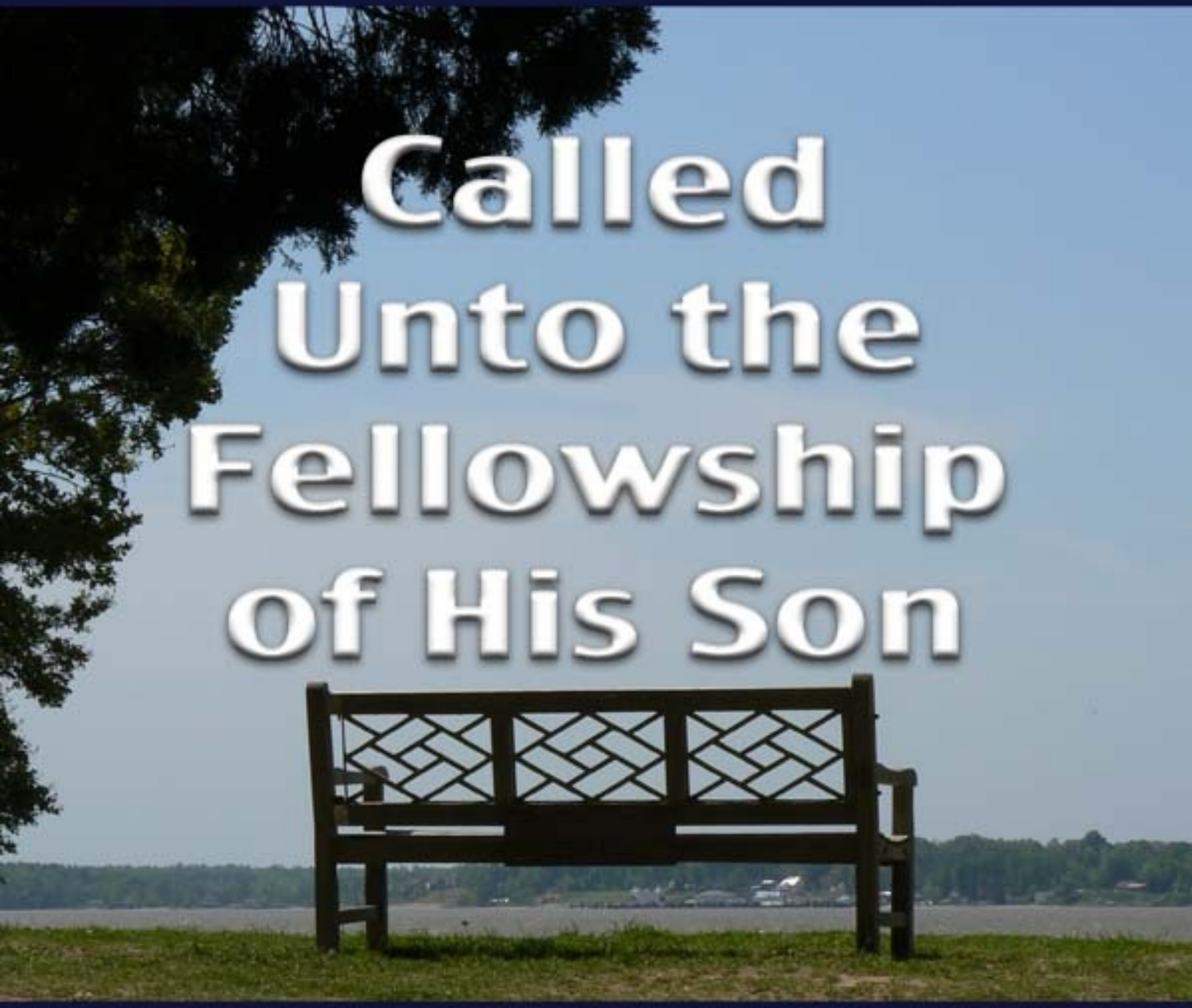
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Called Unto the Fellowship of His Son

T. Austin-Sparks



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Called Unto the Fellowship of His Son

by T. Austin-Sparks

A series of addresses given by T. Austin-Sparks. The spoken form has been retained in printing.

This book contains a series of spoken messages given by our brother, T. Austin-Sparks, shortly before he joined that "great cloud of witnesses." Because he ministered these words at the culmination of a life lived in fellowship with our Lord, we feel that the Lord gave great emphasis and importance to these last words spoken through His devoted servant.

After seeking the Lord in prayer, we felt that these messages should not be lost and that they should be shared with "the Church, which is His Body." Therefore, we have sought to retain these messages in their spoken form and have given minimal importance to the grammatical structure. In this way, we hope to preserve the anointing of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit revealed the Mind of God concerning our fellowship with His Son.

May the God of all Glory bless the readers of this book with an adequate apprehension of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

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Chapter 1 - The Person of the Call and the Fellowship

May we have a further word of prayer: "Lord, when we pray, it is our way of saying we cannot do without Thee. There is nothing that we can do without Thee. We are wholly dependent on Thee, Lord, and we acknowledge it, and we are very conscious of it. If there is to be anything of eternal value in this time, it must be Thyself Who is doing it. We also lift our hearts to Thee in a humble, earnest dependence; and, we say to Thee, Lord, You speak and give us to hear Thee, deeper than the voice that Thou dost use as Thine instrument, for Thy Name's sake, Amen."

Before we come to the actual message which I feel the Lord has given, there are one or two preliminary things that I would like to say. I think you will agree with me if you know anything about conditions today inside Christianity and outside it, the greatest need of our time is a reappraisal of Christianity, a new apprehension of what we come into when we come to Christ. There has been much lost, very much lost, of the true nature and essence of Christianity, and there has been much distortion, resulting in confusion. I repeat, the need of our time is a re-presentation and understanding of what it is we have come into when we come into Christ.

This is an age of cheapness. Get it as cheaply and as quickly as you can, with just as little cost and tiresomeness. "Get it quickly: get it easily." That thought governs the whole world system. Everything is now aligned to getting it done easily and getting it done quickly. It is that way in your kitchen, your scurrying, your household affairs, and in every other realm. What is true in the secular has now become very largely true in the spiritual. The standards have been terribly lowered. Bigness has substituted greatness. Greatness, the true meaning of the word is no longer considered. Oh, how we hear, "Big, oh yes, the bigger, then assuredly that is the most successful," but this is absolutely contrary to the Bible, to all gospel. It is like that.

Ease and easiness, lightness, glamorousness, excitement, emotion: this is the order of our day. This hurrying that we are speaking of comes so largely into Christianity: and the result is that we have quite a poor type of Christian.

Now, you may despise the Puritans, but the devil, someone has said, has made great capital out of using that word, "puritan," by way of discrediting something that was very vital and deep, strong and foundational, for the foundations were well laid in those days. Perhaps it is a good sign that today such people as the Moody Press are reproducing the writings of the Puritans. A very good sign! There is a bringing back of that substantial teaching of past generations. Reproducing, that is a good sign, perhaps indicating a direction at least.

I am very glad that there is a manifest outreach, especially on the part of young people, for reality. They are tired and sick of unreality. That is a very good thing indeed if only they find reality and do not go in for the substitutes that are today being retailed so lavishly, the substitutes which seem to be real and are an illusion.

Well, you have, therefore, today a superficial kind of Christianity: it is shallow. There is very little stamina about it. As soon as things become difficult, contrary, and seem not to be what was expected, people begin to back off. Their expectation was a false one. Things are not what they expected and are getting rather hot and rather tiresome and rather exacting; and then, as the Scripture says, "in the last time many shall fall away." The stamina is not there: there is no power of endurance. The public looks very good and very pleasant where, for a little while, it is address that seems to attract, but it easily wears out. It does not last. That is a condition of our time, a lot of noise and a lot of show.

There is a fear of seriousness and a fear of death. The slogan today is "Are you happy?" Even amongst Christians, the question is one of "Are you happy?" Well, perhaps there are two ways of thinking about that; but let me say at once, and I have young Christians very much in mind as I am speaking, that if you are going on with the Lord, you are going to have some unhappy days. Is that too bad to say right at the beginning of a conference?

I was at a conference once, and a large number of Christian ministers was there. We had a week on the Cross, and it was a devastating week. In the end, an appeal was made for testimonies as to what the week had meant to these men, and one very excitable man got up. Everything for him was wonderful, marvelous, terrific. It was tremendous. He sat down. Presently, a man got up onto the platform, and he said, "Wonderful? Happy? Why, I have just been shattered, smashed to pieces. My whole life has been taken down to be made all over again." That man counted for God after that. You understand what I mean?

So, while we are going to be joyful in the Lord, sometimes there is a large gap between being happy and joyful. "Happy" depends upon "hap": "Joy" goes on whatever "happens." Well, this is something that I must say at the beginning: there is a need of a recovery or reappraisal of the true nature of that into which we have come when we have come into Christ.

Now, we are going to begin and take a brief statement in the Scripture as the basis of these considerations. You will find it in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 9: *"God is faithful, through Whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord." "CALLED,"* underline the word, *"called,*" into *"fellowship with His (God's) Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*

The line that we may follow will be: The Person of the Fellowship, Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord; The People of the Fellowship, *"ye were called"* The Purpose of the Fellowship; The Process of the Fellowship; The Prospect of the Fellowship; and The Peril of the Fellowship.

The Person of the Fellowship, His Son

Now we begin with The Person of the Fellowship, His Son, Jesus, Christ, Lord. A new appraisal and apprehension of the Person is basic to everything else. Until we have an adequate apprehension of Christ, we have not got a sound and sure foundation for our Christian life. Everything begins with and flows from our understanding of Jesus Christ. What do we know about Jesus Christ? Well, let us look at Him from several different angles, in several different collections.

First of all, we shall look at His Eternity, the Eternal Sonship, the Eternal Anointing, which the word, *"Christ,"* means. Let us look at the Eternal Lordship of Jesus Christ: let us look at the Eternity of this One into Whom we have come if we have rightly come into Christianity.

There are two beginnings in the Bible. The Bible begins with one: *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* Yet, there is a beginning before that beginning. In John's gospel, chapter 1, verse 1, it says, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* This in Genesis 1:1 follows the beginning of John's gospel. *"All things were created by Him."*

A beginning before the beginning of this creation - this Jesus, this Christ, was away back there before time, before all things. Look at this matchless, I mean,

matchless statement in the Letter to the Colossians. Will you look at it? You have heard it often perhaps, but you can never read this without taking a deep breath or even holding your breath. The Colossian letter, chapter 1, at verse 15-19:

"*...He is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of ALL creation; for in Him ALL things were created, in the heavens, and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: ALL things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before ALL things, and in Him ALL things hold together. He is the Head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in ALL things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should ALL fullness dwell...*"

One little word there compasses everything, and you cannot get outside of it, *"all," - ALL.* It is putting everything around it every time. You cannot add to that because that *ALL* comprehends the universe; and He is over all and through all and all things are unto Him.

John 17, that great prayer, begins as the Lord is lifting up His eyes to heaven and says, *"Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."* "The glory that I had with Thee before the world was." - And then Paul opens a window and just gives us a glimpse in that letter to the Philippians when he says, *"...Who, existing in the form of God..."* A long way back before anything else was this One, to Whom we have come; and in the terms of fellowship, we are "called into the fellowship" of this One. Later, we shall bring that down to our own selves and how we are related to that; but for the moment, our object right at the beginning is to see how great this One is Whom we call *"Lord, Jesus, Christ," and* Whom we believe to be God's Son, Master of the Ages, greater than time, the Master of all things in the universe, the Creator of all - the One active in creation, and yet the One to Whom all the creation belongs.

Now, you may not think in the light of many happenings and much history and the world conditions that such statements are true; but even though that is difficult to understand, it is true. All I have to say to you is that if you have come into true Christianity and a true relationship with this One, Jesus Christ, then you have come to the Bible. You have come to the Bible, and you have got to take the Bible and take it as it stands; and what I have given to you is a fragment of the Bible, but it is the Bible.

I really do not understand. Something is wrong with me, I think, I do not understand how people, anybody or any system, can claim to be Christian and not believe the Bible. Where did they get it from if they did not get it from the Bible? Where did it come from? What do they know at all about anything in this realm of Christianity apart from the Bible? Really, their attitude simply means that they have got the Bible, and they have taken a name which is the name in the Bible, the dominating name, and they do not believe it. They do not accept it.

Now, young people, you take it from me, you take it from an old man; and do not take it as from an old man but as from one who was your age once and who began the Christian life at your age and has gone on and on all these... shall I say, centuries? What I mean is I have had plenty of time, plenty of time and opportunity and occasion for testing the Bible. I took dogmatic theology under a prince of modernists. If you understand what that means for a young man, you know I have had opportunity to test the Bible.

Well, I would not be here today if I had not taken the Bible and come to know at least something of the truth of it. I have gone through all the problems, theological problems, doctrinal problems, through all the controversies, I know it all or think I do, a lot of it; and I have come to prove that it is a safe thing to believe what this Bible says and to act accordingly. You will find God behind that in marvelous ways.

Well, I could say a lot more about that, but, you see, you begin here by saying, "The Bible says these things...." You begin with the things that the Bible says about this One, and it says, "*Jesus Christ our Lord."* The Bible says that. *"Lord."* You say it does not mean just that. All right, do what you like about that; but you will have to come back - sooner or later, God grant it sooner - to believe and to know that these things are true: that in spite of everything, He is this One before all time, the Creator of all things, the Eternal Son of God. I could quote so much more Scripture in this very connection, as you know.

You make such a lot of Christmas, do you? Well, Christianity does make a lot of Christmas; but, after all, what is Christmas? Christmas is only, after all, a fragment, a mighty fragment, within this compass of the Eternal Son of God. He did not begin at Bethlehem. There are some people who think that Jesus began His existence at Bethlehem. That was an incident in the course of the ages; a mighty, significant, and necessary incident. We all know what for; but, true, you do not begin with Him at Bethlehem. We will come to that later on and what the

story really does mean for us, but remember that long, long, long before there was ever such a place or name as *Bethlehem,* He was there. No, He did not begin there.

Well, let us go on. What is His Eternity? Then we come through that eternity to His Divine appointment. The fragment which introduces us to this appointment and to which many, many other statements have been linked, the fragment is the statement in the Letter to the Hebrews, chapter 1, right at the beginning. *"God has at the end of all former times, all former methods, all former economies, all former ways of speaking and working, in the end of all those times, He has spoken to us in His Son."* We are back at our Corinthian text - "*called into the fellowship of His Son."*

Heir Of All Things

God has spoken at last fully and finally in His Son, *"Whom He appointed the Heir of all things."* When was that? We do not know. It is a statement again, way back somewhere, undated, that there was this appointment made: this designation was decided upon that He, the Son of the Father, was made *"Heir of all things,"* and it goes on to say, "*...through Whom He made the ages."*

Then the passage continues in a great and marvelous, sevenfold description of Him that you can read, but first we see that He was appointed Heir of all things, the rightful Heir, the destined Lord of the universe. Heir, God's Heir! The title to *"all things"* is His by Divine determination and decree from all eternity. He is to possess, to have all things. He knew it Himself. This was the mystery of His knowledge when He was here: He was God's Heir.

He wrote it: He said it when He gave the parable of the man who planted a vineyard. He let it out to husbandmen and went into a far country. The time of the fruit drew near, and he sent his servant to claim his rights, to possess what was his. They cast him out, and he sent another (these are the prophets). He sent another, and they maltreated him. They cast him out, and so he went on until he had no more prophets or servants of that kind to send. He said, *"I will send my beloved son:... they will reverence him."* But when they saw the son coming, they said, *"This is the heir."*

The knowledge of Jesus about Himself is that He was the eternally designated Heir of all things Who was sent by God to claim God's rights, to which we shall

refer again. *"This is the Heir":* this is Jesus' consciousness and knowledge; and John, you know, says, "He came unto His own things and the people who were His own received Him not." In the parable, they cast him out. "Let us kill him," they said. "Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Oh, the profundity of that parable, embracing all time and eternity. He was the Heir, appointed and destined for all things.

"Called into the fellowship of His Son" may mean a fellowship with being cast out and being slain, simply because you are related to the One Who is the Heir; and there is another who says, "not if I can prevent it." Relationship with this One, fellowship with this One, involves being in His Own rejection if you are in right relationship with Him.

I do not think very much of a type of Christian who does not suffer for his or her Christianity. Well, I do not want to discourage you; but make no mistake about it, this word *FELLOWSHIP* covers a lot of ground and a lot of things. In eternity past, there was His appointment to the right of all things as Heir. This has been the ground of dispute, of course, through the ages, but we are not at the end of the story yet.

The Significance Of Christ In The Universe

The next thing is His significance in the universe. Shall we have a look at one or two passages in this connection? May we go to the well-known Ephesian letter, chapter 1, at verse 9: *"Having made known,* (because God has done it) *having made known unto us the mystery* of *His Will, according to His good pleasure* (we are to weigh every fragment) *having made known unto us the mystery of His Will,* the hidden secret of His Will, *according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him,* that is, in Christ, until a *dispensation* of *the fulness of times, to sum up all things in Christ - to sum up all things in Christ - the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, in Him, I say, in Whom we were made a heritage,* joint-heirs, *having been foreordained according to the purpose* of *Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His Will:* to the end *that we should be unto the praise of His glory. "*

The significance of Christ in the universe? - that all things are to be summed up or re-gathered into Him eventually. The mystery, the hidden secret of His Will and His working all things after the counsel of that Will, is to at last re-gather all things into this One. This brings us back to that passage that we read earlier in

the Colossian Letter.

I hope I am not tiring you with my slowness. That is a part of old age; but, nevertheless, we are not in a hurry to cover a lot of superficial ground. Let us get right inside because we have got to do some "mental sprinting."

Now, Colossians, chapter 1, again at verse 17: *"And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." "In Him all things hold together."* I could understand that many of you young people do not understand that, but it is the Scripture; and if you do not grasp some of the truth of it, I will take you to Calvary to the hour when the sun should have been at its strongest, its most powerful, burning and scorching, but there was darkness over the face of the earth till the ninth hour. What has happened? And then it says: "There was a great earthquake." The earth shook: it was rent. What has happened? The One Who holds all things together has been slain: the rightful Heir of all things has been put out of His heritage.

All right, put Him out, and you will go to pieces. That is what happens. Put Him out, and sooner or later you will disintegrate because, as many of us know, the integration of our life is our union with Jesus Christ. He brought us together, we poor, broken, scattered creatures. Oh, how sorry we are.

And, oh, the youth of today - how scattered, disillusioned, disappointed, dissatisfied. We who know Christ know cohesion, but they know no unity in their lives. "The scattered" is the word. He is the One Who integrates, in Whom all things hold together and in Whom the story of the Cross has been written in terms of His holding all things together.

The Sun says, "I have no more purpose for shining." The Earth says, "There is no purpose in my holding together." No wonder the centurion said, "Truly, this was the Son of God." Do not think that was just a mental conclusion from observation. It was something deeper than that. *"In Him all things hold together,*" and, will you believe me, we are moving rapidly toward the disintegration of this creation and race?!

The Exceeding Greatness Of His Position

Next, His Position. Well, we have read His position already, and I guess we might as well have one fragment about this. God raised Him to *"exceeding greatness,"* the "*exceeding greatness"* of God's power, the power of God, which was in excess of all other powers. It was in excess of death and hell, the grave

and sin, and the devil, exceeding all other powers. *"...the exceeding greatness of His power, ...which He exercised in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and* (not left Him on the earth or even risen, but) *set Him at His Own right hand... far above all principality, power, rule and authority."* Also, there is another statement which recurs in the New Testament, and it is the place that God has given Him (as in Him is) *"the name which is above every name.*"

"Called into the fellowship of... Jesus Christ our Lord." Every word is full and rich and pregnant with eternal meaning. This is His position - do you believe that? It is stated. The devil will often come and suggest to you, "If that is true, why? Why? Why?" He has whispered that into my ear more than once.

We never had such a battle to get anywhere as we had getting to this conference. *[This was spoken in connection with a conference Brother Sparks was attending in the United States.]* We had made our arrangements, booked our passage, and then there was a strike on that line. We had to be switched to another line. Then my wife was taken ill, unable to be moved, laid low for two or three days. Finally, we came back to this changed line, expecting to come away from the airport at nine o'clock in the morning. We got onto the plane and were told "We are very sorry, the plane has engine trouble, and we cannot tell when it will leave." We were put on another line. It was having trouble (not surprised). After waiting a bit longer, we were informed that this plane had broken down.

So we were there at the airport from nine o'clock in the morning until twenty minutes past five in the afternoon. It was a long, long day with weariness and not knowing what was going to happen next. At last, we got on the airplane, and we went out and had to wait its turn to leave. We came away and arrived in New York seven and a half hours late. The system for getting our baggage out of the plane had broken down. We were told it would be an hour before we could get our baggage through customs. After a few more formalities like that, standing in line, awaiting our turn, we finally got to bed at twenty minutes to four in the morning. We had to leave again the next morning. That was not without some difficulties.

We made arrangements to be in Louisville on Monday morning. My wife was ill again. Could I leave her? Could I come? Should I not take her back to London straightway? Not yet! You see, what a battle! Here is all this frustration, complication, seeming confusion and a little demon - I assure you that! The question came: "Is He Lord? Is He Lord? Are these the signs of His Lordship? Is

He in control of everything?" You know, when you are up against it, the devil is no myth. He is watching to take advantage.

Well, anyhow, we arrived at our destination. Was all this trouble because Jesus Christ was to be magnified?! Is that not what we have heard? *"We should be to the praise of His glory."* Well, His position is stated in the Word, and we always have to say to ourselves, "The end is not yet, and the end will be with Him, and not the other one."

Finally, then, we are *"called into the fellowship"* of this One, His Son, and called into all that the Word says about *"in a Son"* (Heb. 1:2; Nestle's Greek Interlinear). He is the destined Lord: the One destined to embrace all things, the appointed Heir. He is the very continuity and consistency and integration of all things; and He will, at last, sum up in Himself, or having Himself summed up, gather together - thus, reuniting this broken universe. It is and shall be comprehended by Him, God's Son.

Whose universe? Jesus, the name of His humiliation. Christ, and you know that is only the other word for *Messiah.* The Messiah - the ever hoped for, looked for, longed for One Who was to restore the kingdom, but not an earthly one. *"My kingdom is not of this world"* - The Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, our Lord. Our Lord.

You know, dear friends, it does not matter how long you live or how much you may have ministered, meditated, hoped, prayed, or experienced: you will always be defeated when you try to set forth the Lord Jesus in any measure of fullness. We start on an impossible task, do we not? I have just ventured into the impossible of telling you of His greatness.

What I do want, if all the things said are difficult for you, is that an impression will have been made of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you all, especially you young people (and perhaps many of you have recently come to the Lord Jesus), I want you to go away saying, "I never, never knew how great it was to come to Him! What a great thing it is to be 'called into the fellowship' of God's Son. How great He is!" An impression - the Lord make the impression, or may He come upon us with awesome wonder.

We have not come into some very small, light, frivolous thing. However we may joyfully sing our choruses and so on, but remember, this is no cheap thing. This

is no small thing. This is no easy thing. This is a thing which embraces the universe, and we are called into that fellowship.

Well, we have yet to see what the fellowship is and who are in it. This is just the beginning, the magnifying of the Lord Jesus. I pray that you may have a new glimpse of the wonder of the One Whom you love and Whom you call, Saviour *AND LORD.*

May we pray: "Lord, Thou knowest how helpless and hopeless we feel even approaching this great matter. Lord, we do ask Thee to take up where we have failed, carry on where we leave off. Do leave an impression. When we who know Thee somewhat, perhaps, think we know Thee, yet come to realize far, far greater than ever we have thought, and at the end of a long, full life we may yet be saying, '...that I might know Him.' Give us a sense then of the infinite greatness into which we have come by Thy call. We ask this, this pardon for all our weakness and failure, in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Amen."

Chapter 2 - The People and the Purpose of the Call

Let us remind ourselves of the basic word of our previous meditations as found in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 9: *"God is faithful, through Whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord."* - called unto the fellowship of His (God's) Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

We have been occupied with the Person of the fellowship and the call, God's Son. We have been saying that we shall never get anywhere at all in the Christian life as the Lord's people, and we shall certainly never get through to the end and at the end, unless we have an adequate apprehension of the greatness of Christ. Over against all the littleness of what is presented as Christianity, there stands this immensity of that into which we are called when we are called into fellowship with God's Son.

We could have dwelled longer upon speaking of the Person, the great, eternal, matchless Person of Jesus Christ, as this is foundational to everything. I say again that you will never get very far if you have only a small apprehension, a small understanding of the One into Whose fellowship we are called. Seeing that many of you are Christians on the way, well on the way, and some far on the way, let me say to you that this understanding of Christ, Himself, is not just an initial need. We are only going to get through at the end, through all the trials, the adversities, the difficulties, the sufferings, the afflictions, the perplexities, and the problems of mature, spiritual life, we are only going to get through under the increasing pressure and the forces of evil, on the ground of an adequate apprehension of the Lord Jesus. It is He alone Who can measure up to our need and Who can take the measure and meet it.

Well, having said that, we have to pass on and come next to the people of the fellowship, and I hope to be able to get as far as the purpose of the fellowship. These two really go together. *"God is faithful, through Whom ye were called."* *"Ye were called into the fellowship of His (God's) Son" (ASV).* Forgive me for being slowly emphatic and underlining every word. We must move carefully together, not just hearing words, but weighing them. Weigh them because, you see, God always weighs things. The famous Dr. Parker, of the City Temple

London, used to have a great midweek service in the Temple. People used to speak about the great number who attended, but Dr. Parker said, "I never measure my congregation: I weigh it." And that is it: God weighs us. God is weighing us all the time. God is not looking on the outside: He is weighing us on the inside. So we want to be "weighted" with every word.

People Of The Call

In a word, "ye were called" just seems to be the whole matter to us, but what "whole matter" does it bring to us? Of course, these words were addressed to the Corinthians. Yes, this statement that "ye," here in Corinth, "were called" was brought to the Corinthians; but it did not begin with the Corinthians. This call was the long, long thought of God that reached right back into the past eternity where the Divine Counsels were framing what Paul called the *"eternal purpose."* Concerning this purpose, Paul will say in another letter, ye are called according to the "eternal purpose."

This call that came to the Corinthians was in the way, in the line, of this counsel from eternity, the God and Father Who *"worketh all things after the counsel of His Own will."* This call reached right back: it did not begin at Corinth with these people, but they were called into those goings of God from eternity. It was as though God, moving from eternity down through the ages came by way of Corinth; and as He came by way of Corinth, He cried, "Ye here are called, called into the fellowship of My Son. Come along: join in with all those who have responded to the call through the ages, and go with Us to Our end, Our predestined end concerning My Son." That call had been sounding then right through the ages reaching back before the world was. It goes on. They have heard it of old: they have made their decision. Some responded and went on with God. Some have heard and made a response and turned aside, but God has gone on. Some have hesitated by weighing things up and deciding that it was too costly. They could not go on, but God has gone on; and there through history, the ages are strewn with people who heard the call, who God called, but who have missed all that was involved in it.

God has slowly collected, shall I say, a people of the call through the ages; and He is still doing that, gathering a people into the fellowship of His Son. We might note by way of collecting a few lessons that this call can be likened unto "mountain peaks" and their adjacent valleys. There have been the valleys, and in the valleys the ordinary people have been hearing and making their decision, but

there are these "mountain peaks" of the call through history which in a special, particularly interesting, and instructive way embody the meaning of this call. God chose certain ones to shine forth in this way: one, for example, is Abraham. We are not going to stay with these people, but we will just lift out some things in their lives that indicate what the call meant.

Stephen, in Acts 7, said, *"The God of Glory appeared unto our father Abraham,"* when he was in Ur of the Chaldees, *"and said... 'Get thee out.'"* We will see in a moment what that implied. This call gripped Abraham there in Ur of the Chaldees: there with his one thousand or two thousand deities, he met the One Deity or was met by the One Deity, the One God, the God of Glory. Amidst all the deities of the Chaldees, Abraham distinguished a Voice, a Person; and, isolating this whole matter of divine relationship from all the other deities of worship to which Abraham was accustomed, he was drawn to one focus, to the God of Glory. The God of Glory, not just meaning, God Who is in glory, but the God Who has glory at the end as His object.

The God of Glory appears, and Abraham heard the Voice, the call of the God of Glory; and somehow in some mystic way, some strange, inexplicable way, Abraham came to understand that his call was related to God's Son. We do want to study his life, of course, do we not? We want to find the place of the Lord Jesus in the life of Abraham. There is no doubt about it: you cannot mistake His place in the life of Abraham as you go on. *"Take now thy son, thine only son... whom thou lovest...."* Abraham has come right into the very heart of God, right into the very heart of Calvary. I do not know, I cannot explain it all, but somehow, somehow Abraham himself came into the fellowship of God's Son; and this can be marked again and again in his life, right up to that mighty, inclusive crisis of offering his only begotten son.

Abraham came into the heart of God. The Lord Jesus Himself put His finger upon this strange, mystic something - this something being a relationship with the Son of God - He put His finger upon this relationship right back there in the life of Abraham when He said, "Yes, your father, Abraham, saw My day, and he rejoiced to see it." I do not know how, but Abraham heard the call into fellowship with God's Son and, at the cost of everything, said, "Yes, I will go." And he went. He stands as one of those "mountain peaks" of the call because of that response. At great cost in the beginning and all the way along, he made that response, and see what his name represents in history! But let us leave that and pass on from Abraham to Moses.

Here is Moses in the silent desolation of the wilderness with all that is going on inside of him as he is looking at his life and looking at himself. He is looking at his deep-seated consciousness of standing in relationship to this God, Jehovah. There he is in the wilderness for his forty years of aloneness with God. Then one day, not the burning bush, but the "non-burning" bush appeared. The bush that never did come to an end appeared: it held a fire that did not go out. He noticed that while all other bushes flared up and flamed up and died, this one never did. The undying bush was holding the secret of the Life which is eternal, the Life which is never extinguished, the power of His resurrection. Moses said, "I will draw near: I will turn aside and see this great wonder." He drew near, and from the bush there came a Voice, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet: the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Then came the call and the commission, the challenge and the command. Moses heard the call, and he tried to argue with God. He tried to enter into a controversy with God. - Very good, very good! - If your controversies with God and your arguments with God are of the same kind as that of Moses, it is very good. Really there is nothing wrong about that. Some controversies with God do not get you anywhere, but this one thrust him along the way because it was a controversy on the basis of what God had been doing in his own life to bring him to the place of suitability to answer the call. Moses would never be able really to enter into this fellowship, (as one of our brothers said), "until the bottom's been knocked out of you," and then you are able to say truly, "I have had a devastating experience." Even as with Moses, you say, "I cannot, I cannot." Ah, but you thought you could once. "No, I cannot."

That is all right: he heard the call and argued with God, but when it is on that ground, there is no use arguing with God. You are having to deal with God, no use arguing, because here God is going to have the end in His Own Hand. Moses heard the call. He eventually, after arguing and after having to have a certain amount of accommodation made by the Lord to his situation, he went: he obeyed. The call is out - *"Moses, Moses."* Oh, what God can do and will do when our response is from the brokenness which God Himself has brought about through the emptying.

Where shall we go next? We might go on to David. Here we have a young man who is tending his father's sheep far away from the city, away from the world, out there, living a life in secret with God. "The Lord who delivered me: the Lord who delivered me from the lion and the bear." This lad had a life with the Lord,

drawing his strength from the Lord. Later he will say, "The Lord, He called me from following the sheep." God called him from following the sheep. Out there in a simple way, the sovereign God called him, and you know the story. A vindication of David was that his response to God was so complete, so utter. With everything we may say about David's life, some of those things in his later life, we can yet say here is a man whose heart has been captured by God. The call meant that for David.

We go on meeting many in the Word who heard the call; and we come to the great prophet whom we all love so much, and perhaps who we can understand better than we can understand most of the others, the prophet Isaiah. You know the story, the account of chapter 6 of his prophecies, *"The day that Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high, lifted up: His train filled the temple."* At His presence, the foundations did shake. Then there was the overwhelming consciousness of his own uncleanness and unfitness that always comes when you have come into the true presence of God. Isaiah said, "Woe is me! Woe is me! I am undone, I am undone."

Here we have again the background of a great life of service and usefulness to the Lord. Again, he said, "I heard the Voice of the Lord, saying, Who will go for Us: Whom shall I send?" The call came to Isaiah in those circumstances: the day when everything else had become a mere illusion, the day of disillusionment. Uzziah, Uzziah, that great king in Israel. Yes, Isaiah undoubtedly had fastened his eyes upon King Uzziah. He was his ideal, and he was his hope and expectation for Israel. He was the man who answered to all Isaiah's desires, hopes, and expectations; and then, as you know, Uzziah broke down. He broke down, failed; and by his act in the Temple, he was smitten by God with leprosy and was a leper until the day of his death. Poor Isaiah! But when all the glory of this world faded, in that day Isaiah said, *"I saw the Lord, high and lifted up.*" Here the course of God is going on - on with His call into the fellowship of His Son, and Isaiah more than any other prophet has the place for the Son of God. We know that, do we not? Why, chapter 53 alone has that, but there is so much more. The Son of God is in view, and Isaiah has been called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

On we go. Shall we take one big leap right over to the apostles? Here are these apostles by the lakeside involved in their daily vocation, fishing; and Jesus passes that way. God passes that way and just calls this one and that one, *"Come, follow Me."* And they left their nets and followed. The account is very simple,

but a lot was involved. Yet, they heard the call, and that is the point. As one of the hymns, fairly known to you, simply puts it, "I heard the call, 'Come follow,' that was all. I arose and followed." But, how tremendous was the involvement, the response to the call.

Outstandingly the Apostle Paul gives the account of his call three times. He gives what was contained in it and what it was unto on the day that he heard the call, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Who art Thou, Lord? What wilt Thou have me to do, Lord?" Then we have all that follows because as he says, *"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."* I am just giving these instances of the one who heard the call of God as God was moving on through the ages. He was passing this one and passing this way, and as He passed He just called; and after that call, immense things issued. God is calling.

Now what I want to say, and I have got young people continually in mind about this as we go on, is that this call undoubtedly brought a crisis in the life of every one of these people who heard it. And so it is today in the life of everyone who hears it, along whose way the Lord comes and leaves this impression that something has happened. You may not hear a call from heaven, and it may not come to you as it came to some of these; but somehow or other God has come your way, and He has left an impression that you have come to a crisis. There is a crisis bound up with this; and if you have come to this crisis, you will realize, one way or the other as you go on, it was a day of destiny.

Destiny was bound up with this encounter with God, or God's encounter with you. It was the day, and we older Christians know this whether it was some particular day, twelve or twenty-four hours, but it was a time, a time appointed in our life, when everything became involved in this that I have called an encounter with God - when we met the Lord - put it how you will. The Lord passed our way: He came into the realm of our life. Something happened, and everything to us was involved. Paul himself described it as being apprehended by Christ Jesus, laid hold of, arrested - the day that everything was involved. And you know that the passing of the Lord Jesus our way is always like that - it is everything now. It is everything. - For or not - Everything is gained or lost when He comes our way.

You can go through the Lord's life while here on this earth, during those three years, a little over, and see how He is passing along. He is just passing along precipitating life's issues and destinies for those by whose way He came. Something is precipitated, and everything is in the balances now. Did He heed

His enemies? Their destiny and doom is settled because He has just passed their way. He heeded the needy ones who cried out, "Lord, have mercy upon us." What a day that was when He passed by Jericho.

The Lord happened to come, shall we say happened, no, not mere happed, in the Divine eternal counsels of sovereignty, He came to Jericho. Here a little man, who could not see over the heads of the other people, climbed a tree to have a look at Him and got the shock and surprise of his life when Jesus looked up and said, "Little man, Zacchaeus, come down: I must abide at your house today." A day of destiny, was it not? Tremendous! That man did not get up that morning thinking or imagining for a moment how he would go to bed that night. His destiny had been settled because Jesus passed through Jericho.

What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which pressed to Him as He hasted along?
An eager voice thereupon replied,
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

He is passing by. The eternal destiny registered on this one and that one until He even comes to Pontius Pilate. Pontius Pilate knows one thing, even if he does not recognize all the issues, he knows that his destiny is in the balances of this Man, Jesus of Nazareth. He wriggles and writhes to get out of this predicament. He makes his decision and has gone down in history as wrong. Jesus passed this way. It was an eternal crisis with Pilate and with all these. So it is that He is still passing on. He is still coming on. He is still in that course from eternity with God and is precipitating this issue of fellowship with Himself.

Involvement Of The Call

Now a word about the involvement of the call. If you go over again these lives that I have mentioned, Abraham, Moses, and the others to the apostles and on since then to ourselves, you will see the involvement of the call. What is the involvement? What is involved with any kind of contact with the Lord Jesus? At this period of time, we ask, shall we believe that He has come this way? I cannot but believe that the devil tries to prevent it. Oh, what a battle! Is it because Jesus of Nazareth is passing by? God from eternity is moving and taking us in His stride. Is that it? Will you believe it? If so, there is an involvement in this contact with His Son; and if you look at these lives, you will see that the involvement worked out in this way - it was first of all a demand for changing position. What

of Abram? - "Get thee out." - a change of position, a change of course. And in every other case, it is a changed position. With Isaiah it was a change from the earthly, from the earthly kingdom, the earthly Uzziah, the earthly glory, the earthly expectation to a heavenly one. *"I saw the Lord, high and lifted up..."* It is a heavenly position now for Isaiah.

I do want to say to you, dear friends, that if you go the way of this call, do be true to the initial encounter of the Christian life, and do remember that this encounter involves a *CHANGE OF POSITION.* This fellowship with God's Son does not begin and end there. It goes on right through our lives; and will you believe me when I say to you that if you have been going on with the Lord for sixty or more years, you will still have encounters with the Lord which involve a change of position? You are up against that all the time: I am. How many, many times I have had to change position, and I thought my position was quite sound, right and true. I was convinced of it, and in measure it may have been true because in the sovereignty of God I was there. I came to discover that that order was not all that fellowship with God's Son meant: fellowship with Him meant some very big changes of position.

Now you are wondering what I am talking about. How can I illustrate it? Well, you know, I was a fully accredited minister of two denominations at the same time, two of the biggest denominations in the country, and I know that was of God. I know He did it that I might have an insight, a thorough insight into the whole of that system. He did it so that I would understand it and know all that "ministerialism" is, all that "churchianity" is, all that the whole system of organized Christianity is; and now I have an insight that is unusual.

Strangely enough, I have preached in some of the most important churches in London, and I have got a further knowledge of the whole thing. Tremendously valuable to have it from the inside - to know it, through and through, to get its measure; and then the Lord just as deliberately took me right out of the whole thing, out of the whole system.

You see what I mean? And I look back, and I say, "If that was really not God's thought concerning His Church, and it is not, if that is not what we have in the New Testament as the Body of Christ, the heavenly Body of Christ, why did the Lord lead me in?" Just to show me the difference. The Lord would say to me, "Now you know, and you can talk out of knowledge. You have not got a theory about churches and ministries and ministers and all that sort of thing: you know

from the inside how far all these things will take you and leave you." And it is so after many years. See what I mean: I am illustrating.

Do not take this up and begin to say, "Well, then, I must leave my denominational church." But no, that is not the point. It is what God does with you that matters. My point is that as we go on with God, and as we come more and more to know the meaning of fellowship with His Son, He demands a changed position. I have repeatedly changed and continue to change because we have not got to the end yet. I do not know what the next change is for me, if there is another one, but I am having to date to change position.

However, this whole matter of the call goes on. "Come follow. Come follow. Where I go thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know afterwards." The explanation and the vindication do come, but the call to "follow" was a crisis of position. With the call comes the involvement unto all that God has at the end. Perhaps some of you are going to find a new position, and you will change course. You will come up against this issue over and over again: it is that you are as sure as anyone can be that you are right about something today, and then tomorrow you have a question about that.

Oh, how many men I have known in the course of my long life, in the whole realm of things, and it has been a very wide realm from far east to far west throughout all these years. I have known many dear, dear men, whom God had used, who came to a crisis like this, a crisis which required a changed position, and they have said, "No." - Gone away sorrowfully because they had great possessions.

I remember one such man with a very honored name. You would know the name perhaps because he was greatly used of the Lord. He was occupying a position of influence in the Anglican Church, and he got hold of a little book of mine: "The Centrality and Universality of The Cross." He read it, and he said to me, "I want to talk to you." So we went to lunch and coffee. He said, "I read your book. I know you are right. I know that it represents a tremendous challenge to my position. It involves everything for me." In the course of the meeting, he said, "I cannot. I cannot. I have found a good place to preach out of, and I think that I had better stay there." What happened? - the name faded out, the position faded out - he just went on: he lost so much. Oh, what a tremendous thing he might have had, not by coming to accept this book, but by coming to accept the challenge of God. God came his way and gave a challenge to change position:

the man refused, and God moved on and left him there.

On another occasion I was in India at a church. Right in the front there were two fine, young Indian men, fine specimens of men. In front of them was the Lord's table, and the loaf and the cup were brought in. I paused and said, "Do you know what this means? This means everything for the Lord. You are taking these symbols of the Lord and saying that He only and altogether is your life, your days, your future, your everything." They both looked very serious. Then one of them said "Yes" and partook. These two young men had come together. Presently, they looked at each other, and then the second young man said the last good-bye. The Lord met one, and he said "yes:" the other said, "I cannot - too costly." I do not know about them. I cannot tell you the issues in their history, but this is how it was for them.

Any encounter with the Lord does involve this change of position. It did with Abraham. It did with Moses. It did with David. It did with Isaiah. It did with the apostles. It did with Paul, and it is like that right on to the end. Do not think that you have reached the end or that your present position is final. This is where the trouble sets in, is it not?

Oh, be careful on any matter whatsoever of thinking and saying that you have got the final answer and that your position is "it." "There is no more to it," some say, and people are also saying in groups today that they have "the truth." My word - what a history! I have followed such a position. True, there are some things about which we can be quite sure. We can be sure of the Lord, of our salvation, and so on, but our knowledge of the Lord's ways is different. No, we have got to go on hearing the call and having a change of position and a change of object.

A change of object - what is your object? You can follow a change of object in the lives of these men mentioned. You can follow the change of object for which they were living, as we illustrated in the life of Isaiah. A change of object - what is your object? What have you now in heaven? What a radical change it was with the Apostle Paul. Think of the apostles: they had to change their object from an earthly kingdom to a heavenly one. "Wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" They were looking for an earthly kingdom and their place in it, asking to be on the right hand and on the left, *"when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.*" - This "kingdom come set" - this position proved to be utterly false, and, afterward, they had to have a revolution as to the object for which they were

living and working.

I did want so much to say something about the purpose of the fellowship, and so far all that we have said has been on the way to that. Would you suffer me a few minutes on this because this is really what I want to get to; and I think that this is probably all that is necessary at this time as far as I am concerned.

Purpose Of The Call

The *PURPOSE* of the fellowship with the Son of God - what is it? At this point I am not thinking of the purpose in the ages to come: we will come to that when we speak about the Prospect of the Call, but I am thinking of the present purpose, which includes the present up to the time that the Lord Jesus returns. And what is it? Now if you forget everything else, get hold of this. Let us widen out and get the immense setting of it. As we go back to the Book of Genesis, we see that God created the heaven and the earth and next the earth in all of its detail. Then at a certain point in His progress and creation, He finished and rested from His labours. God looked on all things and said, "It is very good. It is very good."

God rested, and what exactly does this mean? God came into the garden. He had said, "It is very good." God delighted to come into the garden, and He walked in the garden in the evening time. He had made this world, and the garden was a symbol of everything else in creation. He had made this world to be a place for Himself where He could be satisfied, perfectly satisfied, and have a place to which He could come. It was like that: this is where you begin your Bible.

How do you end your Bible? Revelation 21: *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them... and be their God."* The Bible is bounded by a place for God. God is present, in satisfaction, in rest. Between Genesis and Revelation, what have you? Almost immediately the great forces of evil disputed God's right to have a place here; and so you have all through the ages these two things: firstly, God ever and always seeking a place where He can be satisfied and at rest, a place where He can " presence" Himself without any controversy; and, secondly, there is a great cosmic conflict that is raging through the ages. The Bible is just full, packed full of this dispute of God's right to have a place here, of this challenge to God's rights here as the place of the inheritance of His Son, a place where it speaks of His glories. The battle rages right through history: it rages today, and the battle comes to get God out, to force Him out, to

cause everything that is of God to quit this earth. The enemy forces persist in this because they desire to live here, to possess it and have this place. This conflict of the ages is over the presence of God in His creation.

Now, dear friends, this is the call; and this is the purpose of the call and the fellowship of God's Son that there be a place here for the presence of God. Oh, you have got to get rid of a lot of ideas concerning this. We hear so much about forming churches. The apostles never set out to form churches: they came into being, but they went out of being. God only looked upon those things, whether it be in Ephesus, or Laodicea, or Philadelphia, or Thyatira, or Smyrna, or Jerusalem, or anywhere else in this world, He only looked upon them as perhaps providing some ground for His presence and being supremely characterized by this one thing - a place where the Lord is. There the Lord is, there the Lord can be found, and there the Lord can be met. There you will meet the Lord and find the Lord. It is a place for Him: He is there.

Now, these believers, what are they? What am I? What are you, as believers? Well, call yourself by any name that you like, but there is only one thing that justifies your being in fellowship with God's Son, only one thing, and that is, is the Lord there? There is only one thing that justifies the existing of what I have called churches, or anything at all like that, movements and groups of Christian title, of Christian name, and that justification is, is the Lord there? If not, then, like Shiloh of old, it is an empty shell: the Lord is gone. It, the thing, may go on, but the Lord has forsaken it. Look now at the seven churches in Asia. Where are they? Was God jealous for the thing? Never, He was never jealous for the thing, whether you call it a church or anything else. He was not jealous for that, but He was jealous for His Son.

God's eye from eternity to eternity has had one object in view throughout. His eye has been focused upon one thing only, not on other things. He has used these other things in a related way; but when they ceased to fulfill that purpose, He has left them. He has forsaken them. Time may have destroyed them, they may have ceased to exist, and some may have continued; but God is out of them if His Son is not in them. God's focus from eternity to eternity is His Son. He is jealous for Him, and He is always saying, "How much of My Son is there in your life?" - not all your doing, but "How much of My Son is in the doing?"

There are many gatherings, meeting places, filling the earth with what are called churches. Oh, the Lord deliver us! I want to know when I go into this place and

that place, do I meet the Lord here and does the Lord meet me here? Do I go away or come away and say, "The Lord was in that place: I met the Lord. I met the Lord," not other things, not people, not men, not the assertiveness of autocratic leaders, and so on and so on, no. "I met the Lord."

The Bible, you see, circles around this circumference always. The Tabernacle, the Lord was there, but where is the Tabernacle? The Temple, the Lord was there, but where is the Temple? He was here: He was there. Men met Him in these places; but, friend, when God saw that it was no longer a place where He could be at rest and satisfied, He passed on. Our countries are strewn with empty shells that once had something of the Lord. All the disappointments! I had been greatly helped by the ministry of a brother of Boston. So when I came to America for the first time and was going to have a conference in Boston, the first thing afterwards, I made it my business to go see the place of my friend who had helped me so much. Oh, brothers, the servant of the Lord was gone, and the Lord was gone. It was an empty shell. From this place there had been a ministry to the Lord's people all over the world, but not now. The thing goes on, but the Lord has gone.

And that's the story of so much; but, oh, God grant that it may not be my story and your story. Once we met the Lord in that man, in that woman. Once when we met them, you see, we met something of the Lord, but now... may I say to you coming here that in my contacts with you individually, I am always feeling, "What is there of the Lord here that I can touch, that we can live upon and have fellowship with?" Not where do you come from, not all these thousand things about your life, but the Lord. Are you making an impression of the Lord?

I say that is the purpose of our being here. It is the testimony of Jesus, and that testimony is that He is the Divinely appointed Heir to this world; and we are here where God has sovereignly put us. Whether it is in a living fellowship or not, in a Christian country or in a Mohammedan country, where God has sovereignly put us, we are there to put both feet down and say, "I claim this place for Jesus Christ. He is Lord." Hell will rage: hell will do anything to get you out immediately. Be careful how you get moved and what arguments are brought to bear on you. Oh, how many of our young people, who are in a living place with the Lord, get married and look for a nice home somewhere in the country; and in doing so, they go out into a wilderness spiritually and lose their spiritual life. What was the argument brought to bear upon them? A nice home?!! Oh, be careful.

We are here to claim this lentil patch for God, as Shammah did; and if we have got to fight until our hand cleaves to the hilt of our sword as Eleazar's did, and we go onto the end of this day, may we come out at the end with the Philistines worsted. The enemies intimate differently. We stand. So Paul in this battle, this cosmic battle, says, *"stand," "withstand,"* and *"having done all, stand."*

See, the purpose of the fellowship is to claim a foothold for the Rightful Owner?! Christ said that this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the nations. Do you stop there? No, it is to be a testimony. Do we hold all those for Christ? - As a testimony, in those nations - you are there as a testimony that "Here are the rights of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am here for them." That is all. That can be enlarged upon as you see, but the question is what are we here for: why are we Christians? To "presence" the Lord, we are here to "presence" the Lord. This is the battle, and it was the battle of the Lord Jesus Himself Who brought God in and declared God's rights. And the devil said, "Out you go, if I can have a say in the matter."

But we know that the end is with Him. We have got the vision. "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." It is going to be! We are heading up, fast heading up, to the great climax when the one issue will become universal. "Who is going to have this world?" And there is every facility and every means now available for deciding that in a very cataclysmic way. *"A new heaven and a new earth" - "wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

Well, I do not know how to stop with such a thing, but I did want to get this to you, why are we here on this earth? Things will be taken from us: men will turn against us, repudiate us, reject us. They will discredit us: they did it to the Lord. Why are we here? For self-vindication? Not at all. We are here to hold the ground for the Lord, to be a "*patch*" for the Lord in this world. That is the purpose of our being called into fellowship with Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Let us pray: Lord, do cover all the faults. Take responsibility for the imperfections of thy servants, but do register in us what is the truth, "as the truth is in Jesus." Oh, convict us of this: we are interested in a lot of things, making, forming, all this, Lord; but do show us today, there is only one thing that matters to Thee, and that is the place that Thou doest have and how much of a place Thou doest have. Do bring this upon us in a new way. Hear our prayer: answer us, for Thine Own Name and satisfaction's sake. Amen.

Chapter 3 - The Process of the Call

First Corinthians 1:9, *"God is faithful, through Whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." "...called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord."* I just want to bracket with that verse two other fragments in the same letter which will come back to us as we go on. In chapter 10:1-5:
"*I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. Nevertheless with most of them God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness."*

Notice the emphasis that the Apostle Paul is making on the word, *"all."* This is the whole object of what he is saying: he says, all, all, all, *BUT WITH MOST,* not *ALL, "but with most of them God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things."*

Now please read on through verse 13 and just retain that passage in your minds. Then come over to the Second Letter of Corinthians, and let us remember that the two letters are one in this, that they are both addressed to the same people and are part and counterpart of the same instruction. 2 Corinthians 4:6, *"It is God Who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,'"* or, as another version puts it, *"God said, 'Let light be, Who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory* of *God in the face of Jesus Christ.'"*

Let us see one more fragment from the next chapter, and, of course, in the original there are no chapters: it is one continuous line of teaching. In chapter 5, verse 17, there are the very well-known words, *"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But, all things are out from God."*

"Called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." This is our third step in relation to that call and our fellowship. Thus far we have seen that the new beginnings of God in relation to His ultimate purpose, His eternal purpose,

are all by way of what is called a "call." That word signified a change in the Divine economy, a change in the Divine progress. When God had made the garden, the earth, and man, and had placed man in the garden and was able to say of everything, "It is very good," God never had to call: He just was there. He was there with man without any necessity for calling or seeking. It was spontaneous. But as soon as man sinned, and his conscience fell into condemnation, and he hid himself, God came into the garden and called unto Adam. - "Adam, where art thou?"

That was the first call in the Bible, and it is the first note in the long, long drawn out call through the ages. It represented a changed position in everything, and God is now, from that moment, represented as the "calling" or the "seeking" God. As we have seen earlier, He has been calling right down through the ages. He called Abraham: *"Abraham, Abraham."* He called Moses: *"Moses, Moses"* and so on. As we have indicated, every time the call alighted upon a human life, that call related that human life in some way to His Son, Jesus Christ.

Here in Corinthians we have this call, not as a separate call, but as the one continuous call of God through the ages lighting upon the people in Corinth as God passes by, so to speak, and calls to them, and they make a response. They do make a response. I believe that there are some better people in Corinth than you would be inclined to believe when you read it, but these people, good or not so good, had made a response to the call. About them all the apostle says, "Ye were called into fellowship with God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord."

The point is that here in Corinth, or wherever that sound of the call of the *SEEKING* God is heard, it is included in the long, long call or thought of God from the beginning when man had to be called. The necessity was to call him because he had gotten away, and the call will go on until the time when the last trump shall sound, the final note of the age-long call. Then He will call us to be with Himself. He will call us up, and we shall hear the call. I trust that we all shall hear the call.

Here in Corinth and in our passage which brings the thing to us, to peoples, to a company of people wherever they are, here then we are found right in this long, drawn out call of the seeking God. His call in the past has been fragmentary, periodic, in different ways to different people in different situations, and it has been in no completeness and finality. All these fragments of the continuous call have been coming together, making up the full call until He appears in flesh

Himself, in the embodiment of His Son Jesus Christ Who gathers all the fragments and all the times together and completes the Divine Call. There is no call after that. It is full now and in Christ: it is complete, and it is final. He is the last sound of the Divine call.

We are called into the fullness of this continuous call of God through the ages, all summed up now in Jesus Christ Who we know from the gospel stories as God now here, present, manifest in the flesh, a seeking God. *"For the Son of man has come (to seek and) to save that which"* when? - way back in the garden *"was lost."* He is now the completeness of the Voice of the seeking God. He is God in fullness and finality.

We have already seen in this passage that that call, 1 Corinthians 1:9, was the long call through the ages into which believers at different times and in different places are called, are joined. Now here is a very significant thing as we move on. What we say may be very simple and may sound very elementary, but it is a very important thing that we should always see parts in their relationship to the whole; or, to put it in another way, we must always have the comprehensive, the all inclusive context or setting of any part of anything that we have.

You see, Christianity, the evangelical Christianity, has been reduced to fragments so that you get a constant drumming upon one fragment of the whole counsel of God. People become taken up entirely with a part, a fragment. It may to them be very wonderful. They may even think that it is everything; but they draw a circle around this particular aspect of truth, or a practice, or an experience, and make it the finality of everything. And that is why we have so many immature Christians and such weakness in the Body of Christ. It is very necessary for us to see every part in its full and comprehensive setting of the counsels of God from eternity if we are going to grow.

Our grasp must always be far beyond our reach. We must always find that God is ahead of us. He is a long way ahead of us. We have not yet attained. Neither have we at the end of the fullest life attained, nor are we already complete. The Lord is still ahead of us, a long way ahead. If I may say as one who has been trying to catch up to God for sixty years, today He is so far ahead I just cannot, cannot get up to Him. He is beating me to it all the way. Yes, it is very true, and I hope no one here will ever think they have attained or think that they have got it all, all the answers, and they know. And if you go on with the Lord, you will find that after the longest life you will have to say, "Well, I have not yet attained. I do

not know. I am more today out of my depths of comprehension than ever I was. The Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word."

Also, may I say in parenthesis that I do not believe it is a right thing to try and reduce everything for young Christians to utter simplicity. Some of the best Christians I know and the most useful to God are those who came into the place and the sphere where the fullest counsels of God were being given far beyond their spiritual age or growth. Yet, they listened; they absorbed; they wondered. It was beyond them, but what came to them was, "My, I have come into something tremendous. If this is all true, how great is the thing that I have been brought into by simple faith in Jesus Christ." So I am not for just whittling it down and making it so very, very simple. No, stay beyond them. Every time make them feel, "My, this is beyond me, but it is very wonderful." Draw them on.

We must get our faith at every stage and every part in the context of the whole purpose of God. If we just have tidbits and make bits of everything, we are not going to grow and lots of other things are going to come in. Well, all that we have said thus far is an introduction to the process of the fellowship of the call.

Now, I think here is something quite impressive and instructive. The Holy Spirit is writing these letters, the New Testament, and He is writing to the Corinthians. We believe that behind the writer, the man or the men, the Holy Spirit was dictating, and the ultimate result of the writing is an expression of the mind of the Spirit; and He is the Eternal Spirit. He is not only the Holy Spirit of A.D. 40, when some of these things were written: He is not only the Spirit in that era, you see. He is not only the Holy Spirit of Corinth and the people there, but He is the Holy Spirit of all eternity and of the universe, the universe of God's thoughts and intentions.

The Holy Spirit has not left off speaking in time, has not left the wilderness in which Israel was forty years. With these people, He is back there. No, go even further back. He has not left the time or the hour, whenever that was, that the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the deep, and God said, "Let light be." That is now, in the eternal now. The Holy Spirit here in Corinth at this particular time is moving right back. There is no past, present, or future with the Eternal God: it is all now with Him. So what was in the wilderness with Israel is for the Corinthians now: "These things were written for our example." That is now, and it is very important and very interesting and significant that the Holy Spirit does this. He reaches back to early activities and movements of God in His goings

toward His full and final intention.

Here is the same God Who said back in Genesis, "Let there be light," saying now in this apostolic age, "Let there be light" to shine into hearts. The same thing as then, now. God, the same God of the fiat, "Let light be," has shined into our hearts.

Also, the God, Who back in time created heaven and earth and all things, has now created in Christ Jesus a new creation. In Christ Jesus, there is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all has become new. This Word to the Corinthians, and all the Letters in the Bible, are not out of man. They are not out from man: they are out from God. Man is not producing anything now in Christ. In Christ, the first and the last is out from God.

That was the law of the life of the Lord Jesus, and a very strong law it was for Him. It was imperative. "The Son can do nothing out from Himself." It is a pity that the Greek words "of Himself" have been so translated. It should be "out from Himself" - "The Son can do nothing out from Himself." He is producing a new creation, a new order of man, a new economy, which is all of God. How testing that is! How challenging that is! We are ruled out in this. That is the argument of the first part of the Letter to the Corinthians. We are out of it. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. He cannot know them." See all the great negative of God upon that former creation where this old man is put aside, ruled out, and where everything from first to last is "out from God" in this new creation. There is such a challenge in that.

If you and I go on with the Lord long enough, sooner or later we are destined to come to the place of utter helplessness in the things of God. In the things of God, we find that we cannot cope, cannot explain, resolve or sort out. Neither can we reconstitute nor give the answer. The Lord has got to answer our questions. No man is an authority in this way. No man is a specialist in this way. The very best of God's servants is limited to get from God the answer. You see, we are back in the creation where all is of God. Adam did not bring any of it into being. God did, and it is all now in the last Adam, all out from God.

So the Holy Spirit reaches back in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4 to creation, to the fiat of Divine Light, and in 1 Corinthians, chapter 10 to Israel in the wilderness. In what position does the Holy Spirit regard these people in Corinth as being? It is rather a terrible thing, but here we see that the Holy Spirit looks upon these

people in Corinth as being exactly the same in position as Israel was in the wilderness. Again and again the Holy Spirit comes down on this warning about Israel in the wilderness. "It is you, written for your examples. That is where you are. These things were written that we should not lust, that we should not... and that we should not... and that we should not perish." - "*All passed through the sea... were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." All partook of the same spiritual food, the same spiritual drink.* Up to this point in the Scripture, you are in that "all." Now the great divide comes. Are you in the majority who perished, or are you in the "some" who survived and went through? The Spirit says, "You are in the same position, Corinthians."

The majority in Christianity, as it is today, are in the position of Israel in the wilderness. The majority in the wilderness belonged to that great mass who never got through and who never entered into all the intention of God in their call and their fellowship with His Son. I believe that the New Testament teaches that it is possible for Christians to fail to come to the fullness to which they were called in Christ and, in that sense, fall by the way, come short. I believe the New Testament as a whole thunders on this. It really does. If you want to know who the overcomers are in the Book of Revelation, they are just the people who went on and go right on and go right through. They do not stop short and, in that sense, perish by the way.

There is an "*ALL*," and there is a "*SOME*." They did all come out. They did all these other things, but with some of them, God was not well pleased. He could not say, "It is very good." He could not say, *"My beloved... in whom I am well pleased."*

There is one all inclusive factor and principle governing this whole issue, governing everything in the life of the believer, and it is this principle that Paul was thrusting like a sword into the situation at Corinth. As we said earlier, the ultimate issue is God's place. That is what is going to determine and be the criterion in the end; however, the principle that governs everything in relation to that full end and that governs this big question of the all and the some, is a matter of the heart. The undivided heart is the principle governing everything. That is precise, concise, and very pointed. Take that back through the Bible and apply that as you go. Book by book, the big, governing principle deciding everything is the matter of the heart, divided or undivided. For our purpose the undivided heart is God's principle in this whole matter of attaining, of going through, of arriving. So in the wilderness, the whole trouble with "the most" of

them was the divided heart.

We must go back again to the Book of Genesis to get our context. What does the Book of Genesis have to say? It says many things to us, but the thing that is paramount in this book is the pairs. It is a book of pairs, people in pairs. You have Cain and Abel. Two different categories, are they not? You have Abraham and Lot, Jacob and Esau, Isaac and Ishmael. We have pairs, in two different categories, perhaps coming from a common stem, but one takes one line and the other takes another line altogether. They part on the way, and what is the thing that is determining that separation, that parting of the ways? One line has an undivided heart: the other has a divided heart.

Abel had an undivided heart, a heart just for God. Cain - well, he is in the line of Saul. If we were going out of the Pentateuch into the other books, we should come unto David and Saul as a pair. We would see the divided heart of Saul and the undivided heart of David. We also see Abraham and Lot, Abraham as a man with the undivided heart and Lot as a man who had interests in this world other than God's. Lot's own interests revealed his divided heart.

Then we see Isaac and Ishmael, and their history, as well as this spiritual principle, declares the difference between them. Isaac had his very existence on the basis of an intervention from heaven, on the basis of the power of resurrection from the dead. His beginning is wholly of God, and he lives a quiet life. You may find some fault with Isaac, but the fact is that he is just there.

Now that may be a very good thing. It might be possible that you are just there. You may not be an Abraham. You may not be a David. You may not be one of these great ones, but you can be there walking up and down in the land. Does it mean that because you are just here on the earth that you have no significance? By his very presence on earth, Isaac signifies the Almighty power of God: he signifies the supernatural behind his very existence for he is the embodiment of the power of resurrection.

Read your New Testament in that connection. In the Letter to the Hebrews, it says that Abraham's body was now *"as good as dead,"* but he believed that God was able to raise him from the dead. You say, "Well, I have no public ministry." You may have had, and the Lord may have asked you to just lay it down. You may not be a very prominent person in the Christian world of whom people are taking note, but you are here holding the ground for God and standing on the

ground of God's absolute ability to keep you alive when naturally it would not be so. Do not think that because you are an Isaac that you do not count as much as the others. You are "just there" walking up and down in the land, opening the wells.

Isaac is a man of the wells. He re-opens the wells that the Philistines have filled in. He is a man of life whose testimony is one of life in the midst of death, and he is just that. But should we say, "just that"? What a thing that is for some of us! We would have been dead long ago if it had not been for this great, great truth of the power of His resurrection.

Go into the land of Ishmael today, and what do you find? You find no living testimony, no life. There is an atmosphere of death. If you go to the land of Ishmael, of Islam, you will feel it: the atmosphere is death. So we see Ishmael set over against Isaac. There is a divide between the two, and the principle in Isaac's deciding is the undivided heart.

What shall we say of Jacob and Esau? There is quite a processing to extricate Jacob for something wonderful, but God is *"the God of Jacob."* We do know something about Jacob because we know something about ourselves. Yet, deep down in Jacob even though it may be largely buried and covered up by his natural makeup, there is something in Jacob that is not there in Esau. What is it? It is a reach for God. He has a valuation of what is of God. The birthright, which is God's own gift, is more to him than anything else. Jacob may be a difficult fellow and may be all that you might say about this supplanter, but somehow in his being there is this concern for God's interest.

God met him on that ground at Bethel. God met him on that ground at Jabbok. Even with all the externals, the vicissitudes of life, the unworthy things about Jacob, there is something in this man which God has planted. There is this principle of a heart for God. This heart for God comes out in his later life when he has been worn out. When this supplanting realm in him has been worn out, we hear him talking, and he is referring, attributing everything, to God. Jacob says over and over, "because God." In essence he says, "When I was away, when I was astray, when I was all that you could say bad about me, yes, God had His Eye upon me. God had His Hand on me. God was interwoven with my life." Deep down, there was this something that gave him a heart for God, better than his own heart.

Esau is of God's birthright; yet, the attitude that prevails in him is that of "Give me a good square meal, satisfy the whim of this moment, and you can have all the other." The Word says that he *"despised his birthright."* One can see the great divide and difference between Jacob and Esau.

Let us now pass on from the pairs in Genesis to Exodus. Come to Israel now and move from the individuals to the corporate body of this nation. The first great act of God is to cut in between them and Egypt. God must get Israel on to ground where He can get to work in them, and this ground is that of the wilderness. What is happening in Exodus in the wilderness? Israel is out of Egypt, but Egypt is not out of them. Again and again, they hark back to Egypt. "Oh, for the onions and the garlic of Egypt. Was there not bread enough back in Egypt? Were we brought out here to die of hunger? Were there not enough graves in Egypt that we should die in a wilderness?" Egypt is not out of their heart. The heart out there is divided: that is the whole story. Read Psalm 106.

If you have a question about this divided heart in the wilderness, and are not sure of this, read in the Fifth Book of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy, chapter 8, verse 2. Here in Deuteronomy is a review of all that has gone before in Israel's life, and in Deuteronomy 8:2, it says:
"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no."

Forty years of heart testing is a tremendous thing, is it not? I believe that in the true, original meaning of this scripture, it is not that God did not know what was in their heart, but it meant that God "might make thee to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no."

The Apostle Paul says, "You Corinthians are back there in the wilderness. This testing of the heart is going on in you. There is a finding out of what is in your heart." The question is coming through the Word, "Where is your heart?" Read the letter again, and you will find out where their heart is.

Now let me say, without intending to give offense, that this letter is the letter of the "pentecostalism" of those days. The gifts of the Spirit are here, more than in any other part of the New Testament, enumerated, underlined, recognized. Yet, with all that is said concerning the presence of the gifts, it is proved that the heart in Corinth was for self-glory, self-gratification, soulish - only out for

enjoyment, even in Divine gifts. When it came to that of these things, it was the things that mattered. The gifts were everything to them.

As we see in the life of Saul, God's people can hold Divine things for selfish ends, for personal ends, for self-glory. Now, if you take these Divine things away and suddenly set aside all these phenomena and manifestations and all that is called evidences (it is the soul that must have evidences), what have you got left??

I have known, and this is the tragedy again and again, people who have made so much of the thing we are speaking of. Then something has happened, and the thing is stopped. For them, it is as though everything is all gone. What then becomes of them? Unless they have a turn in their heart toward the Lord and not a turn toward the gifts, their history will be much like Israel who died in the wilderness. They did not have the Lord: they only had the thing. Therefore, since the thing seemed to be taken away, they had nothing left. For them, these sensational evidences were everything.

We are in that kind of age today. It is becoming more and more a psychic age. It is an age of the soul just spilling over, asserting itself, taking control of everything in Christianity as well as outside of it - a soulish age. Now if you are not seeing and understanding all that I am saying, let us come back again to examine the trouble with Israel in the wilderness. If you turn over to the Letter to the Hebrews (which is of course a summary of all the economy of those times), and come to chapter four, you will see Israel in the wilderness again. It is very significant and instructive to note how the Word comes forth in verse twelve: *"For the Word* of *God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing... to the dividing... of soul and spirit...."* In the wilderness, there is a dividing of soul and spirit.

Come back to Corinthians and your earlier chapters. First, it states, "Now the natural man...": this is the man of soul. In the Greek, the very word "natural" is the word "soulical." Next, it says, *"But he that is spiritual...."* Here we have two different men in one, a soulical man and a spiritual man in one body, and God is cleaving between the two. In the wilderness, He is trying to do that with Israel: He is trying to get in between the soul and spirit. You see, the soul is that which must have these proofs and evidences. Soulish men must have something along natural lines, such as evidences or phenomena, to prove that their position is right; therefore, because they are soulish, Israel complains and murmurs and

grumbles when they are called out into a place where God only is to be their recourse and resource.

This dividing work between the *ALL* and the *SOME* is a terrific thing, is it not? In Corinth, the Corinthians are back there in the wilderness with this dividing of the soul and spirit taking place. Christians can be there, and this piercing, dividing, setting asunder work of the Spirit of God is sometimes a devastating thing. If you do not understand, do not worry. You will understand some day if you have not got there; however, some of you will understand that the Lord does not feed His truest, most devoted children with a lot of evidence and phenomena. He starves that side of our being so often. He says, "Trust Me, not for what I can do, not for the evidence that I give you, but trust Me for Myself." This is very testing, but that is the issue in the wilderness. We are not only to be out with God from the world, from Egypt, but also the world, Egypt, is to be out of us.

Be careful that you are not hankering for this realm again. Are you after the evidence? My, how I have seen dear Christian people just prostrating themselves, groaning and crying, almost screaming for evidence - these "sign" things. Please, do not be offended with me because I am trying to get to the heart of our present, complicated situation; and it is becoming more complicated because dear Christians and dear men of God, who have been greatly used, are creating an emotional, psychic situation that is involving simple Christians in things which are, sooner or later, going to be a great disillusionment and an offense. It will bring "offendedness" with the Lord, and that is just what the devil is after.

Can you bear with this word? Can you receive it, seeing that we have been *"called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Look at the life of our Lord. See His life: "He emptied Himself, became obedient unto death, the death of the Cross."

We have been looking at Exodus because in it we see the inwardness of this circumcision, the dividing of the heart or the making of the heart whole for God and, therefore, undivided. Now, let us look at Leviticus. One may ask, "What is the Book of Leviticus?" It contains a lot of things, and, perhaps, most of you do not enjoy reading it. Some of you young people may find it a bit dry and difficult to understand, but it is a part of the goings of God. It is part of the call into the fellowship of His Son, and that which Leviticus represents can be summed up in this - everything suitable to the pleasure of the Lord, the Presence of the Lord in

satisfaction.

Does that matter to you? I am sure that it must. What matters is not the amount of work that we can do for the Lord or the amount of ministry that can be accomplished. I am prepared to let that go any day; indeed, the Lord is having a hard time keeping me in it because it means real battles to stay in the ministry. Whether I am in public or private, in ministry or out of it, wherever I am or whatever I am, the thing that does matter is the Presence of the Lord being with me. Is the Lord with me? Is the Lord with you? That is the ultimate thing, the final thing, the conclusive thing, the everything. We want the Lord to be able to say, "I am with you."

You cannot always feel the Presence of the Lord. I cannot always say that I feel this wonderful Presence, and if you can, I envy you because you have got further along than I have. However, I do not always feel it, and it is not always an ecstasy. It is a walk of faith, but, be that as it may, the thing that matters to you and me is the Presence of the Lord. This is the main point in the Book of Leviticus, and all turns around that.

All the detail in this book is showing forth a situation that makes it possible for the Lord to be present, and the Word that sums up this situation is "He is a Holy Lord." In the scriptures of Leviticus, we can see that, as it is described, everything is being gathered up into one focal point. Everything is moving from the level of the common people, gradually rising in rank and position and importance, through the Levites, up through the sons of Aaron until you reach the head, the top, Aaron, the high priest. We can gravitate from Aaron's feet upward to his forehead and see that there is inscribed, *"Holiness unto the Lord."* On that ground, the Lord is present: *"The Glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."* They all bow and worship. There is a solemn awe, but it is a deep, joyful awe of rest and peace because the Lord is present. The Presence of the Lord is rest and peace. It is something very wonderful, deeper than words. "The Lord is in our midst."

When we feel His Presence and know He is there, we are silenced. We make no noise, no chatter: we do not gossip. There is something that is suitable to the Presence of the Lord, and that is the Book of Leviticus in every detail. All the offerings and the feasts are suitable ground for the Lord. He is glad and satisfied to be there because all is speaking of His Son, every feast and every offering is speaking of His Son, the Lord Jesus.

Our life is on Holy Ground with Jesus Christ because we are "called unto His fellowship." There is that wonderful benediction, *"in Whom I am well pleased."* We have not yet gotten to the place where everything in our lives is altogether Christ, but we are called for it to be so. This call of His fellowship comes, and we begin to move in a course toward an expected end where Christ shall be *"all in all."* Knowing ourselves as we do, we know not how that is going to be, and it almost seems impossible to believe; but, if God grant, at the end we shall hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." This will be spoken because everything is of Christ, *"in Whom I am well pleased,"* and what shall bring this about is an undivided heart.

I am not going into the Book of Deuteronomy, because I have said that it is a comprehending of all past history: it is a reiteration and a re-exhortation. So let us look at the Book of Numbers. It has been called a book of wanderings, but I believe that to be incorrect. It is a book of journeyings. Forty times in this book, the words occur, "they journeyed." They were moving, perhaps going around in circles, but they were on the way. They were moving in the wilderness where God was doing this work of searching the heart. Remember, Deuteronomy 8:2 says that it was "to know what was in thine heart," or "to make thee know what was in thy heart...." The Book of Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers is the whole course of the heart searching work of God. It is the dividing of the heart; in other words, it is the setting on one side of what is not acceptable to the Lord and on the other side the gathering and securing of what is of the Lord.

The great tragedy is that only two of that great, mighty host got through and got over. Only Joshua and Caleb became the overcomers of that age: the others did not. Oh, may we not be as those who did not get through! The Lord is doing this kind of work with us, is He not? Is He doing this with you? He is doing this with me. The Lord is seeing what is in our hearts, and He is testing us by all manner of things to see where our hearts are.

You see, He brings us to the place where we can honestly say, "Lord, You're Life for me, and I have no other life than You. But for You, I would be better put in the grave. I have no interest to stay in this life, in this world, or on this earth, if You are not in it, Lord." God is seeking to bring a people to this place, even in spiritual things. Dr. A. B. Simpson said it this way: "Once it was the blessings, now it is the Lord." That thought is much like the vindication of David which was, "He set the Lord always before his face."

May the Lord grant that in us He is finding for Himself a people of the undivided heart. When He puts us to the test, may He find that we say, "All right, this can go and that can go, anything and everything can go, but Himself. If only He remains the all, then nothing else matters." So be it.

Let us pray. We commit the Word to Thee, Lord. We commit our hearts to Thee. We commit the issue to Thee. Work on then, Lord, 'til on our hearts eternal light shall break, within Thy Presence, perfected, we satisfied shall wake.' Help us with all the trials of the way, the testings of the way, and may we come out of every one in the triumph of the Lord. The Lord has triumphed! We ask this in the Name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 4 - The Prospect of the Call

Let us consider the prospect of the call into the fellowship of God's Son. This falls into two phases, the present prospect and the future prospect. I will just bring immediately into view the ultimate of this call and fellowship so that we can make our way toward it again as we trace the course of the present prospect into the future one.

The Bible, the Word of God which is our charter in this great calling, teaches us quite definitely that the end of this call and fellowship is a reigning together with Christ. *"If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him."* God's thought, intention, and will in reigning together with Christ is that it will be fellowship not only in His kingdom as a sphere and a condition, but also fellowship in the sharing of His dominion, being one with Him in His eternal government. That is the full idea in the call and in the fellowship. Even though it is the will of God that all govern together with Him, in the Bible it is made perfectly clear that many will not arrive at that. Nevertheless, this is what we are called unto - to share with Him His Throne.

It is possible to be citizens even as it is possible to be subjects, but it is also possible to be of the royal family which is very much more because that speaks of those who are associated immediately with the Throne. In the Word, it is revealed that for those who are called and will go on in the fellowship of His Son to its ultimate fulfillment, the Lord's intention is that these will be in association with the Throne. We bring that into view and will probably come back to it before we close, but now let us look at the present prospect.

The Present Prospect

The present prospect of this call and fellowship again divides into two phases. The first phase is the reconstitution for that position, responsibility, and association with Him in His ultimate fullness of government. For this, there is a preparation and a training, and the training is what I have called a reconstitution or a making again on a different basis altogether from what we are naturally. As you are naturally, you cannot live on the moon. You have to have a lot of apparatus, breathing apparatus and such, in order to exist there. In the stratosphere, you need another kind of lung, a different mechanism and

organism, to live in that realm.

So it is in this matter concerning us. You and I as we are at present would have a difficult time if we were immediately translated to heaven. We would feel out of place. So there must be a reconstituting in us. An entirely new constitution has to be inculcated, and this brings us into a condition of conflict between the two constitutions that are in us and between the two ragings around us.

I ask you to be very patient with me because I am going to traverse again much of the ground which we have covered only through indication. I have only pointed things out, indicating but not staying to consider. Now we are going to tarry on some vital points.

Do you agree that we have got to be made all over again?! Many times the question comes, "Why can we not just come in as we are and go on as we are and be in without all this fuss and trouble and business of being changed?" Why? Well, the answer is just this - it is only the Lord Jesus Who can occupy that heavenly kingdom and occupy that heavenly Throne as being of a different order of humanity. He is a contrasting order, nature, constitution, species. If we know anything about relationship with the Lord Jesus, we know that He is different from what we are, and He is so different that it is very difficult to be like Him. We are all the time trying to be like Him because we know that we are different. This is very simple, but it is basic to everything. When we are called into the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called into a relationship with an order to which we do not belong naturally and to which we have got to be conformed. That is the scriptural word, *"conformed"* to the image of God's Son. In another word, we must be 'reconstituted' all over again from the beginning, and this is a tremendous battle.

We are therefore called into conflict and warfare. Paul said to Timothy, "No man who is called to be a soldier goes on in the way of this world and this life, that he may please Him Who has called him to be a soldier." We are called to be soldiers, to join this heavenly army. Now we can have all of our hymns, "Onward Christian Soldiers" and others, but when we come back down to practical politics, we find that being a soldier is not just walking about in a uniform. To be a soldier is to be in downright grim warfare day by day, and the warfare begins inside ourselves. Before we can do anything outside, this warfare has got to be finished inside of us. There must be a settling of the battle between the two natures in us, between the two constitutions, and that is war.

We came to the Corinthian Letter, and we saw that by this very letter and its definite allusions here and there, the Holy Spirit looked upon these Corinthian believers as in the same position as that of Israel in the wilderness. Very definitely that is referred to in this letter, and it contains many warnings to the Corinthian believers.

When we go back to Israel in the wilderness, we see that although they had not yet arrived at the objective warfare of the land, they were in the place and period of preparation for that. Make very careful note of this: before you can go in and touch principalities and powers and before you can have any power of authority over the external forces of evil in this universe - the principalities, powers, world-rulers of this darkness, hosts of spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies - before you can touch that, all this matter of preparation has got to be completed.

It took God forty years to get the children of Israel anywhere in this preparation, and, then, they actually got nowhere in it. In the end, they perished because they were not constituted for what lay beyond. These people had not allowed this constituting to be accomplished in them; therefore, they perished in the wilderness. The new generation, a reconstituted generation, went over to do the work in the land, the objective work, because during that time in the wilderness one constitution was dying; it was being put aside. One kind of person was being dealt with, brought to nothingness, and ruled out while in the wilderness, and this other kind was being formed from birth and growing so that it could go over and do the work in the land.

Now do not be disheartened because it need not be forty years. Just get rid of the geography, just get rid of the temple and time factor, and remember that this work of reconstituting is not necessarily a time matter at all. Some Christians who have been on the road for years and years are nowhere near being able to cope with the evil forces of this universe: they are out of that objective battle. The Church is very largely out of this today. Christianity is not able to touch these world-rulers of darkness effectively. It is not really standing up to the evil powers. These forces are just having their way with Christianity.

However, you come upon some here and there, perhaps a young Christian, who because of some secret principle, some wonderful reality, has leaped ahead into the things of God, and they really do represent a positive factor against evil and evil forces. In a very short time, they have grown and have almost compassed the whole distance of the wilderness. Why is that? Because this reconstituting is

not a time matter: it depends only upon certain things.

We have laid down the thing that is the principle of all spiritual maturity and growth: we laid down the basic thing as being a heart undivided. Remember that an undivided heart is one that is wholly and utterly for God, and it has no secondary considerations. Even though a circumcised heart costs everything, this heart will cry, "I must go on with God." This heart matter governs the whole period in the wilderness as we shall see.

Let us mark the fact that this Word concerning God's people being in a wilderness was spoken to the Corinthians who were much nearer to our time by a few thousand years than Israel was. Seeing that the Word of God is still alive and has not all been used up in the apostolic age, it comes to us. This matter comes down to our own day, our own time, into our own lives. It is a matter of whether we are going to be in "Corinthian" conditions and position or whether we are going to gravitate from that of Corinthians into Colossians and Ephesians. It is a mighty gravitation and a tremendous transition from the one to the other. However, as much as you may read and enjoy and take pleasure in Ephesians and Colossians, you cannot get into those letters until you have come out of Corinthians. You have to first go through the Book of Corinthians chronologically and experimentally before you can go any further. You cannot go on to Ephesians and Colossians until you have gone through the wilderness position and have been reconstituted.

Now, just a short word of warning. A lot of people have taken up this idea of warfare with Satan and warfare with the powers of evil, and they have set up what they call "warfare clinics." They call this type of thing the warfare. Their phraseology and their ideas about this are that if you use certain words for Satan and throw them hard enough at him, then he is going to run away. Do not make any mistake about that; you be very careful about that because Satan will bide his time and hit back. He will make an awful mess of that kind of thing. Remember that we have no power against Satan while we are on natural ground, while we are in the wilderness, while we are in the Corinthian position. That is why the Letters to the Corinthians, especially the first one, are a shocking revelation of the need for correction of the things that are wrong.

So here then we have the present prospect of this call and this fellowship which involves us in a twofold warfare. There may be an overlapping because this warfare has a double aspect. We have seen that this first aspect concerns the

inward conflict, triumph, and ascendancy. The inward aspect was what was going on with the Corinthians in their first state of spiritual life. The second aspect of the present prospect is the outward that brings power against the power of the enemy. So we see first the inward conflict and victory and then the outward which results in power against the enemy.

As we have seen, Israel was out of Egypt; that is, they had positionally left the world. They had taken ground with God objectively, outwardly. By the blood of the Lamb, the Passover, by the mighty work of God for them, they had come out to be God's people. They were out of the world positionally, but, as we said, the world was not out of them. Egypt was still strongly in them constitutionally. They were constantly thinking and harking back to Egypt for the onions and the garlic and so on. It was still a part of their constitution, and so God had to take them in hand to make real in them as a people corporately, collectively, what He had been doing with individuals.

The Individual And The Prospect

Now let us go back and start with Abel again. We have seen the pairs up to this point and how these "twos" in every case divided and parted company, chose different ways and represented the two different principles. Cain and Abel - we would like always to reverse the order to Abel and Cain. Nevertheless the principle is quite true, first the natural and then the spiritual. The earthly first, then that which is heavenly.

Here we have the two principles, the natural and the spiritual, in these two men, and they part company. They become absolutely hostile. The earthly is against the heavenly, and the spiritual is against the natural. There is a hostility which is found in these two, and they go different ways and have two different destinies.

Abel is the man of the Spirit, the man of heaven, and he is the man who places everything upon the work of Another for his salvation. He is the man who knows full well that his own works will never get him through with God. The whole great question of history all the way through is that of right standing with God. Abel is the man who knows quite well that in himself there is no right standing with God. He is utterly dependent upon Another, upon a Lamb, to get through to God.

Then there is Cain, and he brings works, his own works. They were probably

very beautiful. I should think that in the basket that Cain brought there was some very beautiful oranges and apples and pears and what not. It was the fruit of the land, the good fruit of the earth. The Apostle Paul could say that before his conversion he was bringing very good fruit. There was nothing wrong with the law as such. There was nothing wrong with the works of the law, and Paul was perfect so far as that was concerned; however, he brought the works of the law, his own works to God, and, like Cain, that never got him through. Cain was dependent upon his own fruit, what he could produce, what he could do, and you know where you are in the New Testament on that. You are in the Letter to the Galatians and the Letter to the Romans.

So here we see a conflict arising. The point is that there is a battle between these two, and it is a battle in which Abel forfeits his life. He is slain, but was he? In the long verdict of history, who lives? Who survives? Who stands with God? What is the verdict in the end?! Read the little book of Jude that is near the end of the Bible. It says that *"they have gone in the way of Cain."* There is a stigma upon this man, a stigma upon this "earthboundness" of life. Upon Abel there is no stigma: he stands well with God in the end. *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."* Abel was justified. The Amplified Version is, *"in right standing with God."*

So here is the conflict even unto death, and it is a conflict unto death between the earth man and the heavenly man, the natural and the spiritual. That conflict was what was going on in the wilderness: you can see it so clearly when you read this first letter to the Corinthians. There is a contrast and conflict there. *"The natural man receiveth not."* He cannot for there is no right standing in that natural man with God. "But he that is spiritual understandeth, judgeth all things...." The spiritual man has got an open heaven. Now we view the teaching of the conflict between these two natures, we view the doctrine of this objectively, and we say, "This is what is going on in us," for we know that there is no power against the evil one while there is any dispute within between the natural and the spiritual. We will presently come to this point again in another connection. So here in Cain and Abel we have seen the first dividing of these things.

Next we come to Abraham and Lot, and we see this principle in another form. In the history of Abraham and Lot, there comes a point in their course when they divide company. They part company, and the one takes one direction, and the other another. With Lot, it is only first a gesture. The histories and the destinies of these men are not precipitated in a moment: they have a very, very simple

beginning. Beware! Beware right there of Lot's gesture. Let us see how it began with Lot. Abraham told him to take a look and make his choice. All Lot did was to look around, and then he took a position in a certain village with his face toward the cities of the plain, his face toward Sodom - his face toward the world. That is all. It was only a gesture; but once that is insinuated into the life, we find the enemy behind that. That is the force of the prince of this world. The next thing is that he moves in that direction and pitches his tent toward Sodom, and he does not stop there because the enemy is behind all this, and he is pressing it further. Lot goes in through the gate, joins himself to the elders, and becomes one of their committee, their counsel, and shares their whole system of things. Now he has left his tent outside and has bought a house inside.

See the course of this. It is a steady, slow course. I do not know how long it took. It began simply, but this course is just a gesture, then a drawing, an inclination, and a following that constitution to his end. It took an intervention from Heaven to take him out of that situation and to save his very life, but he remains in history as a man who was not very honorable. We do not think of Lot with a high esteem, do we? We leave him here: his life has shown us one course.

Abraham chose another course. He speaks to us of another principle, and you can test your own life, your own heart, by this. Right into the very constitution of Abraham, there had been planted something, it was going to grow and grow; but down there in the very bedrock of his being, there had been planted a sense that this world is not everything, this life is not everything. There is something more, and there is no satisfaction whatsoever with things here. There is a sense of being a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth. There is no ability to settle down here because there is a magnetism inside, this magnetic needle of the Divine compass always gravitating toward a certain direction. Inside there is an instinct of the heavenly, of the Divine; and though he may stay in places for a little while, he cannot stay long. He must move on, ever on, because the principle of Divine discontent is rooted in his being.

Discontent can be a very evil thing, but there is a Divine discontent. God can never be satisfied with anything less than His full, final, and ultimate; and the Holy Spirit is always inwardly urging toward that *MORE*. "I must have more. I must go on. I must move more into this realm *THAT I MAY KNOW HIM. I have not yet attained. I am not already complete. This one thing I do, leaving behind those things that belong to the behind and pressing, pressing, pressing....*" There is another constitution that has come in, and it has this inward urge always for

the "more" that is of God.

The true Spirit-governed people of God are those who while they are satisfied with the Lord in Himself and can never think of life without Him (in this sense, He has become their finality); nevertheless, they know He is so much bigger than they have known heretofore. The territory of Christ is so much greater. The Spirit is inwardly urging, "Go on." This is constitutional, and it is like this in Abraham who becomes known as the friend of God.

Now we come to Isaac and Ishmael. Let us see what Isaac has to say to us again. If you had met Isaac, the well maker, water provider, life giver, out looking for old wells that the enemy had filled up, if you had met him on one of his daily walks out looking for wells that he could open again, and if you said, "Isaac, tell me something of your history," I think Isaac spiritually would have put it something like this. "My history? Well, my history began on an altar where I was in effect slain, came to death. In another instant, in a flash, a drop of the hand, my life would have been ended. But for God's intervention, I would not be here today. I am a living miracle, a living testimony to the power of His Resurrection. I am because of God, and He is the answer and the explanation. My very beginning and existence in this world has a miracle right at its roots: it was a supernatural event. I represent something that is wholly and utterly of God because Resurrection is alone the prerogative of God."

That is Isaac, the man who knows that he owes his very existence to God. There would be no survival for him except for God. Because of the Lord, Isaac has known the miracle of new birth, that supernatural thing which accounts for him. Isaac is the man that is going to be the instrument of God, the vessel of God, in opening up wells of water for others. He is to be the man undoing the work of the enemy in robbing people of life. It was the constitution of Isaac that constituted his ministry of life giving. That tremendous battle with death had to be fought out, and death had to be conquered in his experience before he could minister life to others.

Isaac was God's act from the very beginning. Ishmael was Abraham's attempt to do God's work, to realize God's purpose. I need say no more for you to know that you have come down to the earth. You have come to the natural man for Sarah argued, reasoned, on natural grounds entirely, and Abraham fell into this. It stands over his life as one of those mistakes that the most devoted servants of God sometimes make. So Ishmael goes down in history as a mistake, a mistake

of natural recourse, while Isaac stands as the great testimony to what is wholly of God.

The Lord Jesus is the Isaac of the ages. He was begotten from above, born of God. His birth was an intervention of the supernatural, and then He is the opener of wells of Life for all the thirsty. He is the Great Isaac, but I am afraid that in the same tent with Isaac there is an Ishmael. So often in the Church there is this other thing. Now you must interpret and see how true this is as we move on toward the climax of all this.

We have spoken about Jacob and Esau. Now from the natural standpoint, I do not think that Esau was such a bad fellow. One can like a lot of things about Esau. As you look at his history, there are some fine things about him naturally. Have you ever noticed that there may be in a family, perhaps two brothers, and one of them is naturally a fine fellow. He is strong, honest, straight. Naturally he is greatly respected. In the same family, there is another brother who is not quite like that. He is weak. There are many things about him that you could criticize. Before the world, he is not accepted like the other one; and, yet, the other one, the fine fellow, has no interest in God and God's things. He has no interest in that at all. He just goes on and lives his life, a good, strong, straight sort of life; but in his life there is no place for God. If you talk to him about God, he does not want to hear about "that." He just wants to live his own life.

The other one, in a natural sense, is not so fine and admirable; yet, somehow in him there is this instinct for God and the things of God. You can watch these two histories. One goes on in his natural course. He may be successful in work, in business, and stand well with the world. Then he dies, and there is nothing - nothing left for Eternity, nothing for Heaven. That is that. Now there is this other one. We may despise him naturally, but there is that out of his life which abides forever, which God has.

It is like that so often. You can see these two types either in families or in the world generally. Esau was a fine fellow in this way. Look at the way he treated Jacob at the end! I think that Esau was magnanimous, seeing that he had been tricked out of the birthright and had suffered so much at the hand of this brother of his. Esau had lost so much and yet wanted to give Jacob a lot, to help him on his way, and forget all the past. There is something fine about Esau; and yet, what is the verdict of history concerning him? - And why? The verdict stands as it does because there was planted in Jacob this instinct for heavenly things, for

the things of God. With all his faults, with all his wrongs, with all of his deceptions, and all that he was, he eventually came out to the position where God says, "I am the God of Jacob," and He said that because Jacob was God's man.

This battle is going on in us. It is going on in you: it is going on in me. There is a little bit of Jacob in us all. There is a bit of Esau in us all. The conflict goes on, and the divide has got to be made before God will get a people.

The Corporate Body And The Prospect

Now we leave the individuals and come to Israel, and all these things seen in Abel and the rest, all these spiritual principles, are taken up in the nation Israel collectively. In the wilderness, this battle of the two things is going on. The great issue is "which way are you going?" Are you going your own way? Are you going to be dictated to by your own natural interest? Look at Israel in the wilderness, and see all these things. There is the pull of the natural and the pull of God. "Which way are you going, Israel?" This is the issue of Carmel, and the Prophet Elijah cries, "If God be God, serve Him. If Baal, serve him. Why limp you like a lame man between the two things? Why do you not come down with both feet on one side or the other?"

That is the issue in the wilderness. That is the issue in Corinth. Are you going to be utter? Is God going to have all? What is in the balances of such a question?! It is whether you are going to reign, whether you are going to have power over all the power of evil and darkness, whether the devil is going to regard you as someone to be reckoned with and pay you a lot of attention for that reason or whether he is going to ignore you and leave you alone in his content. This is the issue that is being fought out in the wilderness and at Corinth, and I believe in the Church today, in Christianity today, it is just this same thing. Oh, the world is so much on the inside, crippling and paralyzing.

Now let us come over to the issue at the end of the wilderness at Kadesh-barnea. What has happened is that the old generation has been put aside, ruled out as unfit to go and tackle the situation over on the other side of Jordan: they were without competence to meet these other forces in the universe. All that has been set aside, and a new generation has been raised up. This new generation has come to the Jordan as it was overflowing all of its banks, and they have been taken through. "All the People were clean passed over Jordan." *CLEAN PASSED*

over - no stragglers, no compromisers - they are over!

Then what happens? They come to Gilgal, and the whole of that generation is circumcised. This whole generation growing up from childhood during that time in the wilderness had never been circumcised. The sign, the mark of the Cross (because that is what the meaning of circumcision is) had never been put upon them. Look at Colossians 2:12, and you will see that we are *"buried with Him in baptism,"* and the apostle calls that the circumcision of Christ. He says that baptism is the symbol of the circumcision of Christ. It is the Cross making a circle around the life and putting away one kind of life and bringing in another.

This whole generation is now marked with the Cross which says, "That is that. That history, that dividedness of heart is finished. That is over there now, buried in the wilderness. Now it is all for God." That is the meaning of the Cross. It is the meaning of that baptism. *"One has died for all; therefore, all have died... they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him"* (RV; KJV). It is all the Lord now. They are over, and the mark of the Cross is put into the bodies of everyone of that generation. That is the position. All this duplicity, doubleness, is finished with, and they are over, "clean passed over."

Now that they are over in this new position, what happens? There are two things that follow. First there appears a Man with His sword drawn. Joshua goes to Him and says, "Art Thou for us or art Thou for our enemies?" and He does not answer him. The Lord Jesus never did give an answer straight like that. Notice how often the Lord Jesus being asked a question said something that never looked like the answer to the question: He would go around the question and come in at the back of it. Then He would "get home" what He did have to say. So here this Captain of the host of the Lord did not give the answer and say, "I am for you," or "I am for your enemies." He said, *"...as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come."* What is He saying, and what is He doing?! It is the establishment of the absolute Lordship of the Holy Spirit on this new ground in this new position. Now it is to be *"'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' saith the Lord of hosts."* He is Captain of the Lord's host, and all the battles ahead are to be through the absolute Lordship of the Holy Spirit in the life on the ground of the Cross.

Oh how much truth concerning the Cross, the circumcision of the Cross as we know it, is found right there. The Holy Spirit is taking full possession and full charge. That is the new position. That is the first thing. We must notice that

everything now is by the energy of the Holy Spirit and no energy of the flesh, and that is so thoroughly established in the second thing, Jericho. Now they come to Jericho.

Jericho is high and walled up to heaven. It is strong, closed, a tremendous proposition. Jericho is at the gateway of the land and symbolizes all the seven nations of the principalities and the powers in the heavenlies. These are all concentrated right at the very beginning, Jericho. Now, what are you going to do with that situation? Right there at the beginning you are really in effect meeting all the forces of evil that you ever will meet. They are all concentrated symbolically in Jericho; and the Lord in His Own way, knowing His Own principles, makes this very clear in the symbolism of everything.

God says to the host, "Now then, walk around the city, just walk and do not talk. Do not whisper. Make no sound, just be quiet and walk around. You do it once today, and you do the same thing tomorrow. Silently hold your tongues and walk around. The only sound that is to be heard is that gentle murmur like sound of the ram's horns of the priests. Do that seven days, and then on the seventh day, do it seven times."

Seven is the number in the Scriptures that symbolizes what is spiritually complete - the completeness of what is spiritual. This is so spiritual that the occupants of Jericho could laugh and smile and say, "What a feeble lot." "So *SPIRITUAL"* that is the language of the natural man, as he taunts, "He is so spiritual." The Lord in effect would say, "All right, they may despise you, but walk around seven times on the seventh day and encompass the whole range of spirituality, the spiritual forces of the spiritual nature of this warfare that you are entering into." For our warfare is spiritual, not carnal. It is a spiritual warfare.

So on the seventh day after the seventh time around Jericho, they shouted. You know what happened, but what we need to ask is this, what does all this really mean? In the full knowledge of God, what does this mean? The children of Israel probably did not know or understand the true spiritual meaning of this act. When you read it, it is like a natural story, but there was much behind it. Do you know that when the Lord Jesus went to the Cross He compassed the whole, entire, utter range of the cosmic forces of evil! It was a "sevenfold" victory: it was the completeness of victory over every power of evil - a cosmic victory. It is not just a historic act on the earth. He was not just dealing with things down here. The Lord Jesus stripped off principalities and powers and made a show of them

openly triumphing over them. Calvary was a mighty victory not only world over, but also in the cosmic realm.

The Lord is saying at Jericho, "Put all these things under your feet in faith because of the completeness of My victory." This must be fundamental. This must be at the beginning. You must in faith appropriate this for now and for all that is to follow. You are starting from a victory, not working toward one. This is the position of faith; and unless you have got there, you had better not go on from Jericho.

Now we can see that the great universal victory of the Lord Jesus is implicit in Jericho, and it is implicit in all spiritual warfare. Therefore, note this: if the enemy can find anything whatsoever that is his ground, that belongs to his kingdom, in a child of God, the victory is suspended. There you come to Ai, Ai and Achan.

Achan coveted a Babylonish garment, silver, and a wedge of gold, and he hid it in his tent. Hid it from whom? Hid it from Joshua? That is what he thought. Hid it from the other people, the priest? That is what he thought. Hid it from men? That is what he thought. He did not hide it from God! God saw into that tent. He saw it beneath the covering, and He held up everything. In essence God said, "You will go nowhere from here." You see, here the enemy has got a foothold. Here there is something that belongs to his kingdom, a bit of this world that is his kingdom, and it is secretly there. It is a secret thing in the constitution, a thing that we are not prepared to bring to the Light, and, on account of this, the victory in our life is suspended. Seeing that this was a corporate thing, the whole nation of Israel was paralyzed by one man's act. We do not know how much we affect and influence the whole body of Christ by our own personal lives.

If Satan can just get a foot in, something that is his right, that belongs to him, then he can suspend this tremendous progress of fellowship with the Lord and this victory over himself and his kingdom. This he can do. Many a life is held up because of something hidden, secret, that a person is not prepared to have out in the open; and Satan has got his foot in there behind many a life. Well, that must go, and Achan must go with it because he is the old constitution. All that belongs to him must go, and then on we go in the victory.

All this is perhaps well-known spiritual Bible teaching, but the point is that we are called into the fellowship of His Son, the uncompromising One, the One

utter for God. We are called into that fellowship in order that we progressively may learn to overcome and at last stand with those who have overcome, joining with Him in His Throne. *"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne..."* That is the final issue of the call and the fellowship.

Well, remember, the main issue is the divide that has got to take place between the soul and the spirit. There is this inward separation, this circumcision of the heart, that must take place in us in order to bring us into the power of His Kingdom and into power over all the power of the evil one.

Let us pray. Lord, we hand back to Thee the Word and ourselves with it. We know that the enemy makes it difficult for such a Word to be uttered and received and understood, but we pray that the Spirit of God may enlighten us and strengthen us both to apprehend and to obey that we may not be disobedient to the heavenly vision. Go on with Thy work in us. Deep work is needed, continuous work, but may we grow in grace, may we advance in victory. In the Name of the Lord Jesus, Amen.

Chapter 5 - The Peril of the Call

I want to bring just three fragments of Scripture together as basic or background to what I feel the Lord wants to say to us this morning. In the prophecies of Isaiah, turn to chapter 6, verse 1: *"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord."* I want to take that last fragment, *"I saw the Lord."* Then, in the Letter of Paul to the Galatians, let us turn to chapter 1 in verses 15 and 16 and see this clause: *"it pleased God, to reveal His Son in me."* And then in the Book of the Acts, chapter 26, verse 19, Paul says: *"Wherefore, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."* I saw the Lord, it pleased God, to reveal His Son in me, and I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

We are getting very near to the end of this time together, and those of us who have had responsibility in ministry are asking the question, "I wonder what the people have seen this week?" What have they really seen, and what are they taking away in them? What have they seen with "the seeing" about which the Bible, and especially the New Testament, has so much to say.

I am not so much concerned, dear friends, with addressing you. You know the difference between being addressed and being talked to. I want to talk to you, and I want to talk to you about this matter of spiritual seeing. I am quite sure that even a small gathering like this one represents different degrees of spiritual seeing. Whether it be the early beginning of seeing, or whether it be the most advanced that a company like this may represent, this matter of spiritual seeing is the most governing thing in all life.

I think you will agree with me that although we think of our time as being perhaps more important than any other time, that is, we think that things have advanced in our time to such a degree as they never were like this before, there have always been times (if this is a time when things have become more developed and advanced), there have always been times when this matter of spiritual seeing was the only hope of the situation.

We are in a time of unspeakable confusion in Christianity. It is in the world, of course, but we are not at the moment concerned with the confusion in the world. We know about that, but in Christendom I think that there never was such a degree of confusion as there is today. There is such bewilderment and almost

countless, strange, perplexing developments in Christianity. There is a defeating and defying of every attempt to either explain or cope with them - to understand what they mean.

We have found it here this week - a tremendous amount of confusion. You would not believe what comes from personal conversation. There are questions, endless questions. From the moment you begin to speak and finish your first word, people are asking questions. There are questions about this and that and another thing and all the things that are going on; and even if you have not had their questions, you know quite well that the atmosphere is full of this intrameeting, intrahearing of, intraseeing. There are these questions concerning the things that are going on amongst Christians. This is true, is it not? And the one great paramount necessity is spiritual sight. Shall I use another word, a New Testament word, spiritual discernment.

This was so at the end of the apostolic age. The Letters of John are written because of this confusion and the defeat of the Christian mind to be able to comprehend, understand, define, or explain what was going on. John is saying that there are many antichrists - many antichrists - many false spirits, and many false prophets gone into the earth. The situation was developing then as it has developed so much more in our time. John made it his business in writing his letters to try and indicate to these Christians in their perplexity, the way (the only way) in which they were going to be able to get through all this perplexity without becoming involved, defeated, and led away, led astray.

You know, multitudes of dear Christian people today are just being led away, and I think led astray, by the things that are happening, strange things. It is as in the days of David when his treacherous son, Absalom, rose up to capture the throne and the kingdom. He sat in the gate, and he resorted to all the make-up, polled his wonderful hair and I do not know what else he did to attract attention to himself; and then he put on artificial smiles and words and language, and it says that he captured, led away, the simple people - the simple, the poor simpletons of that day - with disastrous consequences. That was the method, and even Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Very often, unless you have discernment, you cannot tell the difference between various things. Surely, in these days, the great need of the Lord's people is spiritual discernment, spiritual perception, or what I am speaking of as spiritual sight.

Now let us come back to two of the passages which we have quoted. In Acts 26,

the Apostle Paul is reviewing the whole of his Christian life and ministry. It only lasted thirty years - thirty years of Christian life, experience and ministry - but what a thirty years. Thirty years not exhausted in two thousand, and we have not got to the bottom of him yet. We have not exhausted him yet.

But here, he is reviewing those thirty years since the Lord apprehended him unto the day that he was standing in the presence of the Roman governors. He is reviewing the thirty years and all that he had learned, all that he had been shown and taught, all that he had come into since he came into Christ, all that the Lord had given him to give unto others. How great! How full it all was in a span of thirty years. Why, some of us have been Christians a good bit more than that, and we have not got a fragment of what he had.

But here, he is reviewing it all, and he is attributing the whole thing to one thing. What happened to him? There was a tremendous revolution that took place right there on the Damascus road, with all that opened up to him at that time, all that began to break upon him and has been breaking on him ever since, the ever growing expansion of Divine revelation. All the traveling and ministry that has been done, he is attributing it all to one thing - to one thing - *"It pleased God, to reveal His Son in me."* It does not say just to me: it was not just the objective thing on the road to Damascus. You think about that! "I saw a light from Heaven, above the brightness of the sun." That is the objective. But when he is speaking about it in the light of what issued from it, what began then and has continued and grown and grown, he does not say it was that "God revealed His Son to me." In essence he says, "Something was done in me. On that day, He started something which has resulted in all this" - *"It pleased God, to reveal His Son in me."* - When you think of what you have in the Bible throughout, you see it is the result of the same kind of thing.

What do we have from Abraham? *"The God of Glory appeared unto our father Abraham."* Abraham could say at the beginning of his career, his course, his history, at the beginning and with his going on and growing until his seed was as the sand of the seashore and the stars of the heavens, he could say that at the beginning of this immense thing, *"I SAW THE LORD.* You ask me how I came into this. You ask me for the explanation of my life, my history, my knowledge at the beginning, *I SAW THE LORD."*

So did Moses. It says that Moses went up into the mount and "saw the God of Israel" and the Glory; and under his feet it was as "a sapphire stone." *"I saw the*

Lord": that accounted for Moses. *"...he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible."* A tremendous life, that of Moses. The principle beneath and behind and over it all was that he *"saw the Lord."*

Thus, we can go on through the Old Testament and come to the Prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel begins with, *"I saw visions of God." I SAW,* and so everything in Ezekiel as a representative prophet is *"I saw the Lord."* Isaiah, you have read it: *"I saw the Lord."* And so you can go on because the very name " "prophets" was "seers." Seers were men who saw, the seers of Israel, the men who were the eyes of Israel. They were the *SEEING* for Israel, and that explains all the prophets.

Now we come over into the New Testament. For some time, the greater part of three years and perhaps a little more, there were men in company with Jesus of Nazareth, physically in company with Him. They were at His side, hearing Him, seeing Him walk, and feeling His influence, that magnetic influence of His; and yet, they were not seeing Him. See how near you can get, how much there can be; and yet, there not be a seeing of Him?!

You can go to Palestine today, if you like, you can go to Israel and see it all and not see Him (I do not mean physically). But the disciples were with Him, and they did not see Him until after His resurrection. Then there is a new note, a new excitant note, when you hear them after His resurrection meeting others of their company. *"We have seen the Lord. We have seen the Lord."* There is something here that was not there all that time before, and that accounted for everything afterward.

Now, you come to this Apostle Paul, and, as we have said, you explain and account for everything in that man as God's servant, as the greatest of His apostles, you account for everything on this one thing as he did, *"It pleased God, to reveal His Son in me."* He could say, *"I saw the Lord."* Everything stems from that kind of seeing, an inward revelation of Jesus Christ.

When the apostle said this, that it pleased God, to reveal His Son in him, he was implying that up to that time he was blind. Oh, yes, he had inherited what? He inherited not only nature's blindness, for by nature all men are blind in this sense that they do not have spiritual sight, but he had inherited the curse which Isaiah was commanded to pronounce upon his race. "Go to this people and say to them, seeing you shall not see, hearing you shall not understand: make this people's eyes closed, ears stopped," and Saul of Tarsus had inherited that. *"Blindness,"* he

later said, *"has happened to Israel."* He was a great Israelite - so blind. He was content with his blindness as was Nicodemus; and then the Lord said, "except, except, except something happen to you which gives you an entirely new constitution, with a new faculty of seeing, you shall not see - you shall not see - and you cannot see the kingdom."

That is where Saul of Tarsus was. Let the force of that come to us because we are in a conference, dear friends, where we have had a lot of Bible teaching. From day to day a lot from the Bible has been presented. A lot of doctrine - I do not know how much theology, but I suppose it may be that some of you are going away with your hands fuller of Bible knowledge than when you came.

Well, you will never, never beat Saul of Tarsus on that line. You can never catch up with him on that line, and you will never, never measure up to Nicodemus on that ground. *"Art thou a teacher in Israel." A TEACHER IN ISRAEL* - if you knew what it required to produce a teacher in Israel - a rabbi was in training from infancy, and how thorough-going that training was in the Old Testament. Well, you say, one had to go a long way in the religious education and a long way in the knowledge of the Bible, the Scriptures; but when you have got there with Nicodemus, Saul of Tarsus, who was a rabbi, and many others of the same class and category, when you have got there, you are still blind - blind, as we say, as bats.

What I am saying is that we must get to this business of spiritual faculty before we finish this conference. We really must face the issue that we have had a lot of Bible teaching. We have had a lot here, and perhaps you have had a lot of it for years. How much of this teaching is in the line of "God has revealed His Son in me?!" Not, "I have got Bible knowledge from the Bible or from the schools or in any way that I have read or heard", but in isolating myself from all that and from all others we should be able to say, 'I am a man, I am a woman, in whom God has revealed by Divine Act, a supernatural act, has revealed His Son in me.'

We should ask ourselves, "How do I know the Lord Jesus? How do I know the Bible? How do I know? Can I say I know perhaps through the Bible, perhaps through a messenger, or perhaps through a book?" Yes, but that was only a vehicle. "Back behind that, I know because God Himself has revealed His Son inside of me: He has done something inside. I have seen beyond - beyond the vehicle, beyond the means employed. *I have seen beyond the sacred page: I seek Thee, Lord. My spirit pants for Thee.* Oh, not just the written Word, but the

Living Word." This is spiritual faculty. This is a wonderful, amazing thing, this spiritual faculty. It is a miracle thing, and nothing but that will have upon us the effect that it had upon this man, Paul, and these others. Nothing but that - and the test of whether it is that act of God in us is how it effects us. Nothing at all but a spiritual seeing would ever have made that revolution in Saul, Paul, that was made.

What a revolution! Think of him again. We have never yet sensed the immensity of that transaction. This man was a rabid, utter, uncompromising devotee of Judaism and of the earthly Israel and all connected therewith. He was so devoted. It tells us that he was zealous above anyone of his own age. For it, he would persecute unto far cities; and he did not stop with men, but women and children he would hurl into prison. He would stand by while that grand, that wonderful, young man, Stephen was being battered to death, broken by the rocks. He would stand by and say, "Go on. Go on. That is it. Finish that work. Have done with that man." This revolution turned that man to be just as Stephen was, to be just as utterly, uncompromisingly committed to the Jesus of Nazareth Whom he was persecuting. Paul was committed in all that he would suffer for that new position afterward. I tell you nothing, nothing on earth, in heaven, or hell would bring that about, but a revelation in him of Jesus Christ. That is what did it - that did it!

Only such a revelation to our hearts will precipitate such tremendous issues, make those revolutions, bring about such an emancipation, and set us on a new, utterly new course. It will do that. It will do that if you have really seen the Lord.

I must press on and get nearer to the happy, blessed side of this, because there is a blessed side as well as the tremendous challenge of it, but we must be challenged. You see, I know what I am talking about. I am not giving you an address this morning, but I am talking to you out of a little bit of experience of this. It is not the doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ is His Eternal Sonship. Yes, we believe in His Eternal Sonship. His incarnation, God incarnate. Yes, we believe in it, in His incarnation, in His good life, perfect and sinless life. Yes, we believe in His atoning death: He was the atonement. Yes, we believe that and so on - all the doctrine of the Person of Christ, but it is not that that I am talking about. You can have all that and not have a revolution. You can be the uttermost fundamentalist on the doctrine of the Person of Christ and not ever have this that I am talking about happen in you. That is the weakness of Christianity today - it has got the doctrine, got the

fundamentals, got the teaching, got it all, and, then, what they will do for it!!

Paul had the revelation of Jesus Christ in his heart, and that was his support, his confidence, his strength. That carried him on and carried him through and carried him on to us. No, dear friends, it is not the doctrine of the Person of Christ: it is the revelation of Jesus Christ inside, inside!

It is not the doctrine of the Cross. I have got to the place where I am almost heartily sick of the doctrine of the Cross, just as such. In some places that I go, they have people talking about the Cross; and they think that I move about this world with the idea of teaching the doctrine of the Cross. Identification with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection: that is the doctrine of the Cross; and when Christ died, we died with Him. You can have the doctrine of the Cross, the teaching of the Cross, of "identification," and still be so tremendously alive yourself. You can be so touchy, so touchy, so ready to react to any provocation, any disagreement, any criticism. Have the doctrine of the Cross? No, it is not the doctrine of the Cross: it is the revelation of the Cross.

You can have all the doctrine of the Church. The Church, the Church of Ephesians, you know, the Body of Christ - "very wonderful, very fascinating, captivating, marvelous." The doctrine of the Church - people are talking about it in the churches. The churches, the churches - what are the churches if they are not fragments of the Church?! And what is the Church, the Body of Christ? The Body of Christ is a crucified Body, bearing the scars of Jesus Christ.

You can have all the doctrine of the Church: I had all that. As a member of The Bible Teachers Association, I could take a long blackboard and outline any book of the Bible that you liked, including Ephesians. I could talk about the Church and what is there in Ephesians about the Church, outline it, analyze it, and talk for an hour on it. Dear friends, I tell you quite honestly, I had never seen the Church, and I had never seen the Cross although I could analyze and present Romans so thoroughly and, to my own satisfaction, quite cleverly.

So the day came - yes, The Day came and I have to say that He revealed that in me. What happened? What happened? I shut myself in my room, and I said, "I am finished with the ministry, finished with preaching, finished with teaching. I am finished." I told the Lord that, and I said, "Lord, unless you do something in me that you have never done before, I am not going on." Something happened to bring me there. There was something in the pulpit, in the Bible class, and in the

Bible school. You can guess that something terrific must have happened.

What did it result in? Well, you see, I was the minister of a church, and I was paid a salary to preach and to teach; and whether I had a message from God or not, I had to get one and get one up, and make it up every so often, week by week in order to draw my salary. The crisis came: "I will never preach again. No one will ever get me to preach again, for money or anything else unless I have got a Word from God. I resign this professional business all together and will never appear on a platform or in a pulpit unless there has come a Word from heaven into my heart." I meant it, and I took action on that ground. God also took action on that ground - from that day on, over forty-five years ago, I have never had to find the straw for the bricks, I have had what I call my "open heaven."

Am I drawing attention to myself? Forgive me, but I am trying to illustrate what I mean. There is a tremendous revolution that will be made when you "see." I saw the Cross in Romans, and it slew me. I saw the Church through Ephesians, not in Ephesians, but through Ephesians; and my canonicals went, my ministerialism went, my playing at church went. This is so revolutionary because this "seeing" brings you into another realm.

I have been asked here this very week by someone, "Tell me what books you have read in order to get all that you have got. Please put me in the way of getting those books." See where this leads: how far from the mark we can get. No, that is not spiritual sight. *"It pleased God, to reveal His Son in me." - "I saw the Lord."* This is spiritual seeing that will start a revolution, a revolution that will start something that is to be growing and growing and that we trust will go on growing until we enter into the fullness in His Presence and know as we have been known.

How does this spiritual sight come about? It comes by a great new birth. That is what Jesus said to Nicodemus. In essence, He said to him, "You cannot see. By a new birth from above, you will be able to see. You will get a new constitution which has in it a new faculty of sight by which you will be able to see through to the back of things, through the thing to the meaning of the thing." There is all the difference between the thing, which is the letter, and the meaning that lies behind it. That is a marvelous realm when you see through even what is written in the Bible to what lies behind in the Mind of God there; and if you do not have that, you will often be in perplexity. You will. You will get into trouble with your

Bible, and you will get into trouble with the Apostle Paul.

Have you noticed how the Apostle Paul uses Old Testament Scripture? Have you? Have you noticed what the theologians and the textual critics have come up against? - "Paul was using that. He is quoting that. He is citing that. He is applying that, and in the Old Testament it did not mean that at all. It did not mean that: its connection in the Old Testament is altogether different, and yet Paul was using it like that. He is not a safe student of the Bible. You cannot rely upon Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament."

What are you going to do with this? What are you going to do with Paul and Hagar in Galatians, the allegory of Hagar - "Surely he is going on his imagination. Surely he is reading something into the Old Testament. Surely he is squeezing blood out of a stone. Did it mean that really?" - And so I could cite again and again Paul's use of the Old Testament; and if you looked at it just there as the natural, if you looked in that way by the human understanding, you would stumble. You would be in trouble with your Bible. You really would. But if you have this faculty of seeing through to a deeper than the surface meaning, to a deeper than what looks like the literal meaning, you will find God behind it.

I have said that the Lord Jesus never directly answered questions; and so Nicodemus would come to Him with questions, but the Lord never directly answered his questions. "We know that Thou art a prophet and teacher come from God. No man can do the things that you are doing except God is with him; and now I am going to talk to you about the kingdom, Jesus. I want you to explain the kingdom. You know we Jews are just wrapped up in this kingdom matter. We believe that we are the people of the kingdom: we really believe that we are the elect nation for the kingdom. The kingdom, the kingdom - that is the one thing that absorbs and captivates all of our thoughts; and now, Jesus, can you tell me something about the kingdom?"

Does the Lord sit down and say, "Let us have a study on the kingdom, shall we?" No, He does not answer it that way at all by giving a study of the Bible on the kingdom. He says, *"You must be born again."* But Nicodemus says, "That was not what I was asking about. I was not asking about being born: I was asking about the kingdom." Well, Jesus gets deeper than that, "You cannot see it. You will not enter it unless you are born from above."

Greeks come to see Him on one occasion. They are up in Jerusalem sight-seeing,

having a look at everything that is interesting and seeing people of whom they have heard reports, and Jesus is among them. So they come, find a crowd around Him, and say to one of His disciples, "We would very much like to see Jesus. We cannot see Him out here. Will you introduce us to Him?" That one says to another one, "Here are some men who want to be introduced to Jesus. They want to see Him, and they have come along to the city in order to see Jesus. Will you do something about it?" They go to Jesus saying, "We would see Jesus." What does Jesus do? Does He say, "Oh, that is very nice of them to come and see Me. I will go out and shake hands with them and have a little word." Does He? - He says, *"The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified... Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth by itself alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit."* No, no, no, that is no answer. That is no answer to these Greeks. That is an evasion. Is it?

Are you come to see Jesus? Do you see Him crucified, buried, raised from the dead with this great multitude that sprang up out of His grave with Him - the Church? This is the only way to see Him, but that is not what they wanted or what they were seeking. You see, He did not answer questions in that direct manner. He got behind to the meaning, the deep meaning. He is behind everything.

I know that I am putting a lot into this point, but what I am saying is that by new birth the faculty of spiritual seeing is there. It may be in baby form, baby "measure," but it is there. It is a terrible tragedy, is it not, that after a little watching, parents have to come to the conclusion that their baby is blind. That is so terrible, is it not? But the normal child at birth has a faculty for seeing, even though it does not understand everything. It is not able to explain everything; but it has got the faculty, and at least it knows when mother comes into the room.

This is a mark of the new birth: the faculty is there, and, dear young people, do not think that you have got to at once come into all that I am talking about of the revelation of Jesus Christ; but you have got to have the faculty from the beginning, and, praise God, you can have the faculty. How good it is when we meet a young Christian, almost a newborn Christian, who has had a way of life, a way of behavior, even a way of dress according to the world, and after a very little time in the Christian life, he or she says, "The Lord has been telling me to change my way of behavior. Now He would not have me do this and that, and He has even told me to change my dress."

I do believe that this faculty, just the faculty, will begin to show things and to light up things. We shall see with other eyes what the Lord would have and what He would not have. It begins there very simply, and it goes on and on. A brother told us last night, and he has moved on with the Lord quite a bit, that there comes a time when even in your preaching and in your teaching if you use something that the Lord does not agree with, you know it inside. There is a pause inside. There is something inside that says about that, "No. Oh, no - oh, no. Look again where that came from."

You see what I mean? The faculty is there at the beginning, and it has got to grow and grow; and God forbid that it should ever cease growing, that we should cease to see or come to the end of our seeing. Now, you who have gone on with the Lord the longest, remember that this faculty is capable of giving you a far greater understanding of your Lord than ever all your years have brought to you. You come to the place where you say, "After all, after all, I am still a child, and there is so much to learn."

Well, I am going to close with this faculty. Have you seen like that this week? Have you seen with your head or with your heart? With your soul, your reason, your emotions or with your spirit? How have you seen? Have you seen? This conference will be a tragedy and a failure if we cannot go away in this sense, "I have seen the Lord. I have seen; maybe I have seen only some things, but I can never be the same. That seeing has challenged me, and I have got to adjust."

It must be like that, and if all this is exacting, all this is testing and somewhat disconcerting, let us remember that this is the normal Christian life. According to the Lord and according to the New Testament, this that we have been talking of is not an extraordinary Christian life. This is just how it ought to be, as natural as a normal baby seeing, one whose sight is developed and becomes coordinated, capable of understanding, growing and growing, and being governed by seeing. We will be governed by this seeing in conduct, in behavior, in choice.

You know, the devil captured that faculty at the beginning, and it says that when man "saw that the tree was good," he saw wrongly. I guess he saw the wrong tree. The devil captured his eyes, his faculty of sight, and diverted it from the Tree of Life, from Life. The result was death by blindness. Well, that is only just a flash upon it. The devil is always trying to capture the sight faculty of God's people and divert and attract, but he does not always do so by presentation of the ugly and horrible, the satanic, but by the imitation of Jesus Christ, the imitation

of the truth, the imitation of the angel of light.

And how shall we escape? How shall we be safe? Only by what John speaks of: "*...the Anointing which you have received... abides in you... and teacheth you of all things."* He is saying that alongside of this, there are *"many antichrists.*" How are you going to know which is Christ and which is antichrist in all these imitators? The Spirit in you "teacheth you." The faculty is there: you will have a sense that that thing, wonderful as it may seem, sweeping everything before it as it seems to be doing and having so much truth in it, that thing is a dangerous thing that is going to lead you off to a day of disillusionment and disaster. There is a warning, a warning light within, but I will finish on a positive note.

It is a wonderful thing just to have that faculty. You may read, but your reading does not finish with what you read. You see beyond what you are reading: you can see through to the beyond, and it is a wonderful thing to have that faculty. I cannot explain it. I had hoped that this morning I would have been able to use the projector to throw on the screen a diagram of what I have been saying, but that would only be the objective after all, would it not? But here is this spiritual faculty. It is so true and pierces right through every encompassing realm to our souls, and it pierces right through our souls into our spirits. The Light from heaven brings to birth this spiritual sight so that we are not governed by these outer realms, principalities and the powers in this world with its system and its standards. Also, our spiritual faculty is not governed by our soul, our own self reaction to propositions. This spiritual faculty appeals to the self, our soul: it comes right inside and is governed by the Spirit, not by our own spirits. Be careful about that- I hear people talking about being governed by their spirit. No, no - we are to be governed by the One Who is in the Spirit, the Spirit inner realm. We are to be governed by the Holy Spirit, "the Anointing... which abideth in you" most inwardly. *"It pleased God, to reveal His Son"* there, *"in," IN, IN.*

Well, I have said a lot. Do take it to heart; and if you will do just one thing, make it your business, if you are really in quest of God's fullest, to give the Lord no rest until that faculty is constituted in you, until He has revealed His Son maybe in or through His Word or in any other way He might choose. Remember that this faculty in you is the ultimate thing. You have seen, not everything, but in this you have seen the Lord.

"I saw the Lord," said Isaiah. *"I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,*" said Paul. And if this is my last message to you here, I would pray that the results of

this week should be either that we have seen, or do see, or that you will go to the Lord about this - that a truly born again, normal Christian has got a faculty that is something more than the natural faculty of apprehension.

Let us pray. We want really, Lord, to be quiet in the presence of Thy interrogation, Thy exaltation, Thy presentation. Save us from noisily dissipating. Give us a solemn quietness before Thee, not only this morning as we go; and give us hearts that are altogether consumed with this seeing, knowing, understanding of the Lord. Please do it: please, Lord, do it in us all. We ask this in the Name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus. Amen.