

A
WORD
IN ITS
SEASON

1st Series

No. 392

November 2005

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“IN THAT DAY”

John 14: 15-20; 16: 22-33

P.M. I was thinking of the references to “in that day” – no doubt the Spirit’s day. We may get some impression together of what is open to us in that day. He says, “because I live, ye also shall live”. That is a feature of the present day. I think we had some sense of that this morning. It was referred to in thanksgiving that we are living in the order and character of His life. Then He says, “In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you”. We need a lot of help in speaking of that because although we are here at the present time, because the Spirit is here we are brought into the present enjoyment of relationships. We are not just taken up as individuals saved by grace, great as that is, but are brought into the enjoyment of relationships that centre in divine Persons themselves.

I thought that carried through into chapter 16. He says, “In that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not to you that I will demand of the Father for you”. He says, I do not need to, “for the Father himself has affection for you, because ye have had affection for me”. Much else enters into these passages but I wonder whether there is something distinctive in that we are living in the day in which the Spirit is operating in a way in which He has never done before and will never do again. He is linking us with the realm of divine affections.

D.A.B. There is obviously something clearly defined in the Lord’s mind because He need not have said, “in that day”. It is a wonderful climax in relation to God’s ways on the earth that there should be a day in which spiritual and eternal things can be entered into in the power of the Spirit by those who are here.

P.M. Yes. It is not just for our blessing but for the Father’s glory that there should be persons living here in the life of Christ. This is more than Romans 5, being saved in the power of His life, this is persons set up in the life of a Man out of death, glorified, to whom death will never attach again. What a triumph!

D.A.B. It is clear that although we are dependent on the Father and make requests to Him, we nevertheless know what the power of life is in ourselves. We often say that our experience of it is limited and feeble, but we need to get a greater impression of the reality of it?

P.M. I think so. Our experience, some of us would have to say, is very limited, but occasions like this would stimulate desire to know more of what it is to live because He lives. I remember reading 'if Christ was no longer there before the Father, would my life here cease?'

E.C.B. The special bearing of the reference in chapter 14 is that "ye shall know", because it was true when Jesus was here – "the Father who is in me does the works". The point of the reference following Jesus speaking of the Spirit coming is that "ye shall know", and more than that, "ye in me, and I in you".

P.M. I hope that we can get some help as to that. That knowledge that He was speaking of was objective knowledge, but they would consciously come into the present experience of knowing that He was in the Father and the Father in Him and we in His affections. Is not the Spirit's presence here, not only to give us the light of what is there where Jesus is, but to give us the conscious enjoyment of it even now?

E.C.B. I think that now but I wonder whether we catch exactly what Jesus meant. References are made to this verse, but the scripture does not say that we are in the Father's affections and Christ in ours. The ultimate effect of this verse is that God is in us and in a certain sense we are in God.

P.M. Does John not say something similar to that in his epistle (see 1 John 4: 11-14)? I was feeling after it and hoping that we could get some help together because in that day we are brought into the very intimacy not only of the knowledge of God, but the knowledge of God with the feelings, affections and relationships that are open to us because of the revelation of Himself.

D.J.H. Is this what the Lord Jesus refers to in His prayer in John 17 or is that different? He says, "that they may be all one, as thou,

Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us” (v 21). Is that a similar reference? It is a question of knowing – it seems as though the Lord Jesus is praying to the Father that we might really know this and come into it, but it is wonderful that He should say there, “one in us”.

P.M. Something on that line was referred to in thanksgiving this morning – what was secured in oneness in relation to the Lord and the Father – that they may be one in us! No doubt much more is included in it, but does it not bring on to view the source and the power of the life that is presently enjoyed by the believer and in the assembly, that life is there in divine Persons. I wonder if I fully believe that or whether I am satisfied in thinking that divine Persons have come to me to help me in the life that I once lived. This is beyond that, this is another life altogether having its origin in divine Persons themselves.

D.J.H. It is not only that the Holy Spirit is here but Christ is glorified in a distinctive way in this time. In the time to come the assembly will be united to Him in glory, but now we are still here in testimony and yet this is true at the present time. I was thinking of the distinctive place that Christ has at the present time. He could say Himself, “and have sat down with my Father in his throne”, Rev 3: 21.

P.M. He says here, “because I live ye also shall live” – that bears on the distinctive place that He has. He lives in the Father’s affections, there is a real Man living in heaven in the presence of God. That is something that should lay hold of me increasingly, and that Man is my life. I wonder if I can really say that. He is there in all His distinctiveness, He is living in the power of an indissoluble life. I had some touch of that this morning, He lives in a life to which death will never, ever, attach, but because He is there, that Man is my life. Can I say that that is really so?

B.H.C. The Lord could say, “but ye see me”. I was wondering whether by the Spirit we behold His glory and beauty. Do you think that is the power of life to behold Him?

P.M. You are referring to, “the world sees me no longer; but ye see me” – you are suggesting that that is the result of the Spirit’s service currently? They had had the Lord Jesus among them, “the world sees me no longer”, He had come into the world and from chapter 12 of this gospel He was going out of it. From that point His public service was completed, He was going out of the world, but He says, “but ye see me”. Does that not bring to bear the importance of the Supper and the necessity for faith in assembling that we might see Him?

B.H.C. We have often said that we gather to meet the Lord. I was thinking of Him as “the same yesterday, and to-day, and to the ages to come”, Heb 13: 8. He is the same glorious One and the disciples had been with Him, but then He appears to His own, He comes. I was thinking of the preciousness of beholding Him.

P.M. And He comes to His own, not only for what He might impart but also for what He would get. He comes because He loves to.

D.A.B. John had treasured these comments for a long time, but I wonder whether he had become increasingly impressed with how important they had been to the disciples, to those who were actually there. If you had talked to them in a natural way they would have said, we will never forget Him, we will always love Him, and He will always have a place in our hearts. These are things we say about people who are departing, but John had come to see that, in the presence of the Spirit here, there was more than that. They were touched with Someone who was not only a living memory, He was Himself living. The presence of the Holy Spirit made things much more a reality than the natural mind would ever have anticipated.

P.M. Just simply, John had kept company with the Lord Jesus and he had seen Paul’s ministry opened up, he had seen assemblies established and then he had seen the departure, and the Lord gives to John to write those addresses to the assemblies in Revelation.

You might say he writes that letter to Laodicea and everything seemed to be on the down, as men say, but after that he comes to write this gospel. He says, certain things have gone, that has gone,

this has gone, but I am going to tell you what really *is* that will go through right to the end, and that is the character of this day.

D.A.B. I have been impressed with that, that John begins with the beginning and he speaks about the last hour and about what abides. He does that against the background of public departure. People might have thought that when all the disciples have gone things would be different; but the difference occurred when the Spirit came, not when the apostles died. The whole thing is preserved in the power of that Spirit and His presence here?

P.M. And everything was assured because the Spirit was here. I wonder if I can lay hold of that? We are in a day of departure – we have to acknowledge that, the day of breakdown – but John would say to us, just look at this, what is going through and could you have anything greater? “because I live ye also shall live. In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, ye in me, and I in you”. Could there be anything greater? He is bringing us back to the reality of what came in the power of the Spirit that from the divine side could never break down and from our side is always available if we have a heart for it.

E.C.B. This is not just objective. I observe that Mr Darby has a footnote, ‘this is objective knowledge’, but it is not a matter of faith; the consequence of the Spirit being here in us leads to this.

P.M. I am glad you refer to that. I am sure that the Lord Jesus speaks this to the disciples, He says, “in that day ye shall know”. It was not just left as something for them to gaze at, they were going to be brought into the enjoyment and experience of what was going to sustain life for the divine pleasure here and for the blessing of man, and it was centred in divine Persons themselves.

E.C.B. What is remarkably attractive about this verse in John 14 is that it is in the context of the need of the disciples who had known the presence of Jesus here. He would not be here any longer, but it is really brought in to assure us that the substantiality of Christianity will actually be formed in believers, the consequence of Christ having ascended.

P.M. He tells them that it is to their advantage that He would not be here, “it is profitable for you that I go away”, John 16: 7. We may think, as many of our dear fellow believers do – and we do not speak critically – that it would have been lovely to be here when Jesus was here, and so it would have been, but it is better in the present moment because we have a Man living on high, who is our life and the power here in the Holy Spirit to keep us in the present practical experience of it.

E.C.B. That is the distinction of the present day that our life is there. You referred yesterday to talking to a man, evidently a believer, who did not grasp the heavenly aspect of Christianity. It is because “I go away” that we can be here knowing that He is in the Father and we are in Him and He in us.

P.M. This man was sent by the Bishop of Colchester to find out what we hold. We spoke over the truth together from the scriptures and the concept that this man had of the assembly was an earthly organisation with a head on the earth. I do not say that with any criticism because he said, I have been feeling for this, trying to find it, but he said, I did not know that it existed that there was a heavenly Head and a heavenly character on earth.

E.C.B. The bearing of these chapters in John is that that indicates a lack of apprehension of the divine intention in the Spirit coming. It is not a matter of intellectual knowledge or anything like that, but it is a question of do you understand why the Spirit is here?

P.M. That is so, and to link our hearts with the Man who has gone up that all that is there in Christ in all its variety and preciousness and richness is available to us because the Holy Spirit is here. How wonderful!

D.A.B. It has often struck me that the two disciples who were in the company of Jesus do not describe His ascension. We have been reading Matthew and the theme of that gospel is God with us. He says at the end, “I am with you all the days” (28:20), very much related to the scene of testimony. We might say to John, you say so much about the Lord’s departure but you do not actually describe the

event. I wondered whether that is because John felt that although the Lord had departed out of the world to the Father, He was still with them. It was not exactly in relation to their circumstances here, but with them in the sense that they were with Him where He is?

P.M. We were speaking in the house before this occasion as to His desire that they should have part with Him and serving them in view of that. These chapters flow out from that, He is regarding His own now in association with Himself in relation to another world, and as living in relation to that world they are being sustained in His life.

D.A.B. It is as if John says, I do not find this easy to convey: He is not here and yet He is here, and really the only way I can convey it is to put it in His own words.

P.M. How attractive those words are!

D.J.H. So as to part with him, it has been pointed out that in chapter 13 it is as He is about to go out of this world to the Father, but He speaks of “part with me” (v 8).

P.M. I wondered that. “In that day” there has been opened up to us in the power of the Holy Spirit, and I think we have touched something of it already this morning, the world of relationships in relation to the Father. Christ there in all His distinctiveness. That is the believer’s life according to John’s gospel.

A.A.C I would like you to say a little more as to verse 20, “I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you”. We have spoken as to living, which has a lot to do with this. It is quite hard for us to understand this naturally. This verse is not something which natural man can relate to. I wonder if you could just help us simply to understand the extent of this because it is quite an extensive thing.

P.M. Give us your impression because we are here to get help from one another.

A.A.C. I do not think I can say much, but you have alluded to the morning meeting, and that is a time when we find our life is somewhere else, what really matters to us is somewhere else and we experience something of what it is to be in the Lord Jesus and He

to be in us, we experience something of what it is to be with Him with the Father. But I wonder if you could open it up a little more for us.

This is not something that is just Lord's Day morning, we touch this at moments in our lives.

P.M. I think your reference to the Supper is important because I believe that if we are rightly there the Lord gives us a touch of what is normal to the believer from which we can move forward if we are left here in the scene of testimony. I had difficulty appropriating or understanding this verse for a long time and no doubt still do, but Mr. Raven helped me. The Lord Jesus says, "I am in my Father", Mr.

Raven says He was held in the Father's affections. He filled the Father's affections and the Father filled His affections, but He said, "ye in me, and I in you". Through the Holy Spirit's service Christ is filling the affections of the believer and the believer is conscious of his place in Christ's affections while we are moving here.

D.J.H. Mr Stoney said that it was this verse that helped him to understand Paul's ministry! I was thinking of the matter you speak of as to Christ in heaven and the saints here; it is really the germ of Paul's ministry. It is very deep what goes into this verse.

P.M. It is, but I am sure you would agree that it is really the crux of the maintenance here on earth of what is proper to the divine testimony, that we are held in the consciousness of divine affections and that we have a Man who is filling ours. How could we move here rightly if Christ was not filling our affections? "That the Christ may dwell, through faith, in your hearts, being rooted and founded in love" (Eph. 3:17) – that is really Paul's ministry at its top note and here it is.

A.A.C. In 2 Corinthians 12 we have, "I know a man in Christ" (v 2), which is in a sense one speaking of this experience, is it? He was expressing this verse, in a sense, an experience which he had through being in Christ, was he?

P.M. He says, "such a one ... whether in the body or out of the body I know not" (v 3). I suppose he was really touching something of ecstasy. One speaks carefully because there was what was

distinctive to Paul, but I wonder if may be it is possible for us to be lifted out of ourselves at the Supper or even in our private meditation and communion to be lifted out of ourselves and to be absorbed in the sense of divine love.

A.A.C. In a different context, but your question yesterday and our brother's answer – 'it is normal'.

P.M. Yes, it is normal. Whether I touch it at all, or very much, is a question and maybe the Lord would exercise us as to that, but it is normal and it is vital for the maintenance here of what is suited to the divine presence.

R.M.F. In the scripture quoted, he says, "a man in Christ" – it is not an apostle, so would that open it up to all of us?

P.M. Yes it would. I think we have to allow for the distinctiveness of what the apostle was shown. As you would know the Lord appeared to Paul seven times, but I believe in the character of it the experience is normal for the believer to be lifted out of the very circumstances and to touch a world in which Christ is everything for the Father and everything for us. It is beyond the sphere of need, even the need of the testimony, it is absorption with the Person because of what He is in Himself.

H.A.H. I was thinking about the reference, "in that day". We have this beautiful reference to His being with them, and He had been with them and rejected and the world would know Him no longer, the Holy Spirit was coming and would not be known by the world, but in virtue of His presence they would know Christ as their life. I am thinking of many beloved saints and perhaps we ourselves, may be in danger of putting things off but it is "in that day", there is something now that can be filled out in virtue of the Holy Spirit's presence.

P.M. I suppose we could go home and write down the things that belong to "that day" which will not belong to the eternal day. There are certain experiences that belong to the present day – we have touched on one or two of them – but it seems to me that the Lord Jesus was opening up to them the advantage of His going away and "in that day" they would touch something they had never been able

to touch before. They would know that He was in the Father as He says, “ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you”. It was something that they had not been able to grasp before, but the knowledge of it belongs to the present day.

H.A.H. We have quoted Mr Raven and Mr Stoney, and I think Mr Darby said it was this verse that gave Him the joy and knowledge of deliverance.

P.M. What is my experience? We are thankful for these men and what they have imparted, but the Spirit is here. What is my experience? That is my burden as to the reading, am I living and experiencing what belongs to another world of which Christ is the centre, or am I content to live here and attach Him to my experience here and find that that is sufficient for me? It is not sufficient for Him.

H.A.H. We have already referred to John 17: I was thinking of, “that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them” (v 26). That comes very close to this.

P.M. What do you understand by that – “the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them”?

H.A.H. I know it has been suggested that we would love Him as the Father does, and that may be true, but I thought of it rather that we would enjoy the same love which He knows, that is “the love with which thou hast loved me” would be in us in conscious joy. We sang this morning:

Father, Thy love our portion is (Hymn 94)

E.C.B. Would you not regard John 17 as Jesus seeking from the Father that the disciples, and thus ourselves, might be in the gain of the verse you have read in chapter 14? The tenor of what Jesus asks about in John 17 is that the disciples might be here as He was here. There is a distinction in that chapter of “one, as we are one” (v 22), and “that they also may be one in us” (v 21). That is the verse you have read in chapter 14.

P.M. What is the distinction? I know the words, but what does it mean?

E.C.B. “That they may be one, as we are one” is the desire of Jesus for unity amongst the disciples – how much we long for it, unity among believers – in the whole time in which He was absent, that the relationship between Himself and His Father which had been set out on the earth might be manifest in a company of believers that they might be “one, as we are one”. But then there is something more than that, “that they also may be one in us”. That is what the verse in John 14 is about, that we are held in the sphere of divine relationships into which we are included. “I know a man in Christ” – that was Paul speaking, the individuality is not lost there.

P.M. I think what you say is helpful, “that they may be one as we are one”. As you say we long for it, but it will be actual. That will be actual, it may wait for the rapture, but it will be actual. We should have the faith of that.

E.C.B. It should be actual.

P.M. I wondered going on from that, whether in the verse in chapter 14, if I am living on account of Him and my brother is living on account of Him we shall go on as one. That is the practical experience of drawing from a life from which there will be no variation.

E.C.B. If you meet another believer you will find this to be true, you are one in Him, just for a moment you experience it.

P.M. There is always that which can be built upon as being in Him, in Christ. We would long that we could share more with all, but in the circle in which we are set particularly we should be exercised that if we are drawing from the same source of life our conduct and our thoughts will be the same and our manner of life.

D.A.B. I contrast the word of the disciples in chapter 16, they say, “By this we believe that thou art come from God” (v 30). I suppose that is as far as they had got. Jesus says, “I am in the Father”. That is more and it is touching on something which we need the Spirit to understand. We need to understand that unity in the Godhead that allows Jesus to say, “I am in the Father”. That is a very wonderful preface that the One who is in the Father is in us. That draws us into

a circle of divine relationships. I wonder if there is a public sense in which the truth of John 17 will be manifested, but the Father's answer to the prayer in John 17 was to send the Spirit. There is one Spirit and if that was truly manifested, although the Spirit Himself is not known in the world, the truth of the Spirit's working should be known in the unity of those in whom He dwells.

P.M. We are covering quite a lot of ground in these sentences because every believer is one in Christ: we rejoice in that and would not seek to say anything against it. The teaching in the epistles is to help us that we might stand together in the Lord as well: both sides must go together. We would that everyone was one in the Lord.

That comes down to my individual responsibility to take up that place. I wondered if what we are touching here is really beyond the sphere of need in testimony, it is being absorbed with divine Persons because of what They are, just the satisfaction of being in the presence of Christ and being filled by Him because of what He is, not because I need help in service, or need help in meeting any certain situation, but because the heart is filled with that blessed Man.

F.S.P. I noticed that if you have the Father at the top, Jesus the middle and ourselves at the bottom, you get the middle to the top, then the bottom to the middle then the middle to the bottom and then you get love; and in verse 23 you get the top to the bottom, the Father's love to us.

P.M. "If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him" (v 23). What a privilege that is! We must note the order of this, "if any one love me he *will* keep my word, and my Father will love him". It is almost as if there is what cannot be hindered in that. The Father will love him, He must love him because of the place that Christ has in the affections of the believer.

D.A.B. I think it is helpful to see that God directs Himself to the heart, not only because it is the seat of our affections, but because it is the seat of life itself. We would have no mind if the heart was not

working, and the effect of God's entrance into the heart is to renew the mind. Once the heart is renewed it governs the affections according to the will of God. So that a heart that loves God keeps His commandments. It is the way the whole life of the person is taken possession of and then worked out in a loving and living way.

P.M. It must be that way. We have tried, some of us older ones have had experience of seeking to work at things the other way, but "If any one love me, he will keep my word". There is no question as to that. But the question is as to whether I am among the lovers.

D.A.B. We see it in Jesus Himself, that His whole life in everything that He did was governed by the will of God because the law abode in His heart.

P.M. The Father filled His affections. What a contemplation for us to see it in perfection, that the Father filled the affections of Christ so that everything that He did was for the Father's pleasure.

P.F.E. I was thinking of Stephen in the Acts, towards the end of his life he was able to look into heaven full of the Holy Spirit and see the glory of God and Jesus together (see Acts 7:55). I was thinking of the experience He had in relation to what we have here.

P.M. He saw, "the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God". That is an interesting reference. I suppose the glory of God was shining in that man. Stephen was so absorbed by it that he even appears to lose sight of what he was passing through here.

One's exercise is, am I really touching what belongs to this day? Is it that our life is drawn from His life? It says as to Benjamin, "seeing that his life is bound up with his life" (Gen 44: 30). Is that the case, or is it that Christianity becomes an attachment to what I go on with normally. This, I think, would bring us into the reality of what was in the Lord's desire for His own, that "In that day ye shall know".

E.C.B. Do you not think that Jesus in John's gospel presents things from what we might call the ideal, but on account of the weakness on our side and consequently falling away, Paul has to emphasise, and begins with the Lordship of Christ, which taken up in the letter has

led us into the direction of authority and law, but John's approach is that if you love Me it will all come natural to you.

P.M. Yes. We have often said, John does not give us an official, he gives us the thing itself. He says, Paul will set up for you and give you the outward glory of the assembly in all its character and John says, after all that is broken down publicly I will show you what is maintaining the life of it and it will be carried through right to the end. He is not setting aside Paul's ministry, but He is showing us how we can walk in the light of it.

E.C.B. I am sure that is so but I think Paul's ministry and Paul's service is introduced in order to hold the brethren in the light of the Lord's Name as Lord. It is what John would bring about in affection, so Paul writes a whole chapter about affection and love. It is interesting in Acts 9 it says, "Who art thou, Lord?" (v 5), and he says, "What will thou have me to do?". The Lord says to him, go and see what I have here already.

P.M. The answer to that question is, "*I am Jesus*".

LONDON

20th March 2005

Key to initials

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PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD

Iain Mitchell

Romans 5: 20 (from "...where sin)

"Where sin abounded grace has overabounded" – I had it on my heart to say something about the possibilities of coming into what God has in mind for us in His grace. I am not an expert on what grace means, it means much, but I was just struck and impressed by these two states, the state of sin and the possibility that grace opens up to us. Brought together in this passage, Paul's letter to the Romans, on the one side sin and on the other grace, diametrically opposed to each other in one sense, yet the grace of God coming in to remove and dispel completely that matter of sin that rests upon us.

I was thinking in the week that it would be easier if everyone had a realisation of sin. What I mean is that people away from God, and perhaps myself too, to a certain extent, fail to have a real realisation of what sin is. Unbelievers especially would tend to say that. People accept that sin exists in the world, people accept that bad things happen in the world, but as to sin itself, people have a difficulty in the acknowledgement that sin is existing, not just philosophically but actually in persons. The scripture says, "sin abounded". God has a view about sin; He felt it very much when sin came in at the beginning, the man and the woman had to be banished from the garden because they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had to move in such a way that Adam and Eve were removed from that wonderful place that God had set up for them, that satisfied an answer to their every need; that is because sin came in, sin existed in the world from that point onwards. It has continued and continued until the point where Paul says, sin abounded. Sin abounds in the world as we know as believers, we feel it, we feel it as we go around our daily work or our daily activities, sin is there. It is oppressive sometimes.

What I want to say something about, and I feel very unqualified as to it, is as to the fact that “grace has overabounded”.

What came in in the beginning as to sin God has had to say to, He has dealt with. It is good to understand and to lay hold of it in our souls, but as to sin, as to the matter of what exists in our hearts and exists out there, God has dealt with that matter already. He will have to say to it finally, we know that and that is a day in the future. But, God has dealt with it, and as dealing with it He is able to come out to a poor sinner like me and poor sinner like you in the fulness of His grace. It says, “where sin abounded grace has overabounded”; an over-abundance of grace has come in to meet what is there in us that denies us our presence with God Himself, which He wants us to have. Think of that, sin has come in to deny us that and the devil would work in order that that position should remain between us and God. Grace has come in from God Himself in order that the position that we have as away from Him might be dealt with and that the distance might be removed completely in order that we might know Him as Father and be brought into His very presence and be with Him forever. Grace is the favour and graciousness of God towards sinful men, women and children. Think of that! That is the position that we have. God is in a position of righteousness and holiness, nothing of that which is tainted by sin can enter into His presence, yet in His love, because everything that lies behind God’s attributes and the way He moves is His love, He has come in in grace, the favour and the graciousness of God towards sinful man. From one point of view you wonder that God, at the incoming of sin, did not start again, start in some other way, but in His heart He has come in in a way to deal with what was between us and Himself and in such a way that He Himself is glorified and as doing that praise and worship and glory accrues and ascends to Himself forever. These things are beyond our minds to grasp, the Spirit would help us to come into some knowledge of them, but grace has overabounded, grace from God’s side has come in in order that it might reach people like us. Is that not wonderful? That it might come in to reach us and bring us out of the abyss of sin, out of the condition that we are helpless to bring ourselves out of through any work that we can

do ourselves, God has come in from His own side in the fulness of His love and He has overabounded in grace towards us. We are in this condition of sin and God has come in for us and He has come in for us by giving from His own side in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has given us a Saviour. We read about that in Luke (see 2: 11), also in Matthew, Emmanuel, God with us (see Matt 1: 23).

God is there in heaven, but the Lord Jesus has come in, He who Himself is God, the creator of the worlds has come here and as we read so affectingly in Luke, come here as a babe. He grew up to be a Man, but He came here as a baby born in a manger in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes. That was the condition, the lowliness that He came into so that He should go that journey to meet the just judgment of God upon sin and deal with it fully unto God's satisfaction. He went to the cross and died there and shed His blood there, buried here on this earth and raised again, appeared here through a period of forty days and then ascended to heaven. Think of the wonder of the story of grace that has come so near to us in a Man. What it meant for God Himself, and what it meant for a Man who was perfect, who had committed no sin, who went about here doing good, healing, helping, blessing, bringing people into the acknowledgment of what they are. He was bringing people into the realisation of a relationship with Him, relationship with God, "seeks such as His worshippers". Think of that, He went about looking for people who were able to worship. Are we able to worship in our current state, in our old man? No we are not, but as we come into contact with Christ, through the grace that God has poured forth to us we find that we are able to be brought into a relationship with Him. How are we brought in? We are brought in because God is able to look upon us when we put our faith and trust in Jesus and in the worth of the Lord Jesus apart from sin. An amazing fact and something I wish I understood more and was deepened in my soul and heart as to it, but how can God look upon me? How can God have you and me in His presence? He can have us in His presence because our sins and our sinful state was dealt with fully and perfectly to His full satisfaction when the One who was perfect and had not committed any sins went to the cross, suffered and died

there, took the righteous judgment of God upon sin, took it upon Himself and exhausted God's judgment. He *exhausted* it, He did not just take God's judgment on but He exhausted it. That is how God can come out in grace and blessing towards each and every soul, man, woman and child in whatever condition, no one outside of that possibility, whatever condition they come in repentance to the Lord Jesus. He is now in heaven, He was here. Come to Him, cry to Him in acknowledgement of ourselves and what we are, but in the realisation that He has gone there. He has gone to that cross and He has taken all that judgment that was due to me and to you. He has taken that upon Himself. What grace there is from the divine side, what fulness of blessing there is as we are able in our measure to come into the full understanding of these things, but in order for us to move from that position in which we are, we must put our faith and trust in the One who came in here as a Man and went about doing good, "healing all that were under the power of the devil, because God was with him", Acts 10:38. He was able to go to that cross and to take the judgment upon Himself for my sins and yours because of who He was in Himself. He Himself was God, but came into this earth as a Man in flesh and blood condition, in a condition in which He was able to suffer. He took that condition on Himself. It says, "thou hast prepared me a body" Heb. 10:5. Think of that, He came in and took a body that which He could suffer and die. In the condition that He was before that it was not possible that He should go through those sufferings, so in His great love and in the outshining and outflowing of divine grace to me and you, the Lord Jesus Himself, the One who was creator of the worlds, One who was with God Himself before time, came from that place, that glorious place of which we know very little, He came here with that express mission in life that He should go to that terrible cross and take upon Himself the matter of sin and sins while He was yet alive. Darkness covered the earth, it was not possible that man could see that that transaction worked out between God and Christ, but it was worked out: but it involved the awfulness of one perfect Man having to be made sin. Think of that! Having to be made sin, One who had never committed sin although He felt sin, felt it when He was walking

around, the awfulness of it, the oppression, what it did to people, but that very One was made sin in order that you and I could be set free from our sin, relieved of it forever and have the knowledge of the fact that our sins are fully dealt with and removed and put away. The Scripture says of God that “their sins and their lawlessnesses I will never remember any more”, Heb. 8:12. We are not able for that, we are not able never to remember things, things come back into our memories even when we want to put them aside. God is able to never remember. It makes one think of the goat sent into the wilderness, to a land apart from men (see Lev 16: 21), removed completely. The one goat which had to have its blood shed and died is a type of Christ as having to suffer for our sins, but the other as being sent away and removed completely. Think of that. That is the fulness of the way that the sin has been dealt with.

My impression is that grace has overabounded. It has more than fully resolved that which has come in from sin and has enabled God to come out in the fulness of forgiveness to those who come to Him through Christ and enabled God to come out in the welcome of the fulness of divine love. His very essence and character is love and able to bring in all those that know Him through the work of Christ, and those brought in to have that peace now. We are able to have that peace now, but fully able in that time to come when the Lord comes to bring every one who has put their faith and trust in Him, to bring them with Him to that wonderful place where He is now. Think of that! That wonderful time, “of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end” (Isa 9: 7). It increases and increases, it is beyond our human minds to understand, but it is so and we have the faith and the Spirit helps us to understand something of it.

That is my simple impression. I cannot say much as to grace, but I feel that grace has come in for me, and I would desire that it should be realised by all, divine Persons are able for it. We often think of how many there will be, we know there will be myriads upon myriads, we like to think that there will be the most, God will have the victory over everything here. The most will be with Him, how much

there will be. What an accrual there will be through the work of Christ, “grace has overabounded”. I feel that my understanding of it is so shallow yet I wish it was more, but I feel that how grace has come in and it has come in for each one of us here, but how much has been provided, how much has been given from the divine side. May we take advantage and be brought into it ourselves and kept in it so that there may be more for God Himself while we are still here, more praise to Him in our lives here.

May these things be so. For His Name’s sake.

COLCHESTER