

The Uplifted Christ

OR

The Cross

Its Necessity, Testimony, and Attraction

BY

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With a Foreword by

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FOREWORD

The number of newly published books increases year by year. In general, as the Preacher wrote: "Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (Eccles. 12:12).

But there are books *and* books, and this one is in a class apart.

The author of "The Uplifted Christ" need make no apology for publishing yet another book, for this latest from his pen concerns the central fact of history and, moreover, presents it in an uncommon form.

Here is a theme transcendently important and inexhaustible. No meditation is so calculated to grip, enthrall and captivate. The author has brought to bear on his task his consecrated gifts of mind, both analytic and synthetic. He has obviously written out of the abundance of his heart and against the background of a rich and varied Christian experience. The result is a well thought out and logically presented pamphlet of intense interest.

My valued friend for more than thirty years, I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to the author of "The Uplifted Christ" for instruction, counsel and encouragement conveyed in conversation and oral ministry, as well as by his numerous published works which have had a wide circulation throughout the English-speaking world.

May this pamphlet be richly blessed to the glory of Him Who is its subject, the eternal Son Who became Man, the Savior Who was "lifted up," and has ever since been drawing men and women, boys and girls to Himself; Who is now enthroned in majesty in the heavens and Who, one day, will be universally acclaimed "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Norman J. Campbell.

"Charnwood"

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PREFACE

The following pages are sent forth with the earnest desire that God may be pleased to bless this setting forth of the great fundamental facts of Christianity, as seen in the three fold reference of our Lord Jesus Christ to His being "lifted up."

May these glorious truths concerning the eternal sufficiency and efficacy of His substitutionary sacrifice; His victorious resurrection; His glorification at God's right hand; His present ministry for His people in the presence of God, and the certainty of His second coming, grip the hearts of all believers, and lead them to a greater appreciation of His matchless Person that shall result in increased devotion to, and more effective service for Him.

My grateful appreciation is due to my very good friend and brother in Christ, Norman J. Campbell, of Ashstead, Surrey, England, for his kindness in reading the manuscript and writing a foreword to the booklet.

May the Son of God, who was lifted up to secure our eternal redemption, be thus lifted up for the adoration of each reader!

Wheaton, Illinois, 1956

A. P. G.

THE UPLIFTED CHRIST

By ALFRED P. GIBBS

**“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,
even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.”
(John 3:14).**

**“When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall
ye know that I am He.” (John 8:28).**

**“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw
all men unto Me.” (John 12:32).**

INTRODUCTION

Our Lord used the expression, “lifted up,” three times in John’s gospel, and each time He used it He gave it a deeper spiritual significance. May the Spirit of God cause these words to be engraved deeply in our hearts, so that we may rightly appreciate their tremendous importance.

The cross is the central fact of chronology, history, prophecy, humanity and eternity. Sir Robert Anderson has finely said: “An eternal past knew no other future, and an eternal future shall know no other past, save the cross of Christ.” The poet has well described it as—

*“The center of two eternities,
Which look, with rapt adoring eyes,
Onward, and back to Thee!”*

The cross is the focal center of the universe. It was no accident, which frustrated God’s eternal purpose, but was the great culminating event towards which all things had converged, for it had been predetermined “from the foundation of the world.” (See Revelation

13:8). What a wealth of meaning is found in that simple statement in John 18:4: "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth." He knew all that awaited Him, and what was involved in the garden of Gethsemane, at the judgment seat at Gabbatha, and on the cross at Golgotha. None of these things took Him by surprise. It was all part of the Divinely prearranged program. In the infinitude of His grace, the incarnate Son of God set His face, calmly and deliberately, in the direction of Calvary, and allowed nothing and no one to turn Him aside from His eternal purpose to redeem us.

Our Lord declared: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John 10:17, 18). On the day of Pentecost, Peter left his audience in no doubt as to the Divine plan and purpose of the cross, for he said: "Him (Christ) being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23). It is important to notice that though the crucifixion of Christ was foreknown by God, it did not in the least degree lessen the enormity of the sinner's guilt in despising, rejecting and crucifying the Son of God.

Let us be clear as to what is meant by the term, "the cross," as used by Paul in his epistles. By the word, "cross," is not meant a piece of wood, or metal, shaped in the conventional pattern. But it refers to *the work accomplished on the cross by our Lord Jesus Christ* when He bore our sins and, by His death, accomplished all the work necessary to the eternal salva-

tion of every sinner who, by faith, rests in His finished work, and trusts Him as his own Savior. This was "the cross" which Paul preached, and in which he gloried. (See I Corinthians 1:18; Galatians 6:14).

Now let us consider, particularly, these three references of our Lord to His being "lifted up." In John 3:14, the emphatic word concerning the cross is "must." Thus Christ indicated the *necessity for the cross*. In John 8:28, the word that is stressed is "*know*." In other words, Christ declared that the cross should demonstrate His Deity, and by this drew attention to the *testimony of the cross*. In John 12:32, the emphasis is on the word "*draw*," and surely this indicates the *attraction of the cross*. Thus, in these references to the cross, our Lord has given us a threefold cord which is "not quickly broken." (Eccles. 4:12). I. The necessity for the cross. (John 3:14); II. The testimony of the cross (John 8:28); III. The attraction of the cross (John 12:32). Let us now examine each of these references in detail.

I. The Necessity for the Cross.

“Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up”
(John 3:14).

The cross was a Divine “must.” It is difficult to conceive of Deity as being under necessity and using the word “must”; yet it is plainly stated by Christ Himself.

In fact, there are four “musts” in this chapter. First of all there is the *must of the sinner*. If ever he would see or enter the kingdom of God, he must be born again (v. 3, 7). Second, there is the *must of the Savior*. If ever a sinner is to be born again, this can only become possible through a Redeemer who must be lifted up. (v. 14). Third, is the *must of the Sovereign* for John the Baptist said of Christ: “He must increase” (v. 30). Lastly, there is the *must of the servant*, for John added: “I must decrease” (v. 30).

Now let us consider the sevenfold necessity for the cross.

1. Sin necessitated it.

Had there been no such thing as sin, there would have been no necessity for the cross. The moment sin became *actual*, the cross became *essential*. We shall never appreciate the transcendent value of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ until, in some measure at least, we have realized the enormity and awfulness of sin. The greater our realization of the heinousness of sin is, the greater will be our estimation of the virtue and value of the Savior’s work on the cross.

No sooner had sin been introduced into the world by the transgression of Adam, than God declared to

the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:15). Thus the first promise of a Redeemer is linked with the entrance of sin, for only by the One here called "the Seed of the woman," could sin be put away; and that only at the cost of the bruising of His heel, which took place when the Savior was lifted up on the cross.

The question may well be asked: "What is sin?"

(1) It is a coming short of a given standard. Sin is a failure to meet the righteous requirements which God, because of His infinite holiness, must necessarily demand of His creatures. These requirements are revealed in the law which is summarized in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27). Any failure on the part of a person perfectly to meet these demands, or come up to this standard, constitutes sin. Who amongst us can claim to be perfect, or sinless, in view of these requirements? God's verdict is: "There is none righteous, no not one"! In Romans 3, where God gives us a full length portrait of the sinner, is found this summary of the facts: "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and *come short* of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23).

(2) But more: sin is a deliberate and overt act of transgression against what a person knows to be right. Knowing the truth, he tells a lie; knowing the pure, he entertains the impure; knowing the honest, he deliberately becomes dishonest, and thereby incurs the guilt of sin.

(3) But further: sin is moral perversity, or iniquity. Iniquity is un-equity, an unevenness of character

which each possesses by nature. Paul speaks of it as “sin that dwelleth in me.” (Romans 7:7). Through our link with Adam we inherited a sinful nature which has constituted us sinners by birth.

This devastating thing called “sin” is here. It has brought a curse upon the earth, and is evidenced by crime, disease, pain, sorrow, death, doom and despair. How can this dreadful thing be righteously put away and the sinner pardoned, cleansed and relieved, and brought into God’s presence and favor, absolved from the very guilt of sin? This tremendous question was answered by the Savior in the words: “Even so, *must* the Son of Man be lifted up.”

As Christ hung upon the cross of Calvary, “God made the iniquity of us all to meet upon Him” (Isaiah 53:6—marg.). Our Lord, in turn, in infinite grace, voluntarily “bore our sins in His own body on the tree” and, by the sacrifice of Himself, “died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (I Peter 2:24; I Corinthians 15:3). God attested to the completeness of the redeeming work of His Son by raising Him from the dead and glorifying Him at His own right hand.

Thus our sins, which necessitated the cross, have been righteously put away through the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Each believer can now joyously sing:

“All my sins were laid upon Him,
Jesus bore them on the tree;
God, Who knew them, laid them on Him
And, believing, I am free!”

2. Holiness required it.

God is holy. Never let us forget that. Holiness has two essentials; a love of righteousness balanced by an equal hatred of iniquity. (Hebrews 1:9). Holiness is one of the essential attributes of God—it is the very

essence of His character: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory . . . Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." (Isaiah 6:3; 57:15).

Only as we sense the unapproachable holiness of God can we appreciate the significance underlying the words: "Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up." How can a righteous and sin-hating God, in perfect consistency with His holy character, not only forgive, but view with acceptance a self-confessed and guilty sinner? There is only one solution to this problem, and it is given to us by the Lord Jesus: "Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up."

Never was the holiness of God more clearly demonstrated than when our Divine Substitute bore our sins in His own body on the tree. As He hung there, surrounded by awful darkness, God forsook Him, so that from His lips came the awful cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" These words are found in Psalm 22, which prophetically describes the inner feelings of the Lord Jesus. Note the words which follow: "But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (Psalm 22:1-3). Thus Christ justified God for having forsaken Him because He was, at that time, "made sin for us, He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (II Corinthians 5:21).

Mrs. Browning's words are appropriate in this connection:

"Yea, once Immanuel's orphaned cry,
The Universe hath shaken;
It went up single, echoless:
'My God, I am forsaken!'
It went up from His holy lips,
Amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no soul need use
Those words of desolation!"

3. Justice demanded it.

God is just and had declared: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." He had revealed Himself to Moses as the One who could "by no means clear the guilty." (Ezekiel 18:4; Exodus 34:7). All God's attributes are harmoniously blended and perfectly displayed. His "throne is established in righteousness." He therefore cannot be *merciful* at the expense of His *justice*; nor *loving* at the cost of His *righteousness*. If ever sinful man is to be saved, it must be on a perfectly righteous basis. Justice must be satisfied, before mercy can flow out to the guilty. God is *light*, therefore He cannot be indifferent to *sin*. God is *love*, therefore He cannot be indifferent to the *sinner*.

How then can God be just and, at the same time, the Justifier of a guilty sinner? This great riddle of the universe was solved by Christ in the words: "Even so, *must* the Son of Man be lifted up." When the fateful moment, predetermined in a past eternity arrived, the incarnate Son of God, to whom all judgment had been committed (John 5:22), stepped down from His judicial throne, before which man had been found guilty, mounted the scaffold on which the guilty and condemned sinner stood, assumed the liability of his sin and guilt and then met, by His own death, the full penalty that was the sinner's due. On the third day He rose again to justify each sinner who, in repentance, trusts in Him and His redemptive work.

Thus, on the basis of the sacrificial and substitutionary work of Christ God can, in perfect righteousness, both "be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans 3:26). Each believer can now sing:

“Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on Christ, and pardon me!”

Albert Midlane, author of that beautiful children’s hymn, “There’s a Friend for Little Children,” also wrote a magnificent gospel hymn which fittingly describes the gospel of the grace and righteousness of God:

“The perfect righteousness of God
Is witnessed in the Savior’s blood;
’Tis in the cross of Christ we trace
His righteousness, yet wondrous grace.

God could not pass the sinner by,
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save us righteously.

The sin is on the Savior laid,
’Tis in His blood sin’s debt is paid;
Stern Justice can demand no more,
And mercy can dispense her store.

The sinner who believes is free,
Can say: “The Savior died for me’;
Can point to the atoning blood,
And say: “This made my peace with God!”

4. The law needed it.

Listen to its fiat: “Without the shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:14). “The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” (Lev. 17:11).

When Christ came into this world He declared: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” (or “fill full”). Not only did our Lord perfectly keep all the holy demands of the law of God, but it was said of

Him: "He will magnify the law and make it honorable." (Isaiah 42:21). What does this expression mean? Let us look at it a moment. The law had declared: "Thou shalt not steal." Not only did Christ not steal, but "He restored that which He took not away" (Psalm 69:4). The law said: "Thou shalt not kill." Christ not only did not kill, but "He gave His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45). Thus the law, which was largely negative and prohibitive, was magnified by Him into a positive and perfect thing, by which His Father was glorified on the earth. (John 17:4).

The law, which Christ came to fulfil and magnify, not only revealed the righteous requirements of God's holiness, but also indicated the penalty incurred by those who broke it, for it is written: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10). Furthermore, the law provided a means by which a sinner could have his sins atoned for (or covered) in the sight of God. This was through a God-planned, God-provided and God-accepted substitutionary sacrifice. In the Old Testament there is pictured for us a long line of countless thousands of sheep, goats and heifers that marched, in monotonous procession, to the blood-baptized altars of Jewry. Each sacrifice was slain to fulfil the Divine decree: "Without the shedding of blood, is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

The law of God, though "holy, just and good," could save no one; for we are told: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 7:12; 3:20).

The question may now well be raised: How can a sinner, who has broken God's law, and is consequently under its curse and condemnation, be delivered from

both, and in such a way that every righteous claim of God's holy law shall be met, and its every requirement satisfied, and God Himself glorified? There is only one answer to this vital question, and only Deity can give it: "Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up."

The One who fulfilled and magnified the law in His life came to redeem us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us, as it is written: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). Here is the story in brief. He who had no sin, knew no sin and did no sin, and upon whom the law had no claim whatever, willingly allowed wicked men to lift Him up on a cross in order that He might bear the sins of those who had broken the law, take their place and suffer the full penalty which the law demanded against their guilt. That penalty, as we have already seen, was death. Thus we read: "Christ died for our sins Christ died for the ungodly." By the shedding of His precious blood, He satisfied every demand of the holy law of God. His resurrection is the full and unanswerable proof of God's acceptance of His substitutionary sacrifice on our behalf; for we are assured that "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." (I Cor. 15:1-3; Rom. 5:6; 4:25).

In many countries the end of the law is the hangman's rope, or the execution chamber. Once the full penalty of the law has been exacted on the law breaker, it can go no further. The death of the criminal satisfies the righteous demands of the law. This is the position of the Christian in relation to the law of God. In the reckoning of God, each believer is viewed as having died to the law in the person of his Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose death has satisfied every claim of the law. In the light of Christ's death and

resurrection, each believer is assured that he is “become dead to the law by the body of Christ.” (Rom. 7:4).

Because the law’s demands have all been met by the death of Christ, in token of which He has been raised from the dead, God can now righteously justify each sinner who will own his need, trust in the finished work of Christ, accept Him as his own personal Savior and confess Him as the Lord of his life. (See Rom. 3:25-28; 10:4-10). It was in view of all this that Christ declared: “Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up.”

5. Prophecy expected it.

A study of the Old Testament will reveal that there are more than 300 prophecies of a coming Messiah. The first is found in Gen. 3:15, where He is described as the Seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent’s head. Time and space forbid the tracing of this fascinating array of prophecy from its inception to its consumation, when Mary “brought forth her first born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.” (Luke 2:7).

Christ’s virgin birth, His holy life, His vicarious sufferings, His sacrificial death, His victorious resurrection and His future glory are all described in the pages of the Old Testament. One has only to turn to the New Testament to read such words concerning the Lord Jesus: “Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.” See Matthew 1:22; 2:15, 23; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 27:35, etc.

These prophecies of the Old Testament would have remained unfulfilled if Christ had not come. In fact, our Lord Himself said: “These are the words which I

spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things *must be fulfilled* which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me.” (Luke 24:44). To the two disconsolate disciples on their way to Emmaus He said: “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?” Then, “Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” (Luke 24:26-27).

Thus the words: “Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up,” have a vital connection with all those prophecies which “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,” and which are recorded for us in the Old Testament scriptures. (II Peter 1:20-21).

6. The types entailed it.

Throughout the pages of the Old Testament are numerous types or pictures of Christ. By the word “type” is meant: “a Divinely purposed illustration.” A type may consist of various things. Sometimes it is a *person*, as Adam. (Rom. 5:14). Again, it may be a *thing*, as the veil of the temple (Heb. 10:20); or an *event*, as the crossing of the Red Sea. (I Cor. 10:1-11); or an *institution*, as the tabernacle, priesthood and the offerings (Heb. 9:11); or a *ceremonial*, as the Passover (I Cor. 5:7).

The spiritual significance of these types is not explained to us in the Old Testament, and they are *utterly meaningless* apart from the New Testament revelation. The lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, as recorded in Numbers 21, has no spiritual meaning for us whatever, apart from our Savior’s own explanation: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.”

The tabernacle, with its Aaronic priesthood and elaborate ritual, is an inexplicable mystery apart from the New Testament revelation.

All these various types of Christ could be likened to those curiously shaped pieces of cardboard which go to make up a jig-saw puzzle. On some of these pieces is part of a person's face. Others show a piece of a tree; still others a part of a house, or a bit of the sky. Only as these pieces are slowly and painstakingly fitted together can the complete picture be formed and appreciated.

In like manner, each of these types of Christ is essential if we are properly to appreciate the virtue of the Savior's Person, the value of His sacrifice, the victory of His resurrection, the variety of His offices, and the vital necessity for His present ministry for us at the right hand of God as our great high Priest.

Just as printer's type has no value, as reading material, for the ordinary person until it has been coated with ink and its shape impressed on paper; so these types of the Scriptures have no significance to us apart from the impression they produce on us as they find their counterpart and fulfilment in Christ. Therefore it was in view of all this that the Savior said: "Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up."

7. Salvation compelled it.

The Bible leaves us in no doubt as to the reason why Christ came into the world. His very name, "Jesus," which means "Jehovah Savior," was given to Him before His incarnation, and the reason for His name was stated: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt.

1:21). Christ Himself declared: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost . . . The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Luke 19:10; Mark 10:45).

If ever lost, guilty, helpless, hopeless and hell-deserving sinners are to be saved from the doom, dominion and domain of sin; then there is only one way by which this can be made possible, and the Lord Jesus has indicated this clearly, for He said emphatically: "Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up."

Knowing full well all the infinite cost of the salvation He came to bring, and what it would involve in the way of indescribable suffering and unspeakable loss, yet He willingly came. In matchless love and infinite grace, He clothed Himself with humanity, and became the Babe of Bethlehem. What tremendous meaning is hidden in these words: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). Christ likened Himself to a merchantman seeking goodly pearls who, when he found the pearl of great price, *sold all that he had* to secure its possession. (Matt. 13:45-46). Scripture bears testimony to the fact that "Christ loved the Church, and *gave Himself* for it." (Eph. 5:25).

None but the eternal Godhead could possibly comprehend all that was involved in the lifting up of the Son of Man. Deity alone can measure the awfulness of that dread storm of Divine judgment which broke, in unparalleled fury, upon the sinless and unprotected head of our Divine Substitute as He hung upon the cross, rejected by man and forsaken by God!

“The tempest’s awful voice was heard—
O Christ, it broke on thee!
Thy open bosom was my ward,
It braved the storm for me:
Thy form was scarred,
Thy visage marred,
Now cloudless peace for me!”

Our blessed Lord knew there was no other way by which sinners could be saved except that He must bear their sins, take their place, die in their stead, and rise again to make good *in* them what He had accomplished *for* them. Only by this means could the God of the universe righteously justify and save each guilty sinner who trusts in the Person and in the work of His beloved Son. Mark well the words of Romans 3:24, where the believer is assured that he is: “Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Each Christian can therefore humbly, confidently and adoringly look up to his Lord and Savior and sing:

“The storm that bowed Thy blessed head
Is hushed forever now;
And rest Divine is mine instead,
Whilst glory crowns Thy brow!”

May it be ours to lay to heart, increasingly, the deep spiritual meaning of these words of the Lord Jesus: “Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up,” for herein lies the absolute necessity for the cross, as revealed by the Christ of the cross. Such a consideration will increase our appreciation of His blessed Person, and lead out our hearts in fuller adoration to the One “Whom, having not seen, we love,” and to whom we shall sing, with all the redeemed of all the ages: “Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation!” (Rev. 5:9).

II. The Testimony of the Cross.

“When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He” (John 8:28).

Having noted something of the significance of the words of the Savior: “Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up”; let us now examine the next reference to His being “lifted up.” This is found in John 8:28, and reads: “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He.”

In these words our Lord affirmed that His crucifixion should demonstrate, beyond all possibility of contradiction, the absolute truth of all He had previously claimed as to His essential and eternal Deity.

Let us look at some of these claims, as recorded in this chapter. In verse 12, Christ testified that He was the world’s light: “I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” In verses 16-18, He affirmed that He was the sent One of God: “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me . . . the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me.” In vs. 21-22, He declared He was the sole Deliverer from sin’s penalty, and that refusal to believe in His Deity would seal the unbeliever’s doom; “Ye shall seek Me and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come . . . If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.” In verse 25 He attested that He was altogether that which He had said. In response to the question: “Who art Thou?” He replied: “Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.” In other words, He declared: “*I am what I say!*” Thus He claimed that all He had *enunciated* with His lips, He had *exemplified* in His life.

These tremendous claims to Deity, which we have considered, are but a few of the very many more recorded in the gospel of John. In fact, the whole book was written to prove that Christ was the Son of God. We read: "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." (John 20:31).

It was therefore in the light of these definite statements which He had made of His Deity, that our Lord plainly and emphatically declared: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye *know* that I am." It will be noted that the word, "He," is in italics, indicating it was supplied by the translators. It can therefore be left out. Thus it should read: "Then shall ye know that *I AM*." For the significance of this title, we must turn to the third chapter of Exodus, where the description is given of the appearing of Jehovah to Moses at the burning bush. When Moses inquired: "When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them: 'The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they say to me: 'What is His name?' What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses . . . 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: ' *I AM* hath sent me unto you.' " When Christ applied this title to Himself, He therefore left His audience in no doubt as to the import of His claim. By this He affirmed that the Jehovah of the Old Testament was none other than Himself!

Thus, in words that admit of no other meaning, Christ declared that all the claims He had made to be the essential and eternal Son of God would be fully substantiated and incontestably demonstrated when they had lifted Him up. Here, then, is *the challenge*

of *the cross!* It was to be the grand consummation and the supreme attestation of all the claims He had ever made to be the Son of God. It would dispel all doubt and settle the issue, once and for ever!

Let us see how marvelously these words of the Lord Jesus were verified when, some time later, they led Him out to that "hill, lone and grey, in a land far away," and there "crucified the Lord of glory" (I Cor. 2:8). The poet has beautifully expressed it thus:

"Then dawned at last that day of dread,
When desolate, yet undismayed,
With wearied frame and thorn crowned head
He, now forsaken and betrayed,
Went up for us to Calvary,
And dying there, in grief and shame,
He saved us—blessed be His name!"

We shall think of seven distinct spheres, or worlds, in which the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ was fully demonstrated, after He had been lifted up.

1. The Religious world knew.

(Matthew 27:50-51).

We are told that: "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." In Luke's account, it further states that this veil was rent "in the midst." The words: "from top to bottom," indicate the heavenly and Divine origin of the act. The words: "in the midst," draws attention to the fact that this veil, which so long had concealed the holiest of all from public view, was now open for all to see and enter. (Luke 23:45).

Let us now consider the spiritual significance of the rending asunder of this veil. The temple in Jerusalem was the religious center of the people of Israel. This

temple was divided into two compartments. In the first, which was called "the holy place," was the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the golden altar of incense. The second compartment was called "the holy of holies," and in it was the ark of the covenant, overlaid with the mercy seat. Separating these two compartments was a thick curtain, through which no one dared enter save the high priest, and that only on one day in the year, the great day of Atonement. (Lev. 16). Let us briefly describe the ceremony.

On this occasion, the high priest, having slain the sacrifice at the altar, first entered the veil with the blood of his own sin offering, which he had offered for the atonement of his own sins. This blood he now sprinkled upon and before the mercy seat. Having done this, he then emerged from the holy of holies and returned to the great brazen altar. He then took the blood of the sin offering, which had been offered for the people, and again entered the holy of holies and sprinkled the blood upon and before the mercy seat, and emerged once more to assure the people that their sins for that year had been covered from the sight of a holy God. The constant repetition of this ordinance, year after year, served to impress the people of Israel with three facts. First, the holiness of God. Second, the absolute necessity for a substitutionary sacrifice ere their sins could be covered. Third, that this sacrifice was not permanent, for it had to be repeated each year.

The mercy seat stood for the presence of God in the midst of His people, for God had said concerning it: "There will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." (Exod. 25:22). Between that dwelling place of a holy God and the sinning people of Israel stood the veil, and this effectually shut

them out from His presence, save only on the occasion when their representative was allowed, one day each year, to enter within the veil.

This was how matters stood when Christ uttered the words: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye *know* that I am." No sooner had the Lord Jesus accomplished, by the sacrifice of Himself, all the work necessary for the eternal forgiveness and acceptance of each sinner, than God Himself testified to this glorious fact. He tore, from top to bottom and in the midst, the curtain that so long had shut them out from His presence. By this He indicated that the way into God's presence and favor was now open to every sinner who trusts in the merits of Christ's precious blood, and receives Him by faith as Savior and Lord.

Thus God, by the rent veil, signified the end of the religion of Judaism, together with its Aaronic priesthood and all its elaborate ritual in the way of oft repeated sacrifices and offerings for sin. *God swept the whole thing away at the cross of Christ.* There is no longer any need of a humanly ordained high priest to act as our representative. The Lord Jesus Himself was both the perfect Offerer and the perfect Offering. By His death He has satisfied every claim of a holy God against sin, and the sinner who trusts in Him is accepted before God. Mark well these soul-emancipating words: "But this Man, (Christ) after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). The rent veil is God's eloquent imprimatur on the efficacy of the sacrificial work of His beloved Son, and expresses His willingness to welcome the vilest sinner who will rest in the merits of the work of Christ and trust Him as his own

Savior. The resurrection of Christ, three days later, was the culminating proof of God's complete approval of the Person of His Son, and absolute satisfaction in and acceptance of the work of redemption He had so perfectly accomplished.

The Scripture leaves us in no doubt as to the meaning of the rent veil, for we read: "Christ . . . by His own blood . . . entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us . . . Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh; and having an high Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, . . ." (Heb. 9:11-12; 10:19-22).

Thus the religious world was made to know, when Christ was lifted up, that He was all He had claimed to be. What was the effect of this on the leaders of Israel? Did they accept the testimony of the rent veil and believe on Him? No, indeed! They sewed up the curtain, and went on with the old ritual which God had so signally repudiated. Up to the time of the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, they continued to offer "oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins." (Heb. 10:11). Truly, there are none so blind as those that *will* not see, and none so deaf as those that *will* not hear! Unbelief has the fearful power of robbing a man of the faculty of faith. He who *will* not believe may find that he *cannot* believe. See John 12:39.

2. The Pagan world knew. (Matthew 27:54).

In charge of the Roman soldiers who had performed the grim task of crucifying the Lord, was a Centurion.

This man was a representative of the Roman empire which, at that time, was entirely pagan in character. Its citizens were devotees of a multitude of idols, as also were most of the nations it had conquered; for Rome allowed the countries it subjugated to retain whatever form of idolatry it preferred, providing it did not interfere with the working out of its governmental policies. Some time before this, the emperor of Rome had proclaimed himself to be divine, and decreed that worship should be accorded him. Thus the dark pall of paganism, or heathenism, enshrouded the whole Roman empire.

This Centurion had attended many executions in his day. Through long experience he had become inured and insensible to the sufferings of the victims as they were fastened to the cross on which they were to die an agonizing and a lingering death. But what was this he heard the man named Jesus say, as He was nailed to the cross? As they drove the nails through His hands and feet he heard *words of forgiveness*: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" (Luke 23:34). He had invariably heard the criminals, as they were crucified, cursing their executioners; but here was a Man who actually prayed for their forgiveness. What could it mean? His attention was aroused.

The next words he heard from the cross were *words of salvation* which Christ addressed to one of the thieves who had been crucified with Him. This thief had turned to his companion and rebuked him for his blasphemy and said: "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man hath done nothing amiss!" Then turning to Christ he cried: "Lord, remember me when Thou com-

est into Thy kingdom!” In response to this plea, from the lips of the Savior came that wonderful message: “Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” What a tremendous effect this must have had on the Centurion! Here was a Person confidently assuring one who had believed in Him of a dwelling place with Him in heaven!

The next words he heard Christ speak from the cross were *words of affection*. Standing by the cross was the mother of Jesus and by her side was John, His disciple. Looking towards His mother He said: “Woman, behold thy son!” Then looking on John, He said: “Behold thy mother!” Thus the Divine Sufferer, in the midst of His awful agony, could think with affection of His mother and make provision for her future. (John 19:27). What manner of Man could this be? The Centurion’s amazement increased.

At noon there came a great change. The sun, which had been shining brilliantly over the place of execution, was now blotted out by a great cloud of darkness which engulfed the dread scene for three long hours. Towards the end of this period of awful darkness, the Centurion heard the *words of desolation* from the lips of the Sufferer: “My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me!” What could this mean? The One who had prayed for the forgiveness of His enemies; who had promised eternal blessedness to the thief; and who, in love had made provision for His mother, now spoke of being forsaken of His God! Surely there had never been an execution like this! (Mark 15: 33-34).

The next words he heard were *words of suffering* as the Victim cried: “I thirst!” For six hours He had hung upon that dreadful cross, His body wracked with

awful pain, but this was the first time He had given any expression of His physical sufferings, and this only that “the scripture might be fulfilled.” When these words were spoken, immediately a sponge was dipped in vinegar and placed to His lips. (John 19:29; Psalms 69:21).

The sixth utterance this Centurion heard from the Lord were *words of triumph* as, with a loud voice, He cried triumphantly: “It is finished!” Though wicked men had been allowed to do their worst, yet at the end of the six hours of agony, in which Christ had endured an eternity of suffering, the Savior, with a voice vibrant with infinite power and joyous exultation had thundered out: “It is finished!” In the midst of what appeared to be utter and overwhelming defeat had come the shout of a Conqueror! (John 19:30). Each utterance of this Man served to increase the wonder which filled the heart of this pagan officer.

Then came the final voice, and with it *words of implicit trust and perfect resignation*: “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit!” Having said thus, Jesus reclined His head and dismissed His spirit. (Luke 23:46). At this last utterance, there came a convulsion of nature in the form of an earthquake, which caused the rocks to rend. The veil of the temple was also rent in twain, and many graves were opened.

This culminating miracle, following all he had heard from the lips of this wonderful Man, together with what he had observed of Christ’s behavior while on the cross, so affected this representative of paganism, and those associated with him, that we are told: “When the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly saying: Truly, this

was the Son of God.” (Matt. 27:50-54). It will be noted that not only was the centurion himself affected, but also the other pagans associated with him in the crucifixion of Christ.

Here then is the verification of our Lord’s words, as it affected the pagan world: “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am.” The cross had indeed demonstrated His Deity to paganism.

3. The political world knew.

(Matt. 27:62-28:4).

The political and military power of Rome, then in control of the land of Palestine, was also represented at the crucifixion of Christ. First, there was Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, or governor of Judea. Though he was fully persuaded of the innocence of Christ in regard to the charges brought against Him by the Jews; yet, contrary to all the demands of evidence, justice and decency, he had condemned Him to be crucified, and wrote out the accusation in Hebrew, Greek and Latin: “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” Then there were the soldiers who had charge of the crucifixion itself. Finally, there was the seal on the stone at the mouth of the tomb, and the guard of soldiers outside the tomb.

Rome, through the military strategy of its generals, plus the courage and complete obedience of its soldiers, had obtained political control of the world. One by one, each nation who sought to oppose its demands was conquered and added to its huge empire. The old slogan: “Might makes right” was exemplified in this great world power, whose armies had struck with ir-

resistible force, before whom none had been able to stand, and whose political power none could question.

Palestine itself was under its iron heel, and though the Jews hated their conquerors, they reluctantly paid the taxes Rome levied on them. The Jews did not even possess the power to crucify Christ, and consequently had to appeal to Pilate to condemn Him to death. To get him to do this, they trumped up a political charge against Jesus and said to Pilate: "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." (Luke 23:2). Later in the trial, as Pilate vacillated, the Jews shouted: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend." Finally they cried: "We have no king but Caesar!" Thus they made the trial of Christ a political issue, and succeeded only too well in their nefarious purpose.

Once the sentence had been passed, the political power of Rome moved in and took over. The soldiers performed their grisly task and executed the sentence of crucifixion. They knew their duty well, and did it thoroughly under the eye of the centurion in charge. Not content with seeing that Jesus was dead, one of them, to make doubly sure, took a spear and thrust it into the body so that blood and water flowed from the gaping wound. (John 19:32-37).

With reverent hands, the body of Christ was now taken from the cross and placed in a nearby tomb belonging to a man named Joseph of Arimathaea. It was then wrapped in linen bandages together with burial spices. Finally, a large stone was rolled across the opening of the cave tomb. (Luke 23:50-53). The next day, the chief priests and Pharisees approached Pilate and said: "Sir, we remember that this de-

ceiver said: 'After three days I will rise again.' Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, 'He is risen from the dead;' so the last error shall be worse than the first." To this Pilate replied: "Ye have a watch, (or guard) go your way, make it as sure as you can." Accordingly, a seal was placed on the tomb and a guard was set to make certain that no one would be allowed to enter the tomb. (Matt. 27: 62-66).

Thus the political and military power of the great empire of Rome, together with the religious force of the Jews was combined to make sure that the body of Christ would be kept within the narrow confines of that tomb. But what had the Lord Jesus declared? "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye *know* that I am." Was the mighty power of the political, military and religious world, plus that of the Devil, to be allowed to frustrate the "exceeding great and mighty power of the God of resurrection? No, indeed! They were to receive a demonstration of the absolute omnipotence and Deity of the One whom they had crucified, and who had repeatedly foretold, not only His crucifixion, but also His resurrection from the dead. See Matt. 16: 21; 20: 17-19; 26: 2; Luke 18: 31-34; John 10: 15-18; etc., etc.

Let us again consult the record. "As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did

shake and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women: 'Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay!'" (Matt. 28:1-6).

In these few, but graphic words, the mighty miracle of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is described. He who had been "led as a Lamb to the slaughter," and unresistingly had allowed men to heap upon Him all the ignominy and shame of their wicked hearts, was now risen triumphant from the dead, in the power of an endless life! All the vaunted political power and glory of Rome now lay prostrate at His feet! Thus Christ, in fulfillment of His own word, demonstrated, beyond all possibility of contradiction, that He was all He had claimed to be: the essential and eternal Son of God!

4. The angelic world knew.

(Matt. 28:1-6).

That innumerable company of "ministering spirits" called "angels," which had been created by God for His glory and service, were also made to know that the Babe of Bethlehem, the Man of Sychar and the Victim of Calvary, was none other than their mighty Creator who had clothed Himself with humanity. (Heb. 1:5-14).

The Bible has much to say regarding angels and their various orders and ranks, but time and space will not permit a detailed study of the subject. It is interesting to observe the part angels played in the incarnation of the Savior. It was the angel Gabriel who made the annunciation to Mary that she should be the mother of that holy Child. (Luke 1:26-37). It was an angel, accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly host, that

proclaimed to the shepherds the glad tidings of the birth of Christ. (Luke 2:8-17). Angels ministered to the Lord after the temptation in the wilderness. (Matt. 4:1-11). An angel strengthened Him in the garden of Gethsemane. (Luke 24:33). Angels announced His resurrection. (Luke 24:4-8). Two angels, at His ascension, revealed to the disciples the truth of His future coming again. (Acts 1:9-11).

The angelic world had looked down with amazement, as they saw their mighty Creator, before whose presence they had veiled their faces in worship, humble Himself and become Man. What must have been their thoughts as, with horrified gaze, they beheld Him “despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?” (Isa. 53). What consternation must have filled their hearts as they witnessed the crucifixion, and saw Him hanging on a cross, in agony and blood; not only the Object of the derision and rejection of His creatures, but forsaken of His God in that “lone, dark and mysterious hour!”

The mystery and miracle of it all was made clear to them as “it began to dawn towards the first day of the week,” when their Creator burst the bonds of death, and triumphantly rose again, in the power of an endless life, “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” (Eph. 1:21).

The prophecies of the Old Testament, “which things the angels desire to look into,” now became crystal clear as they saw the unfolding of the eternal purpose of God in the redemption of man. (I Peter 1:12). Because this Divine purpose had now been accomplished through the birth, death and resurrection of Christ,

there has been made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God. (Eph. 3:10).

What exquisite delight must have been the portion of that numberless company of angels when they saw the verification of the words of their Creator: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man then shall ye *know* that I am!" The One who "had been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," was now "crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9). In a coming day, the redeemed of all ages, together with a vast host of angelic beings, shall surround the throne on which sits the glorified Son of God, and ascribe to Him the glory and the dominion and the power for ever and ever! (Rev. 5:10-14).

5. The demonic world knew.

(Col. 2:13-15; Luke 11:21-22).

This mysterious world, peopled by the "Principalities . . . powers . . . the rulers of the darkness of this world . . . the spiritual wickedness in high places, (Eph. 6:12)." was also included in the statement of Christ: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am." This kingdom of darkness, with Satan at its head, and a host of demons under his control, was also left in no doubt as to the Deity of the One who uttered these words.

Satan had tried his utmost to bring about the downfall of Christ, and to turn Him from His purpose. With fiendish ingenuity he had carefully planned the temptation in the wilderness, but from it the Son of God had emerged victoriously to continue His task, which was to "destroy the works of the Devil." (I John 3:8).

It is often recorded that our Lord cast out demons who had indwelt human beings. On many of these occasions the demons had recognized Him as the Son of God and had confessed this fact. (Luke 4:41; 8:2; Mark 5:1, 20; 4:24, etc.). Perhaps the greatest statement that Christ made regarding His intention to overcome Satan and overthrow his kingdom, is found in Luke 11:21-22: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."

The "strong man," of course, is Satan. His "armor" is his wisdom, subtlety and power. His "palace" is this world, of which he is the prince and god (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; II Cor. 4:4). His "goods" represent fallen humanity which he blinds, deceives, enslaves and keeps in a state of false peace. (II Tim. 2:26; Rev. 20:3; II Cor. 4:4). The "Stronger than he" is the Son of God, to whom belongeth all the prerogatives of Deity, and who has all power at His command. Through His redeeming work which He accomplished on the cross, and by virtue of His victorious resurrection, Satan has been defeated, his armor taken from him, his doom pronounced, and all who trust the Savior delivered from his captivity. (Eph. 4:8-10).

Whatever lingering doubts Satan and his hosts may have had of the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth were dispelled, once and forever, by His resurrection from among the dead. We are told: "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He (Christ) also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2:14-15).

Our Lord Jesus Christ emerged from the tomb as the almighty Conqueror over all His foes. Each believer can now triumphantly sing:

“His be the Victor’s crown,
Who fought the fight alone,
Trode all His foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down!
He hell, in hell, laid low,
Made sin, He sin o’erthrew;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death, by dying, slew!”

Paul, by the Spirit, describes the glorious triumph of Christ over Satan and his kingdom in these soul stirring words: “And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” (Col. 2:15). Having conquered Satan and his hosts, the Lord of glory “passed through the heavens” to take His place, undisputed, at “the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Heb. 4:14; 1:1-3). All power is now at His command, both in heaven and on earth. Yes, the demonic world was made to realize the truth of Christ’s words: “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am!”

6. The created world knew.

(Matt. 27:45-51).

Nature itself, the handiwork of its Creator, was made to bear testimony to the Deity of One who had said: “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am.”

At His command, the fierce tempest was hushed, and the mountainous seas gave place to a great calm, for it recognized the command of its Creator. (Mark 4:36-41). He could walk upon its waters, and thus exhibit His complete mastery of the elements. (Mark 6:47-51). He was indeed the Lord of creation.

The dazzling glory of the noonday sun was blotted out, and gave place to darkness for three hours, as its Creator hung on the cross of shame:

“Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut its glories in;
When Christ, the mighty Maker died
For man, His creature’s sin!”

The earth itself was convulsed and torn by an earthquake when He, who had brought it into being by the word of His power, and sent it forth to follow its predestined orbit, died on a felon’s cross to save fallen humanity from the consequences of its sin and guilt. Thus nature paid homage to its Originator when He was lifted up, even as He had said. Our Lord’s words need to be laid to heart: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away!” (Matt. 24: 35).

7. The Christian world knew.

(I Cor. 15: 1-23).

Christianity was made possible by the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification and high Priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. Apart from Him it could not possibly exist for a moment, for “Christianity is Christ.” It was for the “joy that was set before Him” that He endured the cross and despised the shame” (Heb. 12: 2). That joy was to do His Father’s will, and this He perfectly accomplished to the infinite and eternal satisfaction of the Father who raised Him from the dead, glorified Him at His own right hand, and gave Him a name that is above every name, that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2: 9-11).

The resurrection was thus God's "Amen!" to Christ's: "It is finished!" It was the Divine seal of approval on all that Christ had said and done. It was in view of this that our Lord declared: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am." He had predicted His death and resurrection many times to His disciples, but they had been very slow to grasp the plain meaning of His words. It was not until the resurrection had taken place that there dawned upon them the full implication of His statements regarding it. Now they knew, beyond any peradventure and doubt, that all he had claimed to be was fully, completely and eternally verified by God Himself. More things dawned that wonderful day than the first day of the week! It was the dawn of Christianity, when the Christian world was made to know that the Lord Jesus was the eternal "I AM."

Now let us consider the far reaching significance of the resurrection as this stupendous event affects Christianity itself. The resurrection issues a challenge to science and philosophy to *explain it*; to reason and logic to *disprove it*; to history to *reproduce it*; and to time to *forget it*. Many and ingenious have been the attempts on the part of unbelievers to either deny or explain away this greatest of all miracles, but all such efforts have been in vain. The resurrection stands today as the best authenticated event of history. No one has been able to silence "the eloquence of the empty tomb"!

(1) *The resurrection is the complete demonstration of the Deity of Christ.*

He had emphatically declared Himself to be the Son of God. (John 10:30-38; 9:35-38). He not only assumed the titles of Deity, and claimed the prerogatives of Deity, but He had demonstrated, beyond all

doubt, the reality of His claims by miracles only possible to Deity. Moreover, He had accepted the worship of men. (John 5:17-23). For His claim to Deity He had been condemned to death (Matt. 26:63-66). Furthermore, He had declared His death would be *voluntary, vicarious, victorious* and *vindicated* by God. (John 10:18; Mark 10:45; Matt. 16:21; 12:39-40; 27:63; 28:6). Thus His resurrection, which He had previously announced, served to establish the complete proof of all His claims to Deity.

(2) *The resurrection is the irrefutable vindication of the authority of all His teaching.*

Whatever may have been the subject on which Christ spoke, what He said on that subject has been thus proven to be absolutely true, authoritative and final. He is the eternal "Logos," the living Word of God. Christ set His Divine imprimatur on the Old Testament Scriptures. He quoted the incidents recorded therein as being factual. He reinforced their teaching, and declared: "The Scripture cannot be broken." (John 10:35). This settles the matter of the inspiration, truth and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures for the regenerated child of God; for the One who authenticated them is risen, ascended and glorified at God's right hand.

(3) *The resurrection is God's seal of approbation on the work of redemption accomplished by His Son on the cross.*

Christ declared He had come to do a work on behalf of His Father. (John 4:34; Luke 2:49; John 9:4; 17:4). Before He dismissed His spirit He had announced, with a loud voice, that this work had been accomplished: "It is finished!" (John 19:30). The resurrection of Christ is therefore the evidence of the

Father's complete acceptance of and satisfaction in this accomplished redemptive work of His Son. Each believer can now rejoice in the glad assurance that:

"Done is the work that saves,
Once, and for ever done;
Finished the righteousness
That clothes the unrighteous one!"

A risen, ascended and glorified Man is God's receipt to the universe that all the work needed for the salvation of each lost and guilty sinner has been accomplished by His beloved Son. Each sinner trusting in the merits of His redeeming blood and receiving Christ as his own Savior is assured, by God, that he is pardoned and accepted in the Beloved, and consequently blessed with all the spiritual blessings that Christ's death and resurrection has made available. (See I Peter 1:1-9; Eph. 1:3).

(4) *The resurrection of Christ marked the introduction of a power infinitely superior to that of death.*

Death, with but two exceptions, (Enoch and Elijah), had exacted a heavy toll on all humanity since the advent of sin into the world. (Rom. 5:12). But now a power, far transcending that of death, was introduced into the world by the resurrection of Christ. He burst the bands of death, and emerged from the grave with the keys of death and hell hanging on His girdle, and exclaimed triumphantly: "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death!" (Rev. 1:18).

The supreme exhibition of God's power in the Old Testament was the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea; but in the New Testament it is the resurrection of Christ. More wonderful still, it is the measure of the power which God now places at the disposal of every

child of God. We read: "That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead." (Eph. 1:18-20).

It is through this "exceeding greatness of His power" that each believer has been "quickenened into newness of life" in Christ; and is thus enabled to live a life to the glory of his Lord and Savior, whose death and resurrection made it so blessedly and gloriously actual in his experience. (Eph. 2:1-2; John 5:24; Rom. 8:1-2).

(5) *The resurrection of Christ settles, once for all, the age-long question: "If a man die, shall he live again?"* (Job 14:14).

Each believer, because of the resurrection of his Lord and Savior, is privileged to know at least three things regarding death. First, that death is not annihilation, for Christ did not cease to exist at death. Second, that death does not mean the cessation of consciousness, for Christ was not unconscious at death; He was in Paradise. Third, that death is not the end of everything, for Christ rose again from among the dead, to live forever in the power of an endless life. Death has been demonstrated to be, not a terminus, but only a junction.

There are those who affirm: "No one knows what takes place after death, for no one has come back to tell us." To this there is one conclusive and unanswerable reply: Christ, the Son of God, has died and come back from the dead, and told us what happens after death, and *no one has come back to contradict Him!*

(6) *The resurrection of Christ is both the pledge and pattern of the resurrection of every believer.*

Christ declared: "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:19). Is Christ alive? Then all His people are assured that one day they too shall share His glorious resurrection! This is the basis of Paul's great argument in I Corinthians 15. The resurrection of Christ is said to represent "the firstfruits" of the great harvest that shall yet take place; and it is the guarantee that all who have been linked to Christ shall one day be raised and glorified with Him. (verse 20).

In I Thess. 4:12-18, we read: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Paul then proceeds to show that the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the rapture of those believers who are alive at the coming of the Lord will be consummated when "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."

(7) *The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee God has given that His Son shall be the ultimate Judge of all humanity. (Acts 17:31).*

How intensely solemn is this message! Mark it well, for it is an eternal verity: "God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained: whereof He hath given assurance to all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

By this we learn that the day of judgment has already been appointed, the Judge has been selected, the accused will all be present, the evidence shall all be gathered, the underlying principles of the judgment have been determined, even the righteousness of God, the sentence shall be passed, and the execution shall

be carried out without fail. All this has been made absolutely certain of fulfilment by the resurrection of Christ, to whom all judgment has been committed. (John 5:22).

It is this fact that gives eternal import to the preaching of the gospel. The eternal weal or woe of the hearer is determined by the attitude he adopts to the message of the gospel, and the Savior presented therein. "He that believeth is *not condemned*, but he that believeth not is *condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18). Each person's eternal salvation or damnation is thus decided either by his acceptance or rejection of the Son of God.

In view of this, how pregnant with meaning are the words of the Savior, uttered 1900 years ago: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am." We have seen how marvelously these words were verified, so that the *religious world*, the *pagan world*, the *political world*, the *angelic world*, the *demonic world*, the *natural world* and the *Christian world* were all made to know the essential and eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

May it be yours and mine to bow the knee to Him **as Savior and confess Him as Lord**, and then live for His glory for the rest of our lives on earth!

III. The Attraction of the Cross.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me” (John 12: 32).

Having discussed “The necessity for the cross,” as found in the words: “Even so, must the Son of Man be lifted up”; and “The testimony of the cross,” as discovered in the words: “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am”; let us now look into the spiritual significance of His third reference to being lifted up: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.”

In these words, the Lord Jesus prophesied that His work upon the cross should result in the attraction of humanity to Himself. Thus He envisioned the *magnetism* of the cross, and how wonderfully His words have been verified in the centuries that have followed!

Wherein does the attraction of the cross lie? Certainly not in the manner of His death. There is nothing attractive about the crucifixion itself. On the contrary, it awakens only our repugnance, for we shrink from the gruesome details with horror. This fiendish form of inflicting torture and death upon the human body is sickening to contemplate. No human tongue or pen can adequately describe the awful sufferings of the Divine Victim as He was nailed to that cross, His face wet with the spittle of vile men, His ears assailed with their wicked blasphemies, and thus exposed to all the shame and reproach that sinful men could heap upon Him. He was the “despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” (Isa. 53: 3).

No, the attraction of the cross does not lie in the sordid details of the description of the crucifixion, but

in the *Person* who hung upon it, and the *purpose* for which He became "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8). No wonder millions of Christians, all over the world, have reverently sung, and still sing:

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Lord of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood."

"See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an off'ring far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all!"

With our Lord's words in mind, let us now seek to discover the elements which combine to form the attraction of the cross. One thing is certain: wherever "the old, old story of Jesus and His love" is told throughout the world, men and women and boys and girls, of "every kindred, tribe and tongue and people and nation" have been attracted to Him and moved to trust Him as their Savior, own Him as their Lord, love Him above all others, gladly serve Him with tireless devotion, and even sacrifice their lives for Him and the cause of His gospel. "The noble army of martyrs" bears eloquent testimony to the truth of this fact.

The attraction of the cross is due entirely to the *Christ of the cross!* Ritualism gives us the cross without a Christ; Modernism gives us a Christ without a cross; but the message of the gospel is: "Jesus Christ,

and Him crucified.” (I Cor. 2:2). It was this message that became a “stumbling block” to the religious Jews, and “folly” to the philosophical Gentiles; but to “those who are called, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (I Cor. 1:24).

We shall state seven reasons why the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ has attracted and still draws humanity to Himself.

1. *The lifting up of Christ is the revelation of the most beautiful Character ever portrayed on the pages of history.*

Notice His words: “I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me.” It is the *Person of Christ* that is the secret of His attraction. It is because of what He is, in Himself, that all men are drawn to Him.

One word will suffice to sum up His Person—unique. This word is greatly overworked in these days. It can only be applied, in the absolute sense of the term, to the incarnate Son of God. In the French translation of John 3:16, the word, “only begotten,” is rendered, “unique;” and this best represents the meaning of the word in the original. The Lord Jesus was the *unique* Son of God, or “the only One of His kind.” Christ stands out distinct from all humanity as the incomparable One, the “chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.” (S. of S. 5:10-16).

“No mortal can with Him compare
Amongst the sons of men;
Fairer is He than all the fair,
Who fill the heavenly train!”

The world’s greatest artists and sculptors have risen to the greatest heights of their profession as they have vied with each other in attempting to portray the symmetrical beauty and absolute perfection of His character; but all have been forced to confess how

short they have come in presenting an adequate concept of the loveliness of His person.

Throughout the past nineteen centuries, the greatest of writers, both secular and spiritual, have attempted, but in vain, to describe His life on earth as He moved amongst the sons of men. The hundreds of books on this theme combine to testify to the fact that the character of Christ defies both definition and description. Men have made many attempts to write "The Life of Christ," but no volume, or volumes, could possibly contain the full record of His life. In this connection, John's words take on a new meaning: "There are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25).

The earthly life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ stands out clear and distinct, like a majestic, towering and unscaleable mountain peak that pierces the sky, and which both challenges and frustrates all attempts to conquer its heights. Luke's preface to the Acts contains the phrase: "Of all that Jesus *began both to do and teach.*" These words were written nineteen hundred years ago, but Jesus still continues "to do and teach," nor shall He ever cease to "do and teach"; for He ever lives, "in the power of an endless life," to make good to His people what He accomplished for them when He was lifted up on the cross. Thus no complete chronicle of His life can be penned by men, much less contained within the covers of any books written by men.

The world's most gifted and eloquent orators have been made to realize the utter inadequacy of words to set forth the super-excellence of His matchless char-

acter. Neither the tongues of men, nor of angels, can suffice to describe the virtue of His perfect character, or the value of His redeeming work.

“No mortal tongue or pen can tell
Thy character, O Lord;
Thy grace and loveliness exceeds
All human thought and word!”

The greatest leaders of this earth have joined to pay tribute to the greatest Leader of them all. Napoleon, banished to the isle of St. Helena, is reported to have said of Christ: “I know men, and I tell you Jesus is not a man. He commands us to believe, and gives no other reason than His awful words: ‘I am God!’ Philosophers try to solve the mysteries of the universe by their senseless dissertations—fools! They are like an infant that cries to have the moon for a plaything. Christ never hesitates. He speaks with authority. His religion is a mystery, but it subsists by its own force. He seeks, and absolutely requires the love of men, the most difficult thing to obtain. Alexander, Caesar and Hannibal conquered the world, but had no friends . . . Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires, but upon what? Force. Jesus founded His empire on love; and at this hour millions would die for Him. I myself have inspired multitudes with such affection that they would die for me. But my presence was necessary. Now that I am in St. Helena, where are my friends? I am forgotten, soon to return to the earth and become food for worms! What an abyss between my misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ, Who is proclaimed, loved, adored; and whose kingdom is extending over all the earth. Is this death? I tell you the death of Christ is the death of a God. I tell you that Jesus Christ is God!”

And what shall be said of that innumerable company of sinners saved by grace who join, with one heart

and voice, to testify: "We love Him because He first loved us." (I John 4:19). These, without one discordant note, gladly unite to praise Him, and join with the poet to sing:

"No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind!"

Thus wonderfully have the words of our blessed Lord been verified: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

2. *The lifting up of Christ is the greatest exhibition of grace ever manifested.*

Grace has well been defined as "the outward exhibition of love towards those who are utterly and entirely undeserving of it." The supreme demonstration of grace is described by Paul in his well known words: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." (II Cor. 8:9).

From the infinite and unapproachable mystery of the eternal Godhead, He came to the simplicity and humility of a human body. He, who was the Creator of all things, willingly allowed Himself to be made "a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," that He might redeem fallen humanity to Himself! How rich He was in that eternal past we shall never be able to comprehend. How poor He became we shall never be able to fathom. How rich each believer now is, because of the poverty of his Savior, will require all eternity to grasp! (Heb. 2:9).

No wonder, therefore, that true Christians delight to sing of this grace, which not only robs them of all

cause for self congratulation, but which gives all the glory and praise to the One who alone is worthy!

“Wonderful grace was Thine, O Lord,
Leaving Thy throne on high;
From Thy great wealth to poverty,
Lord of all life, to die!

Out from the light, to darkness dread,
Glory, to shame and woe;
Our sins to bear, God’s wrath endure,
Thou didst to Calv’ry go!”

There is nothing comparable in all history to this display of matchless grace. The more one contemplates it, the more marvelous it becomes until the soul is lost in wonder, praise and worship. All the illimitable breadth, length, height and depth of Divine grace is displayed in the incarnation, life, ministry, suffering and death of the blessed Lord Jesus. It is the proclamation of this story of His love that charms both young and old alike, casts a spell upon their spirits, and draws them ,even as He prophesied, to Himself.

3. *The lifting up of Christ has resulted in the releasing of the greatest power ever displayed.*

The substitutionary work of Christ has brought into existence a force and power that dwarfs, into utter insignificance, all other human or natural forces. Through His finished work at Calvary and, by virtue of His resurrection, Christ has made it possible for a gospel to be preached that is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” (Rom. 1:16). Though the story has often been told, its power has never waned. Under the sound of the gospel, thousands of sinners have been drawn to the Lord Jesus, to trust Him as their Savior, own Him as their Lord, and live for His glory. The poet has correctly expressed the thought in the well known hymn:

“I love to tell the story,
For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting
To hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old old story,
That I have loved so long!”

Under the sound of the sweet gospel chimes, Christ has drawn the miser from his treasured golden hoard to the possession of the true wealth that moth and the rust cannot corrupt, and which the thief cannot break through and steal. (Matt. 6:19-21). The gay and giddy worldling has been drawn from the folly of his sinful pleasures, to the true satisfaction that only the Son of God can give. Christ draws the proud and self-righteous moralist from his smug self complacency in his own fancied goodness to a realization of his own sinfulness and dire need of God's regenerating power. Christ draws the religious ritualist from the outward externals of his rites and ceremonies, and from a mere empty profession of Christianity, to an experimental knowledge of the Son of God as a living, bright reality to his soul, “whom to know is life eternal” (John 17:3). He draws the heathen idolator from his superstitious delusions, and the vain worship of dead idols, so that he is “turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God.” (I Thess. 1:9). He draws the prodigal from the far country, with its glitter, glamor and grime, to the Father's arms, home and rich provision. Thus the sweet compelling force of the gospel is still accomplishing what Christ declared it would when He was lifted up.

4. The lifting up of Christ has provided the greatest salvation that has ever been contemplated.

Christ had declared that the purpose for which He had come into the world was to: “Seek and to save

that which was lost.” Furthermore, He stated: “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 19:10; Matt. 9:13). It was to make this salvation possible that He went to the cross, bore our sins, died and rose again. He now is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high, “able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.” (Heb. 7:25).

In order to appreciate the attractiveness of this salvation, or deliverance, which Christ has made possible at such infinite cost, let us notice how the word of God describes it.

(1) *It is called a translation from darkness to light.* “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” (Col. 1:13). What a change! From the darkness of ignorance, of superstition, of philosophical vaporings, which “darken counsel by words without knowledge,” of the empty theories of “science, falsely so called,” and from Satanic delusion; the strong Son of God delivers those who trust in Him. He brings them, by His matchless grace and almighty power, into “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. 4:6). Saul, of Tarsus, once a bitter enemy of Christ, and a persecutor of Christians, was wonderfully saved by the Son of God, and then commissioned by Him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles: “to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God” (Acts 26:18). What could be more attractive than this deliverance from the gloom of darkness into the glory of that light? (Eph. 5:8).

(2) *It is described as an emancipation from slavery to liberty.* The Scriptures reveal that all humanity is

in bondage to sin, and helpless to deliver itself from the chains which bind. Christ came to be the great Deliverer. He declared: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:32-36). Every bondsman of sin, who owns his need, believes in the truth of the gospel, and trusts Christ as his Savior is, that moment, freed from the slavery of sin and guilt, and enabled to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free." (Gal. 5:1).

Each Christian can now gratefully and confidently sing:

"My chains are snapped,
The bonds of sin are broken,
And I am free!
O, let the triumphs of
His grace be spoken,
Who died for me!"

Yes, the Savior knew full well what attraction liberty would have for the helpless and hopeless slaves of sin.

(3) *It is pictured as a transition from abject poverty to immense wealth.* From the total bankruptcy, into which sin had brought humanity, the believer is brought, through the grace and poverty of his Savior, into possession of incalculable spiritual wealth that far exceeds all he could possibly ask or think!

The Bible describes the poverty of the sinner in no uncertain terms. Each one, by nature is said to be without God, Christ, life, peace, hope, righteousness and excuse. Should he die, while in this condition, he will be without escape from the righteous judgment of a sin-hating God. (Eph. 2:1, 12; Isa. 57:20, 21; Rom. 3:10; 1:20).

What a contrast takes place when a sinner owns his bankruptcy and trusts in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ! From that moment he has God as his Father, Christ as his Savior, the Holy Spirit as his indwelling Comforter, the word of God as his infallible guide, all spiritual blessings as his present and eternal possession, Christians as his heaven-born, heaven-bound and heaven-bent companions, and heaven itself as his eternal home. What could possibly be more attractive to a poverty-stricken sinner than this munificent offer of the free gift of such vast spiritual wealth on the part of the God of all grace?

(4) *It is likened to the bringing of a person from a place of distance to a place of nearness.* The Bible puts it thus: "Ye who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13). Sin has separated man from God. Between a holy God and a sinning creature there stretches a gulf that no man can bridge; either by his religious rites, prayers, tears, good works, money, or good resolutions.

The Savior, by His death and victorious resurrection, has bridged that gulf. Every sinner trusting in Him and in His finished work of redemption, is brought from that place of distance, death and doom into the presence and favor of the God against whom he has so grievously sinned! Not only is the believer brought nigh to God, but he can now enjoy fellowship with Him, for we are assured: "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ." (I John 1:3). Thus the Christian can now gratefully sing:

"So near, so very near to God,
Nearer I cannot be;
For in the Person of His Son,
I am as near as He."

Surely the thought of being brought from distance to nearness should have an attraction for every sinner.

(5) *It is spoken of as a deliverance from a state of condemnation to that of justification.* The third chapter of Romans leaves the reader in no doubt as to the state of man by nature. He is declared “guilty before God,” and therefore exposed to the condemnation that such a condition justly merits.

The question may well be asked: How can such a person ever be delivered from the guilt and punishment of sin, and brought into the position of being declared righteous by a holy God? The answer is found only in the lifting up of the Son of God. Christ, who is “the Judge of all the earth,” bore the sins, took the place and died in the stead of the criminal, and thus satisfied all the claims of Divine justice. Now risen, and at God’s right hand, He makes it possible for every sinner trusting Him to be: “Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 3:24).

It is certain that there could be nothing more attractive to a criminal under the sentence of death than to know there was a possibility, not merely of pardon, but of being declared righteous by the highest court of the land.

(6) *It is presented as a passing from a state of spiritual death into a state of spiritual life.* Mark the words of our Lord Himself: “He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).

What greater contrast could possibly be imagined? Man, by nature, is spiritually dead to God. Just as a

body without physical life is declared to be physically dead; so a person who does not possess spiritual life is said by God to be spiritually dead. The Lord Jesus declared that He came into the world that we “might have life, and that more abundantly.” (John 10:10).

To make this gift of eternal life possible, “Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and rose again.” (I Cor. 15:1-3). He now ever lives to give eternal life to each person who hears His word and believes on Him. To such He says: “I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” (John 10:28-29). It is no wonder that such an attractive offer should draw men and women to the One who made it possible by being lifted up on the cross!

(7) *It is designated as a change of destination, from the doom of hell to the delights of heaven.* We need ever to remember that it was the Lord Himself who spoke so solemnly of the “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth” that awaited those who despised, rejected, or neglected the great salvation He came to bring. Only Christ Himself can fully comprehend all that is involved by the words: “These shall go away into everlasting punishment;” and: “He that believeth not shall be damned.” (Matt. 8:12; 18:8; 25:46; Mark 16:16).

Now contrast this dreadful fate with the words Christ addressed to those who believed on Him: “In My Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” (John 14:2-3).

Surely the revelation of such a change of destination from the doom of hell to the glories of heaven cannot fail to attract each sinner who has been brought to realize, in some measure, his sin, need and danger of eternal damnation.

5. *The lifting up of Christ has resulted in the impartation of the greatest satisfaction ever experienced by humanity.*

Mark our Lord's words: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" (John 7:37). To the woman at the well He said: "Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:13-14). Thus, under the likeness of a fountain, the Lord plainly states that all who believe in Him shall experience complete satisfaction.

It is obvious, even to the casual observer, that this world, with all its pleasures, popularity, power and pelf, can never satisfy the human soul. The confession of every sinner saved by grace is:

"I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,
But ah, the waters failed;
E'en as I stooped to drink they fled,
And mocked me as I wailed!

Now none but Christ can satisfy
No other name for me.
There's love and life and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee!"

Solomon, who drank deeply of this world's pleasures, admitted with chagrin: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity . . . and vexation of spirit" (Eccl. 1:2-18). We have all been made to realize that this life is characterized largely by unsatisfied longings, unrealized ambitions, unfulfilled anticipations, grievous vexations, discourag-

ing frustrations and bitter disappointments. Over the fountain of this world's amusements our Lord has written the words: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again!" (John 4:13).

Against this drab background of disappointment, disillusionment and disgruntlement, how attractive is the guarantee of eternal satisfaction which Christ makes to those who come to Him, and make Him the Lord of their lives!

Let us think for a few moments of the completeness of this satisfaction offered to the sons of men that has resulted from the lifting up of the Lord Jesus.

(1) *There is the satisfaction of a three fold peace.* First, of *peace with God*, which Christ made through "the blood of His cross." This assures the believer that all the black past of his life has been both forgiven and forgotten. (Col. 1:20). Second, of the *peace of God* which is the portion of each Christian who is anxious for nothing, prayerful in everything and thankful for anything. (See Phil. 4:6-7). Third, of the *peace of God's presence* which is guaranteed to all who learn, receive, hear, see and obey the truth of the word of God. (Phil. 4:9).

(2) *There is the satisfaction of communion and fellowship with the Lord Himself* as the skilful Guide, the gracious Companion and the faithful Friend all along the pilgrim pathway. His promise is: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me'" (Heb. 13:5-6).

(3) *There is the satisfaction of His provision for His people.* The Lord not only anticipates the needs of His saints, but guarantees to supply every requirement

of which they may stand in need. The promise is: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19).

In a world characterized by unrest, the Savior says to His own: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27). In a scene marked by sin and its consequent sorrow, He declares: "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 15:11). Well He knew the problems His people must face, the trials through which they must pass, and the tribulations they must endure. In view of all this, He made the simple but sublime statement: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9).

What could possibly be more attractive than this three fold provision by which the true and lasting satisfaction of His people is assured? The worldling seeks it in vain from the pleasures, policies, passions and philosophies of this world. With Augustine, each must confess: "Lord, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." Only in Christ is there found undefinable peace, unspeakable joy and illimitable grace. Yes, the hymn writer was correct when he wrote:

"Worldly joy is fleeting—
Vanity itself,
Vain the dazzling brightness,
Vain the stores of wealth;
Vain the pomp and glory,
Only Thou canst give
Peace and satisfaction,
Whilst on earth we live:
There is none, Lord Jesus,
There is none like Thee,
For the soul that thirsteth,
There is none like Thee!"

6. *The lifting up of Christ has resulted in the provision of the grandest objective in life ever conceived.*

This supreme objective of life, needless to say, is a desire for, a knowledge of, and a willingness to do the will of God. Surely there can be no greater or grander object for a person's life than this!

An individual's greatness is not determined by the eminence he reaches in the educational, religious, scientific or political circles of this world. It is determined entirely by the measure in which he lives in and does the will of God. Measured by this standard, many that are looked upon as being "first" are, in reality, "last." (See Matt. 19:30; Mark 9:35).

A life without a worthy objective is a wasted life, for it is aimless, valueless and useless; and surely such a life holds out no attraction for anyone. It is tragically possible for a person to merely *exist* in this life without really *living*. Life, in its true and real sense, lies in "doing the will of God from the heart." (Eph. 6:6). Of David it was said: "He served his generation by the will of God." (Acts 13:36). God places before His people, in golden letters, the soul stirring words: "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (I John 2:17). Here is the secret of true spiritual immortality! Some people advertise *themselves* into *oblivion*; while others minimize themselves into *immortality*! Our Lord said "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mark 8:35).

During His life on earth, our Lord ever kept this objective before Him, and allowed nothing and no one to turn Him aside from the path of delighting in and doing the will of His Father. His first recorded utterance evidences this fact: "Wist ye not that I must be

about My Father's business?" He also declared: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work." He further testified: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." From the awesome shades of Gethsemane came the words: "Father . . . not My will, but Thine be done." As He hung upon the cross, and thus completed our redemption, He cried triumphantly: "It is finished!" (Luke 2: 49; John 4: 34; 9: 4; Luke 22: 42; John 19: 30).

This grand objective, which the Lord Jesus so perfectly accomplished in His life, He passed on to His disciples after He was risen. He said: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so I send you." (John 20: 21). Just as Christ was sent into the world to do the will of His Father, so now the Lord sends His people into the world to do His will. Thus He has left "us an example that we should follow His steps." (I Peter 2: 21). Here, then, is the supreme object for the life of the believer.

The attraction of this supreme objective lies in the fact that the will of God is described as being "good, acceptable and perfect." (Rom. 12: 2). Therefore to live outside of God's will implies that the person so doing is evil, displeasing and unacceptable to God, and consequently an utter failure, spiritually.

It goes without saying that no one can do the will of God until he has been brought to know God; and no one can know God apart from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who declared: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." (John 14: 6). Through His being lifted up on the cross, Christ has made this relationship with God possible to "whosoever will;" for we read: "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become

the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (John 1:12). Each sinner trusting Christ as his own Savior is that moment regenerated by the Spirit of God, who communicates to him a divine nature, in the power of which the believer is enabled to both desire, know and do the will of God.

In the measure in which the Christian makes the doing of the will of God the supreme passion of his life; so will his spiritual joy and prosperity be determined in this life, and his reward in the future. This grand objective of life should therefore be, to the born again believer, the most attractive thing imaginable!

7. The lifting up of Christ has resulted in the assurance of the brightest future ever described.

This future is as bright as only the promises of God can paint it! We are told that: “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18).

(1) Think of the attractive future of the believer at death.

The word of God leaves us in no doubt as to what takes place when the body of a Christian dies. At the moment of death the spirit of the believer goes to be “with Christ, which is far better.” (Phil. 1:23). Three things are predicted of the intermediate state of those who have died in Christ. First there is *conscious existence*. Second, there is *conscious companionship*, for he is said to be “with Christ.” Third, there is *conscious blessedness*, for he is said to be “far better.”

Scripture places no interval between the death of the believer’s body and the presence of his spirit with the Lord. Paul, by the Holy Spirit declared: “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from

the body and to be present with the Lord.” (II Cor. 5: 8). The Lord Himself said to the dying thief that believed in Him: “Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43). Thus the future of each believer, at death, is a most attractive one.

(2) *Now let us think of the attractive future of the believer at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Savior plainly declared He would personally come again. Let us listen to His own words: “In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:2-3). The more these words are pondered, the more attractive do they become. Note the *Person* who is coming. He said: “I will come;” It is the Lord Himself who is coming. Mark the *purpose* for His coming: to “receive you unto Myself.” Look at the *prospect* of His coming: “That where I am, there ye may be also.” What could possibly be more attractive for a Christian than that?

Further details concerning His personal second coming are given us in the epistles, where we read: “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (I Thess. 4:16-17). Thus, at Christ’s coming, the bodies of those who died in Christ shall be raised and glorified and reunited to their spirits which are already with the Lord. Those believers who are alive at

His coming will be raptured; that is, their bodies will be changed and made like unto the body of the Lord. In these glorified bodies they will be caught up and, without dying, will be with and like their Lord for ever! (I Cor. 15:51-58; Phil. 3:21).

What a glorious prospect this is! No wonder, therefore, that the Bible concludes with the prayer: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20). The Christian looks, not for the *undertaker* to bury his body; but for the *Uppertaker* to rapture his body. In view of this great event, the child of God would do well to hold the possessions of this earth with a light hand, and so live for his absent, but soon coming Lord, that he will not be "ashamed before Him at His appearing." (I John 2:28).

(3) Now think of the glorious eternity each believer shall enjoy.

No human words could possibly convey an adequate description of what heaven will be like. God Himself finds it necessary to describe it largely by the use of negatives, otherwise our finite minds could not possibly comprehend it.

In the closing chapters of the book of Revelation, the glories of the Celestial City are described as follows: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away . . . And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him; and

they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 21:3-4; 22:3-5).

Surely all will agree that this is a most attractive description and, best of all, it is true! No wonder the poet wrote:

"If here on earth the thought of Jesus' love
Lift our poor hearts this weary world above;
If even here the taste of heavenly springs
So cheers the spirit that the pilgrim sings:
What will the sunshine of His glory prove?
What the unmingled fulness of His love?
What hallelujahs shall His presence raise—
What, but one loud eternal burst of praise!"

We have seen what a wealth of meaning is embodied in that statement of our Lord Jesus Christ: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me." Thousands upon thousands have been drawn to Him by the sweet compelling cords of His infinite love, have trusted Him as their Savior, owned Him as their Lord and Master, love Him above all others, worship Him with the keenest delight, and serve Him with gladness.

In a coming day when they shall surround Him, as He sits upon His throne, crowned with glory and honor, they shall sing, with one heart and voice: "Thou art worthy for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and people and tongue and nation . . . Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing!" (Rev. 5:9-12). What a day that shall be! A day that shall never know an evening's sunset—and where the Lamb is all the glory!

* * * * *

We have noted the *necessity for the cross* in our Savior's words: "Even so, *must* the Son of Man be lifted up." We have marked the *testimony of the cross* by the words: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye *know* that I am." We have considered the *attraction of the cross* in the words: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will *draw* all men unto Me."

May it be yours and mine to allow these tremendous truths to grip our hearts, shape our convictions, and so mould our lives, that they shall be lived to the honor and glory of the eternal Son of God who, in the infinitude of His grace, became *the uplifted Christ!*

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