

| Index of Articles: | Page |
|--------------------------------|------|
| "He Humbled Himself" | 1 |
| Problems of Christians: Envy | 2 |
| "Helpers of the War" | 4 |
| Dwell in the Fire of God, pt 1 | 7 |
| The Church Compared | 9 |

"He Humbled Himself"

The history of the Lord Jesus Christ's life on earth is from first to last a history of humiliations. If I were to ask you where He was laid when born, you would be right in answering, in a manger in Bethlehem. If I were to ask you where He was brought up, you would be right in answering, in a workshop at Nazareth. If I were to ask you with whom He most frequently sat down to eat, you would be right in answering, with publicans and sinners. If I were to ask you with whom He traveled through the land of Judea, you would be right in answering, with a few illiterate fishermen. If I were to ask you among whom His chief success was, in preaching the gospel, you would be right in answering, chiefly among the poor.

On every page of His history whether the page be blotted with tears, or dark with sorrow, or crimson with blood, those words are written, "He humbled Himself." Ah, my friends, it was an awful humiliation for Him whose right arm is the right arm of God, to be bowed before the judgment seat of injustice; but Christ endured greater humiliation than that. It was an awful humiliation for Him whose eye at once surveys all the brightness of heaven in its height and glory, and all the breadth of the earth and of the universe, and all the depths of hell down through its thickened shades of horror: it was an awful humiliation for Him to be blindfolded by wretched mortals: but Christ endured a greater humiliation than that. It was an awful humiliation for Him who at the great day is to judge the wicked, and send them down to dwell with Satan in darkness everlasting, to be condemned at the

bar of Pilate, and hurried away to execution: but Christ endured a greater humiliation than that. It was an awful humiliation for Him Who holds the rod of vengeance, to be bound to the pillar of Pilate, and scourged with twisted thongs of leather, until the blood streamed down His sides, a gory river: but Christ endured a greater humiliation than that. It was an awful humiliation for Him who wears the crown of glory in heaven, to be crowned with thorns, the thorns of the curse, but Christ endured a greater humiliation than that. For, oh, He endured THE CROSS, dying in shame and anguish, between two thieves on Calvary!

Oh, my friends we have too many of us wrong visions of the cross! In the present day it is emblazoned in gold upon the covers of our Bibles; it is worn round the neck of many as an amulet: it stands glittering in the heavens on the spires or churches. But in older times it was a thing despised and abhorred. Is the gallows held in abhorrence among us? Much more so was the cross among the Jews. But the Lord Jesus bowed His head to it, despising all the shame: yea "He Who was in the form of God *humbled Himself* and became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross*. Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and beings in earth, and beings under the earth"—for all the

All issues of "Truths for our Day" are available by clicking on the link below. This will take you to the index:

[Truths For Our Day](#)

We encourage you to reprint any issue of "Truths for our Day" that you desire, either for yourself or to pass on to other believers. Nothing is copyrighted, but we do request that you copy the entirety of the articles and reprint them as they have appeared for accuracy, and that you give recognition to the author of each article.

We also hope you will let others know about "Truths for our Day" and encourage them to subscribe as well. They can do so by simply sending an e-mail to truthsforourday@gmail.com Thank you!

hosts of heaven, earth, and hell, must bow before Him—"and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:6-11). H. G. G.

When the Son of God had taken on Him the form of a servant, He could say, "My Father is greater than I"; but His obedience showed Him to be equal with God: obedience unto the death of the Cross was such as only the Son of God could be called unto; and only He could render. R. C. Chapman

Problems of Christians: Envy

Joel Portman

Endemic problems among men also afflict believers in Christ Jesus! Problems like envy are linked with human nature since Adam's fall, so that they are a part of the ethos of our lives and the inward condition of our souls. There is hardly anyone who has not had moments of jealousy for another in our hearts, and this is envy. Envy can take many forms, and all of them are, or may be, injurious to ourselves or to others. Envy is an attitude of jealousy of another's possessions, qualities or abilities, position, authority, or many other things. Often it results in the sin of covetousness, and that can lead to one seeking to take what belongs to another. Envy has been the ruin of many lives and has divided many assemblies. A basic ingredient of envy is dissatisfaction, and it is the opposite of one being satisfied with God and what He has given. We read in Prov. 23:17, "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long." The New Testament equivalent of that truth is in 1 Timothy 6:6-8, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." The fear of the Lord is a reverential attitude of the heart that maintains an inward state of true and complete satisfaction with the Lord, who He is, and what He has provided. It results in submission to His will and

recognition that His pathway and provision is always best.

It seems that the murderous sin of Cain against Abel was motivated by envy (Gen. 4). It was more than he could tolerate to see his younger brother accepted by God through faithfully bringing the prescribed firstling of the flock for a sacrifice. How could that be just, when Cain had presented an attractive and (possibly) much larger offering that was far more pleasing than the death of an animal? His envy was because Abel was accepted by God, while he was rejected, so that he recognized that Abel would stand in a higher position before God and in the family than he. That attitude of envy moved his evil heart to deliberately plan to remove his brother so that he, the elder, would have the position and privilege that was his. To this end, he devised the scene when he, having invited his brother to accompany him into the field (H. Spurrell Trans), cut his throat (1 Jn. 3:12. "slew him" means "to butcher, like an animal".) K. Wuest says that John uses a word that was not the usual word for "to kill", and thus emphasizes the violence of his act. "The word "slew" is sphazō, "to slay, slaughter, butcher, by cutting the throat." It was used in classical Greek of slaughtering victims for sacrifice by cutting the throat, also of animals tearing by the throat, of any slaughter by knife or sword. It is used in the LXX (Greek translation of the Old Testament), of the slaying of the Levitical sacrifices (Lev. 1:5)". It is as if Cain's act was one of deep-seated envy that resulted in the first human death. John says that he was a murderer, motivated by the "wicked one."

When Isaiah describes the future, tranquil state of the millennial reign of Christ, one feature is that "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." (v. 13). A survey of their relationship reveals that frequently envy broke out in rebellious acts and caused great difficulties between the tribes thus affecting the entire nation. Since Ephraim was the largest of the northern tribes, the Ephraimites seemed to resent the position that God had given to the tribe of Judah. Even in the dividing of the land to the tribes, the children of Joseph

complained that they hadn't received the allotment that they felt they deserved (Joshua 17:14-18). They (including the half tribe of Manasseh) said to Joshua, in their pride, ". . . I am a great people, forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto." This resentment simmered throughout their history until it reached its climax in the beginning of Rehoboam's reign, when the great division took place between the tribes. The division that Judges 9 anticipated in the days of Abimelech finally came to its sad end at that time, when the entire nation reaped its results.

Causes of Envy

In God's Holy Word we see conditions that can produce envy in the soul. In Psalm 73, Asaph relates the experience of a believer who was afflicted by envy. He confesses that he was almost ready to fall, his steps had nearly slipped, because he "was envious at the foolish, when I saw the **prosperity** of the wicked." He looked at the way they lived, the lack of problems in their lives, their confidence in death, and their pride that caused them to speak lofty words and even blaspheme heaven (v. 9). What more could they ask for? They had everything! But what about him? He had been exercised before God, he had sought to live a pure life and honor God, but it seemed that it was of no value. He had suffered afflictions and chastening, that caused difficulty in his life. His thinking was logical and natural, and we have likely all been in that condition sometime. No matter how much a person possesses, there is always someone in the assembly, in the neighborhood or city, who has more, who has fewer problems, and who seems to be thriving. This may have been in Job's mind also; he knew that he was righteous, but around him were those who prospered without suffering any afflictions, while he was in terrible pain and suffering.

Christian reality is that believers who are relatively poor or who are satisfied with less materially or socially in life, are usually those who have a greater appreciation for what they have in Christ. They are the ones, who like Asaph, look beyond the material and external to say, with him, regarding that way of thinking, "I was as a beast before thee." His thinking had entirely been a "beastly" view of life, cen-

tered upon things of earth and not enjoying heaven's blessings. He was restored by looking away from such things to again appreciate what he had in his God; "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." When the heart is satisfied with Christ, feasting on the spiritual and eternal riches, it is turned away from the mundane and ephemeral elements of a passing world scene with its fleshly values and emphasis.

The wise man in Prov. 3:31 warns against another cause of envy: "Envy thou not the **oppressor**, and choose none of his ways." The word used for "oppressor" is usually translated "violent, violence, cruel", and it describes the means by which many climb their way to positions of power and influence. Climbing the social, economic, or political ladder usually involves trampling on others with self-centered actions bordering on different forms of violent means to accomplish one's goal. Positions of power may be naturally attractive, having the authority to direct others and even use them for one's personal gain, but that attitude is abhorrent to God. The principle of God's kingdom is that the way to advance is to go down. Our Lord, the One who has all power and authority, declared that He was the least among the disciples and had humbled Himself to serve (Luke 22:27), in contrast to the disciples' attempts to gain the highest place. He showed the pattern of how to please God and gain a position in the coming kingdom, by humbling Himself voluntarily to the will of God, a perfect Servant, even to the cross death. Who of us has had that mind so that our ambition is not to gain power over others, but to serve and bring blessing to them? God's perfect ideal for husbands, leaders, kings, and others in authority is that they would lead from a position of serving. May we learn that satisfaction with the place and work that we have been given by God is His will for us and will gain His recognition in the day of review.

Envy can be caused by a wrong attitude toward another's **popularity**. Pilate recognized that the Jews had delivered Jesus to him for judgment because of envy (Matt. 27:18). The Jews of Antioch saw the multitudes of people attentively listening to Paul and Barnabas, and

through envy, spoke blasphemously against them and stirred up the people to persecute the messengers (Acts 13:45-50). This can afflict believers in an assembly also. It can also be seen among preaching brethren! Paul exposes the wrong of this attitude by using a body to show the incongruity of one believer wanting the place of another (1 Cor. 12:14-17), or not appreciating the capability or honor that another receives (v. 26). Members of a human body never act enviously toward another member that seems to be more honorable than others, neither should we toward another believer. It is the Spirit of God that gives gift or ability (v. 11), according to His sovereign arrangement, and God has placed the members in the body where it pleased Him (v. 18). It is a blessing when each saint is seeking to function according to the capacity received from God and to do so for the good of all the rest. Blessing can be expected when this is the case.

Lastly, we learn from Acts 7:9 that Joseph's brothers were moved with envy to the point that they, after determining to kill him, actually sold him into slavery in Egypt. They resented the **place** that their father had given him in the family, though he was one of the younger sons, likely laying the blame to his mother being Jacob's favorite wife. Such a place of privilege that Jacob had expressed by giving him the special robe was more than they could bear, and we know the murderous intent that it caused in their hearts. May the Lord preserve us from acting in any way, openly or underhandedly, against another who has more privileges that we may have!

Results of Envy

We hardly recognize it, but the first and most severe result of envy is **against ourselves!** Prov. 14:30 says, "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones." One commentary says, "One who is consumed with envy finds no tranquility or general sense of health in body or spirit". Barnes Commentary says, ". . . envy which eats, like a consuming disease, into the very bones and marrow of a man's moral life." Medical research shows that a person who displays this attitude harms his own health, physically and emotionally. Very rarely does

envy harm the its object, but it harms the one who harbors that attitude. So that judging and rejecting envy is important and essential to a Christian personally.

Another detrimental results of envy is **open conflict and division**. Prov. 27:4 describes this possibility saying, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" We don't need to look far before we recognize times when this has sadly wrought its evil result, to the ruin of an assembly or fellowship between saints. If angry, even in a righteous way, we are not to retain wrath (Eph. 4:26), nor should we let it continue to the point of causing division. V. 31 describes those attitudes that accompany envy and which are contrary to the fruit of the Spirit, and they are to be put away (completely) from our lives. The positive is described in v. 32, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Lastly, envy can cause **death**, either death to one's character, influence, potential for blessing, and even physically. Job 5:2 says, "For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one." So let us avoid, at all costs, this affliction of harboring envy in our hearts, by having our minds centered on Christ, allowing His Spirit to control our thinking, and being content with what we have so graciously received from our blessed Lord.

Those who receive mercy and are constantly dependent on mercy, should show mercy. If God is merciful to us, let us be merciful to others: They cannot worse conduct themselves towards us than we have towards God.

"Helpers of the War"

T. D. W. Muir

In the days when David, the Lord's anointed, was in rejection, and was being hunted by Saul the king, it is refreshing to read of some whose hearts went out after him, and who were in many cases, led to turn their backs on the court

of Saul, and the honors and emoluments that go with such a connection, in order to be with David! Attracted by his personality, as we have said in a former paper, they went forth "unto him." Anything else there was not; for he had neither throne nor kingdom, honors nor wealth, to bestow upon them. And as God has recorded the names and doings of some of them, they were certainly an acquisition to any cause. God calls them "helpers of the war"! (1 Chron. 12:1).

Men with a Purpose

It was no idle curiosity that gathered them unto David. Nor was it hope of sordid gain that was in their minds. They may have been of those of whom we read in 1 Sam. 22:27, who, because of Saul's reign, were "in debt," "discontented," and "in distress," but they had evidently, in some measure, entered into God's thoughts regarding David, and hence their purpose was like God's to put the Lord's anointed on the throne! They came,—not to be "hangers-on" to David, and receive of his benefits, but that they might be "helpers of the war" he was carrying on. Their fortunes were linked up with those of David, and of those who were with him. If need be, they could "hurl stones" and "shoot arrows," with the right hand or the left. Some had faces like lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains. An overflowing Jordan could not stay the course of some of them, as they fought in fellowship with David. From various tribes of Israel did they come, Gad and Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Ephraim and Manasseh, Dan and Asher, beside Judah and Benjamin, Issachar and Zebulun. And God reminds us that even of Saul's brethren, of Benjamin, did they come, three thousand of them, the greater part of whom "kept the ward in the house of Saul" (1 Chron. 12:29). Thus did they show themselves to be "men of purpose," who could sacrifice self-interest that they might be loyal "helpers of the war."

A Counterpart Now

The One of whom David was a type, in his rejection, is our Lord Jesus Christ. Bethlehem, His birth-place; the lonely mountain side where He oft resorted,—having no place to lay His head; and the cross with its shame and woe; all told the same story, as far a man is

concerned,—there was no room for Jesus; or, to use the language of the prophet (Isa. 53), "He is despised and rejected of men." And what the world thought of Him then, they think of Him still.

"Our Lord is now rejected,
And by the world disowned;
By the many still neglected,
And by the few enthroned."

But it is ours to give Him the supreme place in our hearts, and to own Him in our ways, as the One we acknowledge as our Lord,—our Master.

In a general sense, no doubt every child of God will assent to this, little reckoning where it would lead them, and what it might cost them, to be truly identified with Him in this the day of his rejection. In the world, most men want a religion, and in so-called Christendom, the popular religion calls for some sort of an acknowledgment of Jesus. But even in the apostle's day (2 Cor. 11:4), we find him speaking of "another Jesus," and "another Spirit," and we, therefore, need not be surprised if we find, upon investigation, that the "Jesus" of whom the world sings and speaks, is not the Jesus of the Bible,—not the Christ of God! The one whom the world owns, is with them in all their worldly affairs, by which it is supposed His cause can be sustained and advanced, by a revival to-day and a private theatrical to-morrow, if needs be. Whereas the Christ of God was, in life and in death,

Separate from the World's Religion

Crucified without the gate of Jerusalem, He was there apart from the world's religion, of which Jerusalem was the center. And identification with Him there, involves going "forth unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13). The "camp" then was Judaism; the "camp" now may mean to the child of God any of the many human systems of worldly religion which have no room for the Christ of God and the Word of God. And where He and His Word have not the highest place, there, surely, there is no room for any loyal child of God. Loyalty to Him who is the Lord's Anointed must take us out of such,—unto Him! Others we shall find there where He is. If so, let us thank God, and cast in our lot with them. But let us ever remember that the primary thought is identifi-

cation with HIM! With others we may be, but if not so privileged, He is enough, and we can share the reproach with Him,

Of David's men it is said, "At that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God" (1 Chron. 12:22). Thus there was a steady increase of those who came,—they came day by day. Again the Lord's anointed was their objective,—they came to David. Yet again they came to David, nor for what they got from him, but—to help him, until the host grew to be like the host of God !

What a picture to contemplate! How complete as a study of what one might call the power of love to a person! Hearts won to the Lord's anointed, made them willing to forsake all, that they might cleave to him in the day of his rejection; and every man in that mighty host was a true helper in the war. And let us remember that the conflict is still raging. The enemy is still malignant, and determined, and the loyal saint—in fellowship with the purpose of God concerning His Christ,—must take his stand on the side of the truth, and valiantly use the Sword of the Spirit, if he would be a "helper of the war."

Numbers do not Always Mean Power

Numbers, alas, do not always mean power. In an assembly of God, it is often the case that with the increase of numbers come in strife and lawlessness, and a clamoring for place and authority on the part of some; while, in places where the company is small, there is oft-times a heartiness and zeal, as well as a cooperating vigorously in the work of the Gospel, that is lacking, when because of numbers increasing, the activity of the flesh is more manifest than the power of the Spirit. And it is ever well to remember that "the flesh" can never be a "helper of the war!"

Among the "gifts" God has bestowed upon the Church is that of "helps" (1 Cor. 12:28). All cannot be apostles, or teachers, or even evangelists, in the wider sense of the term. But it is a great privilege that all may enjoy, according to their several ability, to be a "help." None are too poor, or weak, or obscure for that. The poor widow, who in the days of our Lord here on earth, gave her all, in the

shape of two mites that make one farthing, was commended as a "help," who in that act had given more than the rich out of their abundance. Andrew, who brought his brother Simon to Jesus, and Philip who sought and brought Nathaniel also were "helps," who though obscure enough yet did a work that day, for which all succeeding generations have had to thank God. For

"No service in itself is small,
Or great, though earth it fill;
But that is small, that seeks its own,
And great, that seeks God's will."

It is reported that the late Mr. Robert Chapman once said, in bidding good-bye to a young brother who was going to the foreign field: "Remember that the greatest thing you can do in Africa, as in England, is to please God!" And may we not add that the only way we can please God is by doing what He tells us in His Word? And in the measure in which I do His will, and teach others the same, am I a "help" to them,—and a "helper of the war." And, in reverse order, the measure in which I am careless about my own ways, and my own obedience to His Word, am I a hindrance to others who may be influenced by my conduct.

When David reached the throne, he remembered those who were truly his "helpers" in the days of his rejection. And we do well to remember that the judgment seat of Christ is before us, when the Lord will review all we have been and done for Him. In that day all who have sought to be true helpers of our David's cause, and of those who would be true to Him, by strengthening their hands in it, will be manifested, and He will see to it that they will not lose their reward. Reproach they may have now—it is but His they are sharing. Epithets may be hurled at them by the ungodly, and even by carnal Christians, but let them remember that the world, religious and profane, gave Him a cross! No doubt it may cost much to stand with Him, and at no time will it be an easy path, but His presence and His smile will make up for all the sneers of the world, and the misunderstandings, aye, and misrepresentations perhaps of others, from whom better treatment might have been expected. To give His heart joy, should fill us with joy, and well will it be for each of us, if His coming, and the judgment seat that

shall follow, will make manifest that, in the midst of much weakness and failure, we have sought to be true "helpers of the war."

SOME FOLKS' CHRISTIANITY IS JUST LIKE A WOODEN LEG: THERE IS NEITHER WARMTH NOR LIFE IN IT, AND ALTHOUGH IT HELPS THEM TO HOBBLE ALONG, IT NEVER BECOMES A PART OF THEM, BUT IT HAS TO BE STRAPPED ON EVERY MORNING.

How to Dwell in the Fire of God

Alexander McLaren

Isa. 33:14-15, 1 Jn. 4:16

(This is a 2 part article from A. McLaren's commentary on Isa. 33:14-15 that deals with the contextual interpretation of the passage, giving the prophet's answer and the apostle John's answer to this question.)

I have put these two verses together because, striking as is at first sight the contrast in their tone, they refer to the same subject, and they substantially preach the same truth. A hasty reader, who is more influenced by sound than by sense, is apt to suppose that the solemn expressions in my first text, 'the devouring fire' and 'everlasting burnings,' mean hell. They mean God, as is quite obvious from the context. The man who is to 'dwell in the devouring fire' is the good man. He that is able to abide 'the everlasting burnings' is 'the man that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly,' that 'despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.' The prophet has been calling all men, far and near, to behold a great act of divine judgment in which God has been manifested in flaming glory, consuming evil; now he represents the 'sinners in Zion,' the unworthy members of the nation, as seized with sudden terror, and anxiously asking this question, which in effect means: 'Who among us can abide peacefully, joyfully, fed and brightened, not consumed and annihilated, by that flashing

brightness and purity?' The prophet's answer is the answer of common sense—like draws to like. A holy God must have holy companions.

But that is not all. The fire of God is the fire of love as well as the fire of purity; a fire that blesses and quickens, as well as a fire that destroys and consumes. So the Apostle John comes with his answer, not contradicting the other one, but deepening it, expanding it, letting us see the foundations of it, and proclaiming that as a holy God must be surrounded by holy hearts, which will open themselves to the flame as flowers to the sunshine, so a loving God must be clustered about by loving hearts, who alone can enter into deep and true friendship with Him.

The two answers, then, of these texts are one at bottom; and when Isaiah asks, 'Who shall dwell with the everlasting fire?'—the perpetual fire, burning and unconsumed, of that divine righteousness—the deepest answer, which is no stern requirement but a merciful promise, is John's answer, 'He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.'

The simplest way, I think, of bringing out the force of the words before us will be just to take these three points which I have already suggested: the world's question, the partial answer of the prophet, the complete answer of the Apostle.

I. The World's Question.

I need only remind you how frequently in the Old Testament the emblem of fire is employed to express the divine nature. In many places, though by no means in all, the prominent idea in the emblem is that of the purity of the divine nature, which flashes and flames as against all which is evil and sinful. So we read in one grand passage in this book of Isaiah, 'the Light of Israel shall become a fire'; as if the lambent beauty of the highest manifestation of God gathered itself together, intensified itself, was forced back upon itself, and from merciful, illuminating light turned itself into destructive and consuming fire. And we read, you may remember, too, in the description of the symbolical manifestation of the divine nature which accompanied the giving of the Law on Sinai, that 'the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain,' and yet into

that blaze and brightness the Lawgiver went, and lived and moved in it.

There is, then, in the divine nature a side of antagonism and opposition to evil, which flames against it, and labors to consume it. I would speak with all respect for the motives of many men in this day who dread to entertain the idea of the divine wrath against evil, lest they should in any manner trench upon the purity and perfectness of the divine love. I respect and sympathize with the motive altogether; and I neither respect nor sympathize with the many ferocious pictures of that which is called the wrath of God against sin, which much so-called orthodox teaching has indulged in. But if you will only remove from that word 'anger' the mere human associations which cleave to it, of passion on the one hand, and of a wish to hurt its object on the other, then you cannot, I think, deny to the divine nature the possession of such passionless and unmalignant wrath, without striking a fatal blow at the perfect purity of God. A God that does not hate evil, that does not flame out against it, using all the energies of His being to destroy it, is a God to whose character there cleaves a fatal suspicion of indifference to good, of moral apathy. If I have not a God to trust in that hates evil because He loveth righteousness, then 'the pillared firmament itself were rottenness, and earth's base built on stubble'; nor were there any hope that this damnable thing that is killing and sucking the life-blood out of our spirits should ever be destroyed and cast aside. Oh! it is short-sighted wisdom, and it is cruel kindness, to tamper with the thought of the wrath of God, the 'everlasting burnings' of that eternally pure nature wherewith it wages war against all sin.

But then, let us remember that, on the other side, the fire which is the destructive fire of perfect purity is also the fire that quickens and blesses. God is love, says John, and love is fire, too. We speak of 'the flame of love,' of 'warm affections,' and the like. The symbol of fire does not mean destructive energy only. And these two are one. God's wrath is a form of God's love; God hates because He loves.

And the 'wrath' and the 'love' differ much more in the difference of the eyes that look, than they do in themselves. Here are two bits

of glass; one of them sifts out and shows all the fiery-red rays, the other all the yellow. It is the one same pure, white beam that passes through them both, but one is only capable of receiving the fiery-red beams of the wrath, and the other is capable of receiving the golden light of the love. Let us take heed lest, by destroying the wrath, we maim the love; and let us take heed lest, by exaggerating the wrath, we empty the love of its sweetness and its preciousness; and let us accept the teaching that these are one, and that the deepest of all the things that the world can know about God lies in that double saying, which does not contradict its second half by its first, but completes its first by its second—God is Righteousness, God is Love.

Well, then, that being so, the question rises to every mind of ordinary thoughtfulness: 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' A God fighting against evil; can you and I hope to hold familiar fellowship with Him? A God fighting against evil; if He rises up to exercise His judging and His punishing energies, can we meet Him? 'Can thy heart endure and thy hands be strong, in the day that I shall deal with thee?' is the question that comes to each of us if we are reasonable people. I do not dwell upon it; but I ask you to take it, and answer it for yourselves.

To 'dwell with everlasting burnings' means two things. First, it means to hold familiar intercourse and communion with God. The question which presents itself to thoughtful minds is—What sort of man must I be if I am to dwell near God? The lowliest bush may be lit by the divine fire and not be consumed by it; and the poorest heart may be all aflame with an indwelling God, if only it yield itself to Him, and long for His likeness. Electricity only flames into consuming fire when its swift passage is resisted. The question for us all is—How can I receive this holy fire into my bosom, and not be burned? Is any communion possible, and if it is, on what conditions? These are the questions which the heart of man is really asking, though it knows not the meaning of its own unrest.

'To dwell with everlasting burnings' means, secondly, to bear the action of the fire—the judgment of the present and the judg-

ment of the future. The question for each of us is—How can we face that judicial and punitive action of that Divine Providence which works even here, and how can we face the judicial and punitive action in the future?

I suppose you all believe, or at least say that you believe, that there is such a future judgment. Have you ever asked yourselves the question, and rested not until you got a reasonable answer to it, on which, like a man leaning on a pillar, you can lean the whole weight of your expectations—How am I to come into the presence of that devouring fire? Have you any fireproof dress that will enable you to go into the furnace like the Hebrew youths, and walk up and down in the midst of it, well and at liberty? Have you? 'Who shall dwell amidst the everlasting fires?'

That question has stirred sometimes, I know, in the consciences of every man and woman that is listening to me. Some of you have tampered with it and tried to throttle it, or laughed at it and shuffled it out of your mind by the engrossment of business, and tried to get rid of it in all sorts of ways: and here it has met you again to-day. Let us have it settled, in the name of common-sense (to invoke nothing higher), once for all, upon reasonable principles that will stand; and do you see that you settle it today.

(continued)

Never seek to find out if some forbidden thing is sin or not, and whether it may not in some way be reconciled to conscience. Let it be enough that God has forbidden it.

The Church Compared

The Church as announced by Christ, seen in the book of Acts and explained by Paul is a thing of great simplicity and rare beauty.

The church as we see it today is unsymmetrical, highly complex and anything but beautiful. Indeed I think that if some angel of God were made familiar with the church as it

appears in the New Testament and then sent to the earth to try to locate it, it would be extremely doubtful whether the heavenly messenger would recognize anything now existing in the field of religion as the church he was looking for. So far have we departed from the pattern shown us in the mount.

The church as the New Testament pictures it is any company of regenerate believers met in the name of Jesus Christ. Such a company is called out from the world and gathered to Christ as a flock of sheep is gathered to the shepherd. The members of this company constitute a despised minority group standing in bold moral contradiction to the world. Their witness is Christ: His person, work, office and present position at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. They carry His gospel to the world and plead "Be ye reconciled to God," then they return to their own company to worship, pray, teach and listen to the Word of the Lord as it is expounded by men of God. They also exhort, testify and exercise for the good of all such spiritual gifts as each one may possess from the Spirit.

A. W. Tozer

The Cross of Christ is Christ's glory. Man seeks to win his glory by the slaughter of others—Christ by the slaughter of Himself. Men seek to get crowns of gold—He sought a crown of thorns. Men think that glory lies in being exalted over others—Christ thought that His glory lay in becoming "a worm and no man", a scoff and reproach among all that beheld Him. He stooped when He conquered; and He considered that the glory lay as much in the stooping as in the conquest.