

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Bible Student* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bible-student_01.php

The Earnest—His pledge of future blessing.

The Unction—His instruction in the truth.

The Filling—His control of life and service.

May we all learn more and more of what the gift of the Spirit means to us as individuals. Let us see ourselves as the instruments He uses to carry out His activities. When fully yielded to Him we are conscious of His mighty power in our lives. Let us rejoice in the astounding fact of His indwelling us, and its implications, even though we cannot understand it. Then truly will 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all' (2 Cor. 13:14).

'TOUCHED OF GOD'

W. WILCOX

Of the number of 'means' of communication between one person and another perhaps none is more tender than the touch of one upon the other. The touched one immediately responds to the one who touches, and a sense of well-being floods the soul.

Such also is the response of the soul that is touched of God, a touch no less real by lack of the normal sense of feeling and sight. Indeed the spiritual sensitiveness may be more acute than the natural, and the spiritual response more vital in its results than is obtained by the physical. A sense of spiritual blessedness, of power, or of union with the divine may be productive of results which shall bring untold good to many.

Here deep calls unto deep, and the communicable powers of the One are channelled to the other through the loving touch of that One.

Of the several instances in which such a touch wrought great change in the one touched, we may note three, one being the touch of the Lord Jesus, and the other two that of God or of His angels.

1. Touched to See. Matt. 17:7

Fear having seized the hearts of the three disciples who had accompanied the Lord up the Mount of Transfiguration, they had fallen on their faces, and hence saw nothing of the glorious vision before them.

(a) *Blurred Vision.* How often fear so paralyses us that our vision becomes blurred, and we see 'earthly things' only, when, with lifted eye, we might be gazing upon His glorious face.

These men who had companied with Jesus for so long seemed not yet to understand that He, being from Heaven, was constantly in touch with heaven, so that these visitants from the beyond, need not to be looked upon as unexpected and therefore evoking fear, but as the normal to Him Who was the Son of God from heaven. Had not the heavenly hosts heralded His birth, and the voice spoken from heaven at His baptism, and now that voice had broken the barrier between the heavenly and earthly scenes again, and also Moses and Elias had appeared talking with Him.

But they did not understand, and their faces are to the ground, and they saw only dust! What of ourselves? Is our vision limited to the ground, to the earthly, to the dust? If so, what is the reason?

Sin in the life may lead to the blurred vision as when Achan saw the goodly garment, and the shekels of silver and the wedge of gold, and took and hid them, the vision of the promised inheritance in the land receded, and he looked only upon the immediate gain, greedily grasped it and hid it in his tent. Let not sin dangle its pleasant prospects before the eyes and so rob you of that vision of glory which He holds before you.

Fear of the unexpected may blur the vision as in the case of the disciples in this passage. 'Let not your hearts be troubled neither be afraid', said our Lord to His disciples ere He went to the Cross.

Pre-occupation with the things of this life may blur the vision as when Peter sought fish instead of waiting for his risen Lord, or as when Demas went back to the world, having a love for it.

(b) *Brightened Vision.* 'Jesus came and *touched* them, and lifting up their eyes they saw'. The touch of their Lord wrought a great change, causing them to lift their eyes, so that no longer

were their eyes earth-bound, but glory filled, as they rested on Him.

That touch banished their fear, cleansed them from self-desires, and removed from them their pre-occupation with earthly things. May we not also feel that touch with its communicated power to lift the eye and see Him!

It was the touch of the glorified Jesus that so helped them to rise from dust to glory. It was the touch of the heavenly Man, Who communicated with heavenly visitants about the fulfilment of heavenly purposes, which led them to see heaven's values as of more worth than earthly ones. It was the touch of Him of Whom heaven had spoken saying "This is My beloved Son".

To us in this dispensation there comes the touch of the risen Christ, glorified and exalted, Who by His Spirit, seeks to shape our loves to divine ends, and to make us substitute heaven's values for our earthly ones.

(c) *Blessed Vision*. 'They saw no one save Jesus only'. Their former heroes, their lawgiver and prophet fade into the background as they see their Lord alone.

Later, Peter says of this scene, 'We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty for He received from God the Father honour and glory'. His Majesty, His Honour, His Glory—Jesus only. These are the eternal verities with which the touched life is concerned. Nothing else can so fill the soul with blessedness and spiritual well-being.

The disciples left at the foot of the mount saw only the kingdom of darkness enslaving a soul and their ineffectiveness in dealing with it. In the mount the three had seen the Kingdom of Heaven emancipating men from earth-bound elements and had felt the touch of power and love lifting their eyes to Him. Which of these two groups is illustrative of our present experience! The former often is so, the latter should always be the joyous fact in which we can glory.

2. Touched to Speak. Jer. 1:9

Jeremiah is being commissioned to go to Judah with the message of God, but pleads his inability to speak owing to his

being but a youth. But God comes in and touches his mouth enabling him to speak in His Name.

(a) *Commissioned* to go as sent, and speak as commanded. Herein lies the secret of true Ministry in the Lord's Name. So often is it overlooked and men go where they desire and speak as they think best with results that are frequently the reverse of what they should have been.

To know where He would send, and what He would have spoken, necessitates living in closest touch with Him, to have an ear opened to catch the accents of His voice, and to have a sensitiveness to feel the slightest pressure of His touch indicating His approval of the course being taken or His leading into a different way.

(b) *Constrained* to be unafraid. Again, as in so many instances in the Word, the command is given to be not afraid and here in particular it is that he should be unafraid of their faces, i.e., unafraid to stand before them, unafraid of their opposition, and even unafraid of their persecution.

This lack of fear could only arise from a real conviction that the Lord had sent him and that he was charged with the Lord's message. It is here sometimes that failure finds its root cause. A lack of conviction results in a message without true substance, without real power, and without any worthwhile issue.

(c) *Companioned* with One Who promises to deliver. He who goes forth in the Lord's Name goes forth not alone, He Who sends has pledged that He will be *with* the sent one and that, not as a mere passive companion, but as One Who is ever ready to deliver in such way as will be best for the purpose in hand.

Similarly the Lord Jesus in sending forth His disciples ends His commission with the promise, 'Lo, I am with you day by day'; this promised Presence of the Lord lightens many a heavy task, brightens many a dreary way, and strengthens many a flagging resolve.

(d) *Controlled* as the Lord puts His words into his mouth. Even the Lord Jesus declared that the words that He spake were not His own words but those of the Father Who sent Him.

How much more should the servant of the Lord be careful that the words he speaks are those of Him Who sends him.

3. Touched to Understand. Dan. 9:21

Here the man of God is touched by the angel Gabriel, so that he might have understanding of the visions given him and of the times which were yet to come.

(a) *A Right Time*—it came at the end of the evening oblation when the heart was engaged in that deepest of its exercises, its worship of God. Perhaps, at no time are we more sensible of that touch of the Divine, than when we are gathered in that solemn act of worship at the Lord's Table. There are other seasons of worship, it is true, but at this time we seem to sense His Presence and be conscious of His touch as at none other.

Let the saviour of this offering ascend unto the Lord and He will tenderly touch and graciously presence Himself with the offerer.

(b) *A Right Attitude*. Daniel was not only offering his worship but he was praying and confessing his sin. In our awareness of His Presence we shall be most conscious of our own failing, for His holy nature will ever make more manifest our unholiness and cause us to flee to Him Who alone is able to cover us with His righteousness and so make us able to stand before the Divine.

Perhaps we are too reluctant to confess our sins. We speak in a general way and say we are sinners and have sinned, but hardly feel the burden of individual wrongs we have committed and therefore fail to confess them. But only in such confession can we expect forgiveness.

'If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

(c) *A Right State of Soul*. 'Thou art greatly beloved', or, as the R. V. Margin, 'very precious'. Thus he is regarded by the God Whom he serves, and therefore God is giving him the knowledge of the times and the understanding thereof that another has coveted but been unable to obtain. We are 'Accepted in the Beloved' as a result of our being 'in Christ', but our being in Him involves moral obligations that we cannot shelve. There

must be correspondence at every point to the enviroing medium. If we be in Christ then we are to be like Him, to walk as He walked and to love as He loved.

In the intimacy of the soul with God thus manifested will there be possible this communication of further knowledge and deep understanding of His ways and purposes, and that understanding is not for our own benefit only, but for the benefit and blessing of those to whom we are sent.

Let us note from these examples that the touched life can never be the same as it was ere that touch was felt. Sinful ways cannot be the habit of life, selfish ends can no longer be diligently pursued, and spineless ideals can not allure the soul from those purposive ways in which God would lead His people. For that life is a cleansed life, cleansed from its old ways and its selfish interests, cleansed to be 'meet for the Master's use'. That life is charged with a new dynamic; the communicated power of the risen Lord is in that touch; the will constrained to ever blessed obedience to the guidance of the Spirit is found by that touch. It is a life which burns itself out for God, which blesses itself in blessing others and which brings to itself that deeper knowledge of divine purposes as it keeps vigil with its God.

STUDIES IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15

H. C. HEWLETT

5. The Day of Victory (1 Cor. 15:50-58)

The teaching of the chapter now reaches its climax. Rich has been its unfolding of the resurrection of Christ, and then that of 'they that are Christ's at His Coming'. But there will be many still alive at that Coming who are equally His. They, too, must be brought into the same blessing as that reached by risen saints, and hence Paul goes on to describe the change that will take place in them at that day. This is a revelation peculiar to the New Testament. The germ of the doctrine is in the words of the Lord to Martha: 'And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall