grace,' it has been well said, 'is not the shimmering face of an illumined lake whose waters are still; it is the sunlit majesty of an advancing sea.' It is a thing with mighty force in it—the outgoing energy of God.

1. What then does it do? 'By grace are ye saved.' Very striking is St. Paul's emphatic reiteration of this truth. He is not content to state it once or twice, or even thrice. First, he says, 'By grace are ye saved,' and then he puts it negatively—'not of yourselves.' Even this is not enough. 'It is the gift of God,' he adds, and as if to make assurance doubly sure he turns to the negative side once more, 'not of works lest any man should boast.' What produced in the Apostle this so strong a conviction? It was his own spiritual experience. If ever any man sought to earn salvation by his zeal for righteousness, it was St. Paul. But all that he did proved ineffectual. 'The commandment which was unto life he found to be unto death.' Nay, in his exceeding zeal he had been led into the greatest sin of his life—his furious opposition to Jesus Christ. Then came the great astonishing act of grace—Christ confronting him on the road, not in wrath, but in tender reproachfulness and gracious appeal. That saved him. It was not his own doing. It was due entirely to the grace of God. And not that only, but all that followed—every impulse, every effort of that consecrated life of unrivalled enthusiasm, St. Paul knew that he owed to grace. 'By the grace of God I am what I am. I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me.'

2. What is the means by which grace does what it does? We speak about the energy and potency of grace, and compare it to the flowing of a mighty tide. Have we then nothing in our own hands? Are we saved as a child might be who is caught up by the incoming tide and flung gently on some soft, sandy shore? No, indeed. Not so is any man saved. There is still another of Christianity's great words in this brief text. 'By grace are ye saved through faith.' By grace through faith. 'Theological subtleties,' does some one say? Not at all. There is nothing more subtle here than there is in our daily experience. Here is a Friend who comes to you lovingly, graciously, reaching down to you in your need. By His grace you might be saved from your trouble. But something is needed to change 'might be' into 'shall be.' What is it? Your response, of course; your trust, your hand stretched out to the proffered hand from above. You must needs believe in your gracious Friend, incline to Him, confide in Him. Should you hold back in sheer distrust and keep your heart closed to the grace that has visited you, it cannot do you any real good. By grace through faith. Here to-day is salvation possible by grace. For hither has come the Saviour Friend—down to the lowest and most forlorn. It might be. Shall it be? 'According to thy faith,' He says, and waits. The rest remains with us.[1]

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Power of the Spirit.

'With the Holy Ghost and with power.'—Ac 10^{38}.

The language of the New Testament bears witness to the sense of power and victory which possessed the company of believers in Jesus. To believe in Jesus, the living and enthroned Lord, was to be straightway endowed with the Spirit of God; and that means Divine, supernatural, irresistible power. Three ranges of action are manifest in the New Testament account of the operations of the Spirit.

1. It is bestowed, in the first instance, for Evangelism (Ac 1^8, 2^4). To the end of the New

[1] R. Sangster Anderson.

Testament period, evangelism is always represented as a direct inspiration of the Spirit, being, apart from that, wholly ineffective. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, because it is not theory or guesswork, but is the love of God, once incarnate in Jesus, and now clothed in human speech, but instinct with the same Divine energy.

2. It becomes within the witnessing Church the source of gifts, to be used in the propagation of the Gospel (1 Co $2^{3.4}$; He $2^{3.4}$). Various lists of these 'gifts' are to be found in the New Testament. But their contents and the way they are introduced show that they are not meant to be exhaustive, nor intended to be stereotyped into a standard for the Church in all subsequent ages. The Spirit will impart 'gifts' according to need, to all who are wholly devoted to the ministry of the Gospel. They are not given as a substitute for conscientious toil, and have nothing to do with magic. Yet no one who believes that Divine Power is at the service of Divine Love will limit his expectations of help to the measure of the conventional and commonplace. To live in the Spirit is to inhabit a realm where Love is triumphant and works wondrously.

3. The power of the Spirit, however, finds its noblest and most characteristic expression in fitting human life to be the manifestation and the instrument of the Great Salvation. To believe in Jesus and to receive the Spirit are coincident experiences. The Christian life is the life of faith; it is also, synonymously, life in the Spirit. Life in the Spirit, accordingly, is not a luxury. It is a duty. We owe it to the Lord, whose purchased boon the Spirit is, that we decline not His peculiar benefit. Nay, it is a necessity; for there is neither life nor salvation without the Spirit.

No doubt the condition is hard. Legalism, wherever we find it, is an easier process than living in the Spirit. It is far easier to live by a code than to live in such habitual dependence on the Spirit, that, in being free from the Law, we are wholly subject to God, and quickened and controlled by Him. No doubt, too, there are dangers in the high adventure of the Christian salvation, which are escaped by those who content themselves within the barriers of Law. But there can be no doubt that the Salvation itself consists in the reception of the Spirit. Many difficulties and dangers beset those who are afraid to venture upon life in the power of the Spirit of Jesus. All the manifestations of the Spirit are revelations of Jesus. Who would be afraid of Him? To live in the Spirit is to form one of the Jesus circle. He is in the midst, the Bridegroom of the human soul, never more to be taken away from us. To have Jesus with us, and to have His Spirit in us, mean the same thing.

There is no excuse for half-heartedness, and fears that are born of unbelief. We may venture on any duty, and enter into any trial, confident that the Spirit of Jesus will not fail us. The note of the Spirit, accordingly, is Joy. Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit, 'thrilled with joy' (Lk 10^{21}). The Kingdom of God is 'righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit' (Ro 14^{17}). 'The Holy Spirit is a glad spirit' (Hermas). How much we have missed! How deeply we have grieved the Spirit of Jesus![1]

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Christian Life.

'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.'—2 Ti 4^{7}.

The Christian life is a battle, and a march, and a siege; and we find just three principles that cover those aspects in the passage before us.

1. First of all then, because I have enlisted and given myself wholly to Christ as a soldier, I am committed to the fact there is going to be a battle. That does not mean mutiny. Why will people think that we mean only the fight that goes on within when we talk of battle? The fight within is claimed as a victory from Christ, and is settled by His Lordship, and by the maintenance of Him on the throne by the influence of the Spirit of God. But when that is said and done, you are only then ready for that for which you were enlisted as a soldier. This general in Christ's army is not talking of mutinies within the camp; he is talking of the enemies outside.

2. The Christian life is a march. Now this is a very important thing, because it touches, not an exception of life, but its ordinary levels. This man says: 'I have finished my course.' Well, to finish a course is a very great thing. Do not underrate the physical strains of the road. Only a soldier knows how severe a test of morale it is for an army to go through a heavy march, and to

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

come out, if not fresh, at least determined. There is no romance about marching. There is not the excitement of fighting; there is not the exhilaration, even though it be red with blood, of a charge, or the stimulus of 'going over the top,' fearful as that experience is. There is just the dusty way, when every inch counts, and every ounce of equipment tells; when there is sniping along the road, and it cannot be replied to, and there is shelling of the guns all round; but you have to keep going steadily forward, just because those are your orders and the ground must be covered. Under such conditions one man who means to finish the course is worth much.

During an advance along one of the most dangerous roads in the war in Flanders, when men were getting a little restive because of the heaviness of the fire, a gaunt figure in khaki was seen stalking unconcernedly up the middle of the road. Some of the men asked who that was. And the reply of the others was: 'That is our padre.' It was heartening to those men who were getting restive under fire to see that there was one who could go right on, staying the course, and showing them the way to finish their march.

3. But Christianity is not only a battle, and a march. It is a siege. There is fighting pluck wanted for the siege, and there is also staying power. There are some who are exhilarated in the fight, and are supported on the march, but flag in the siege. Doubts and hesitations enwrap them, and the privations get on their nerves. There are in life experiences which correspond to the siege. Times when you are hemmed round are hard to bear. You can go forward in the march; but in the siege you cannot. There are crises when you are brought to a standstill, and, although you know that God is overhead, you feel that man is all round. In days like that, faith is sometimes tempted to flag. Do you not hate the restrictions, and chafe under the needless fences that pen you in and rob you of your freedom?

Remember that picture in the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool of the sentry at Pompeii. The ashes are falling all about him; the reflection of the flames from the volcano and the burning houses is reddening his face; but he is gazing upward from them with steadfast look. He can die; but he cannot desert. He will not give in. And we will not either. There are times when we have to stick at our posts, even though we are hemmed in, and there seems no way out. These are crises that come not only upon our outward circumstances; but they play upon our characters. What control, what strength the siege develops! Your supplies are cut off. The sweet things of life are rationed and reduced. Yet guard the faith. Don't give in. Take the kind of test the telephone girl has to stand. A sudden call, and an answer, and many more to follow. And some are polite, and some are ill-tempered. And there is the desire to let go and answer back. That is a siege. One of the things that the Bell Telephone Company seeks to do is to 'cultivate the voice with the smile.' It is a great ideal. Other people may be hanging upon your holding out in your siege. You do not know how long it may last, but you must hold on. Remember Tennyson's 'Defence of Lucknow':

'Hold it for fifteen days!' We have held it for eighty-seven!
And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew.

The Work of the Holy Spirit.

By the Reverend Arthur C. Hill, M.A., Glasgow.

The Holy Spirit is the permeating energy of God. We speak of the Spirit as personal because the power that creates personal emotions must be similar in kind—though infinitely greater in degree—to that which it creates. Of course the Spirit is always present in the world, just as God has ever been in the midst of creation. Equally, of course, His inspiration is always directed to the effectual awakening of the soul, to nourishing it in all things holy, to preparing it for whatever task is laid upon man. Is it said that we use finite figures to set forth the infinite? That is true, but the need