

had he seen it, and which M. Oppert has pronounced one of the most difficult to decipher among the many records of the past.

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A STUDY IN THE CONNEXION OF DOCTRINES.

GALATIANS ii. 20.

GREAT is the interest of this verse, alike to the student of the spiritual history of St Paul and to the reverent investigator of revealed truth at large. Here is the great Apostle of Justification in the midst of one of his main treatments of the subject, a treatment full of the force and absoluteness of statement called out by special circumstances of peril to the truth in hand. Well, he opens up to us, in passing, out of the depths of his own experience of revealed certainties, and in strong and living coherence with the main truth before him, something also of the central secret of the inner life in Christ and by Christ. And accordingly, as we look through St Paul's experience at the eternal truths for which alone it is recorded, we have given us here the thought that the Divine gifts of our acceptance in Christ and of holiness through Christ's life in us, are things which lie vitally together, in the plan of God and in the experience of the disciple. "Christ liveth **IN** me; Who gave Himself **FOR** me."

I attempt no examination of the entire passage. The words just quoted are, for the present purpose, its essence. The **IN**-ness and the **FOR**-ness of Christ, in their connexion, here is our immediate and sufficient study. I attempt it with a humble sense of the depths that surround it, and well remembering that every action of the Christian's mind is to be carried on under recognition of the presence and in-

dwelling of the Lord Christ. Let this chasten and humble the whole enquiry.

The two great ideas whose connexion we have in view can scarcely be disputed as facts (apart from *minutiæ* of theory) by any student who completely and cordially SUBMITS to the authority of Scripture. Christ is IN the believing man, in such a sense that there is not only sympathy between the two, sympathy of the kind quite common between man and man, but organic spiritual connexion, vital union. Such is this union, whose act of contact and coherence on our side is faith, that it is figured and illustrated in Scripture by the strongest and intensest sorts of material coherence; and we may be very sure that the illustration is not more strong and solid than the thing. My connexion, as a believing man, with Christ is not less intense and vivifying and penetrating, but more, than that of my limbs with my head, with myself. Little as I can analyse and define in such a matter, I can be largely certain that in a sense far more than figurative the life of the exalted Christ is *solidaire* with mine, pervades and possesses me, who am "joined to Him" (1 Cor. vi. 17) by the *nexus* (on my side) of accepting trust. Certain schools of mystic theology may have pushed, may still push, this side of spiritual fact out of proportion; into a place and scale which Scripture abundantly corrects. But all the more is it necessary to recognise and hail the truth *within* its proper sphere, unless we wish to take the surest means of giving a strong impetus to the related illusion. The Risen One lives, in a sense very far transcending metaphor, IN His people. He does not cancel their personality, but, with the power that can "subdue all things unto Himself," He annexes it, may we say, to His own, and pervades it with His Life. "The Life of Jesus is manifested," comes out from an indwelling latency, "in their mortal flesh."

And this profound connexion exists not anywhere but within the sphere of faith. Actually, as to experience, biography, individual result, it subsists not between Christ and men, but between Christ and believing men. I am well aware how much has been said, with deep moral earnestness, on the other side. I know that Gal. i. 16, has been explained to mean that the Son of God was always "in" Paul, and that Paul's conversion was but the discovery and realization of the latent fact. But I venture to traverse this theory with the deliberate plea, urged, I trust, in the spirit of entire submission to Scripture, that the drift of Scripture is another way. On the whole, Scripture contemplates men as dead, devoid of Divine life, till they enter into Christ. Their initial need is not to awake to the fact of in-ness, but to attain it. And our in-ness in Christ and Christ's in-ness in us are viewed in Scripture as coincident and correspondent facts.

There is a something, then, in the mystery of things, in the reason of spiritual things, which ties the fact of the in-ness of Christ in me to the fact of my "believing on His name;" if the main evidence of Scripture is really to rule the case. So much, in brief indication, on the side of the fact, and the conditions, of "IN-NESS."

Again, and in the same way, the FOR-ness of Christ for believing men is given as a spiritual fact in Scripture; such "FOR-ness" that, in a sense which by no means asks to be elaborately explained away, He "BORE their SINS." And if submission to scriptural thought and phrase is to be our rule, can we doubt that "to bear sins" means to suffer by way of penalty for them? A study of the phrase "sin bearing," in its usage throughout Scripture, appears to be decisive on this point. The scriptural idea of the phrase is not that of sympathetic entrance into the wrong of the offender's act, or into the justice of the displeasure of the offended person. It is that of penal suffering, endurance of retribution, for

the act done. And Christ bore our sins in this sense. No student of Atonement doctrine can forget for a moment the controversies that have gathered round that phrase. But I humbly venture to say that very many such discussions would have been precluded by a complete *submission* to Scripture as final authority, which was the attitude of our Lord; and that very many more would have been precluded by a deeper view of the connexion of doctrines, instead of a pursuance of the question as if Atonement truth could be studied quite alone, in isolation; isolation for instance, from the revealed fact of an "eternal covenant."

I may say in passing that when I speak of the "for-ness" of Christ for "believing men," I by no means intend that there is no such thing as His "for-ness" for MAN. But I hold that the two ideas belong, in a sense, to different planes, or lines, of truth. And I am speaking now in the line which concerns actual and individual grant and possession; of that aspect of God's Will in which that Will is seen in what takes place in fact. Those who are in this sense, personally, biographically, accepted before God because of the atoning work of Christ FOR us, are those who "believe on His name." When we come out of the region of undistributed to that of distributed purposes and effects of the atoning Work, then surely, if (I repeat it) we submit out and out to Scripture, we come to a view of the Atonement in which it avails for the acceptance of the believing Church alone.

All this, meanwhile, claims to be held in the chastened remembrance, that we have revealed to us not the whole of His ways, but parts. The plan of salvation is not a map finished to the very edge, with latitude and longitude complete. It is a map; it has its definiteness and precision. But it is still *bordered* with the cloud of multifold mystery *around*.

The "in-ness" and the "for-ness" of Christ, in and for

His people, are thus, then, given facts of the Scriptures. How may we, in some brief indications, trace their connexion? Certainly not by a process of *fusion*. Some important schools and venerable names have adopted more or less completely that exposition. It has been suggested that the indwelling Lord is Himself, as such, the reason of the acceptance of His people. The Father is well pleased with them because the Son is in them. The incumbrances and defects of their present state, their sinfulness and their sins, are to be met, for acceptance, on this line. One singular, I had almost said beautiful, refinement of theory maintains that the Eternal Eyes see the believer, possessed by the indwelling of his Lord, not as he is, but as he will be in the sphere of glory, if the work runs out to its ideal issues. He to Whom there is no time, sees what to us is the bud as already the flower, and smiles accordingly with entire acceptance on what is still, within its own limits and experience, only a bud. There is much to criticise in detail here. But there is one broad fact which seems to cross the scheme decisively; its failure to recognise the claims of the LAW of God. In the whole theory one misses that of which Scripture is full to overflowing, not the recognition merely but the jealous vindication of the sanctity and awful authority of the holy Law, the Law viewed as no mere sequence of spiritual phenomena, but as the "categorical imperative" of the eternal King and Judge. Too often, and in many fields of theological thought, this discrepancy with the tone and proportion of Scripture has to be deplored; a tendency to "dwell upon the beauty of virtue, but less upon its duty;" a large recognition of sin as disease and discord, but a far fainter recognition of it as GUILT, as the thing which the Law inexorably and eternally condemns and sentences to penal death. Hence the possibility of a theory which, in effect, meets the demands of the Law, in the case of the Christian in whom Christ dwells, by a fact,

most sacred indeed, but wholly of the sphere of Life, not of the sphere of Law at all. The Law must be met lawfully. It must be met by either absolute obedience, or absolute satisfaction, of the legal kind. The Divine Indwelling itself, infinitely holy, precious, and efficacious, cannot meet this need, for it is a thing of another sphere. What can meet it but "the obedience of the One" ? (Rom. v. 19).

The connexion of "in-ness" and "for-ness," then, cannot be traced by a process of fusion of the truths, or by making one the equivalent of the other.

May it not be stated, or indicated, with reverence, thus ? The Lord suffered ; therefore His people, His Church, are dealt with by the supreme Law, for eternal purposes, as having suffered ; as having yielded perfect satisfaction to the Law. Why ? We say "why" with a full recognition of the inscrutableness of many of the conditions of the fact, and in a spirit prepared to believe revelation even where it cannot see reasons. But this much of reason we surely can see (reason apprehended far more fully and strongly by the theology of the early centuries, and again of the sixteenth and seventeenth, than commonly now), that the "imputation" of merit runs upon lines *at once* of Law and of Life. It attaches not to *any* parties, but to those who are in a contact, vital, organic, real, with the obeying and satisfying Person, their Lord and Head. Where the Merit of Christ actually adheres, there the Life of Christ actually inheres, and *vice versâ*. Within the organism of His true Church, which is the sphere also of the "eternal covenant," there is nothing, no branch, no limb, that has not part in the two distinct but concurrent blessings, the Merit and the Life. Participation in the Life, participation of the kind we have tried in earlier paragraphs to indicate, carries with it at least a profound suggestion *how* the Head can so suffer beneath the stroke of the Law as that the judicial effects shall pass on to the Members. The imputation loses all

character of a "legal fiction," while yet it remains a fact essentially legal, when the solidarity of the Head and of the Members, their solidarity in a sense not conventional but real, is taken into account. The mystery of the matter doubtless is that the Head and the Members are not personally identical. But this is, to say the least of it, *relieved* by the other mystery, which is a fact of revelation, that the Head and the Members are "one spirit."

It is the province and work of Faith, in the revealed process of the Gospel, to bring the believing man into profound UNION WITH Christ. The *whole* account of its doing so is, surely, among the things unrevealed. Faith, in itself, is the simplest of actions; it is trust. In vain does the Tridentine theology "refute" the "inanis hæreticorum FIDUCIA" (Sess. vi. cap. ix.). The Gospels are sufficient witness to the entire simplicity of idea which the Lord Himself attached to the word *πίστις*. But beneath the simplicity and certainty of the *action* may well lie an unrevealed depth of *result*, in the direction of vital spiritual processes. That perfectly simple impact of *reliance* on "the name of the Son of God" may well carry with it an inevitable, a spiritually *natural*, sequel of a vital contact and connexion between the believer and the Lord, a vital UNION quite transcending all our present analysis indeed, but none the less strong and valid in the order of the spiritual world.

It is, in any case, the revealed effect of faith to CONJOIN the believer to his Head. He enters, in that act, into Christ; and all that is in Christ under the terms of the covenant of grace, acceptance alike and vital power, is his own upon that entrance. Christ is at once, and as the sequel of the same act of entrance, FOR him and IN him, in actual and accomplished fact.

Long ago, in some of the best pages of older Anglican theology,¹ it was pointed out that Justification by Faith,

¹ See e.g. Bishop Hopkins, of Derry (cir. 1680): *On the Doctrine of the Two Covenants*.

read in the light of the connexion of truths, is a brief phrase covering a profound spiritual process. In Christ resides, in its absoluteness, that **RIGHTEOUSNESS** which means complete Satisfactoriness to the holy **LAW** of God. It is His as the Head of a Body; it is His for the limbs of the living organism whose life is in Him. Faith, faith in Him, faith in its simplest idea, unites the man, for all spiritual purposes and relations, to Christ. And so faith is the act of entrance on the possession, in Him, of a sublimely legal Justification at the same moment as that in which it is the act of entrance into actual "Life through His name."

The connexion between Justification and the Life of Christ in the soul is thus a connexion not of mutual dependence, or of the dependence of one upon another, but of common source, Christ, and common entrance, Faith. The two connected things are in themselves things wholly different in idea, and it greatly concerns the simplicity, freedom, and joy of the Christian life to keep that difference firmly in hand. The one is a thing of the sphere of legality, the other of the sphere of vitality. The one is ours from the Lord in His character of covenant Head, the other is ours from Him in His character as vital Head. But the two characters are of one Person, and that not accidentally, but in a profound necessity, as in the case of "the First Man," the solitary parallel to that of "the Second Man" (1 Cor. xv. 47).

Meanwhile these truths do not exclude, they rather intensify, the subordinate connexions (too often spoken of as if the main connexion) between Justification and the Life of Christ in the soul. Too often it has been taught that the whole account of the matter is that the boon of Justification (apprehended no doubt by a faith divinely given) acts upon the life within merely by way of motive, in the common sense of that word, awakening the soul to the love and the self-surrender of supreme gratitude;

and that this is, practically, all the *nexus*. Here there is manifest fact, but in wrong proportion. The Divine Life does not appear, in Scripture, to be meant to lift its human subject above the region of motive; and mighty is indeed the motive-power of a full apprehension of what the Atonement has done in the rescue and the protection of the believer. But that motive can, surely, exercise its proper power only upon a being re-constituted into Divine Life through the Spirit of God; a Life which, but for the Atonement, would have been inaccessible, but which has its fountain not in the Atonement, but directly in Christ. It is a life whose *presence* does not depend on the excitation of "motives," and in which motives therefore may have all the freer and nobler action.

This is latent in the passage which introduced these reflections. The Apostle surrenders himself to the mighty fact of the Indwelling: "Christ liveth in me." He makes use of it, by faith, under the animating certainty, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." *Αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα, καὶ νῦν, καὶ εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος.*

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In a letter which appears in a recently published biography, we come upon some interesting recollections of a day spent many years since in the Prussian palace of Babelsberg. "About a week ago," the writer says, "I went with a very dear friend to make a visit to the tutor of the young prince who, if he lives, will one day be king of Prussia . . . No prince could have a better tutor . . . He is one of those men with whom I feel, after the first five minutes, that increased acquaintance will be only increased pleasure. Loveliness is the characteristic of the man. We were