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raphy, expressing the opinion that, though my argument was not altogether convincing, there may be something in my idea. I received many private letters from scholars at the time welcoming the idea, one being from the late Dr. George Milligan who wrote: 'Your translation seems to me at first sight to have much to commend it, and if I come across any additional confirmation I shall be sure to let you know.' It is to be hoped that some of the many papyri still to be deciphered will afford instances of ἄλας which may determine the matter.

In a recondite article under the apparently unpromising and technical title, 'W and Θ: Studies in the Western Text of St. Mark' in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, xvii. (1915), 16-18, by the late Professor F. C. Burkitt, there appears one of the most useful discussions of Mk 9<sup>40</sup>. And although he adopts a different explanation of 'salted' from the one connecting it with Tarichæa, I cannot refrain from quoting some of his words, for he does see in the verse the possibility of a reference to the Holy Spirit:

'There is really nothing about sacrifices in the whole set of Sayings; to cut off your hand or your foot, if it be a "scandal" to you, is not a *θυσία*, but a precaution. If we are to seek for a theological expression corresponding to being "salted with fire," I venture to think it would be "baptized by the Holy Ghost and with fire." The only salting I know in Hebrew literature of living persons is that alluded to in Ezek. 16<sup>4</sup>, according to which properly cared for new-born infants are washed in

salt water. I don't suppose the passage in Ezekiel was in our Lord's mind, but the custom alluded to may have been. The whole context speaks about "entering into life" and about "little ones," and ἀλισθήσεται may refer to the first bath of a Jewish infant.'

It is sad to think that we are now bereft of Burkitt's penetrating wit and sane judgment, ever based on what seemed to be complete knowledge. If his interpretation of 'salted' is after all correct, it would not prejudice the case for the food interpretation of ἄλας. The early texts do show an appreciation of the need for a different word, namely, ἄλας, the correct classical word for 'salt'—to describe the Divine Activity which cannot become saltless.

It seems to me that if we wish to trace the Pauline and Johannine doctrine of the Holy Spirit back to our Lord, we must be prepared to do so by examining such verses as these. In confining our attention to those Synoptic contexts which happen to mention the Holy Spirit, we are ignoring valuable material. The strange phenomenon of Jeremiah, perhaps the most spiritual of the Old Testament prophets, who nevertheless has no specific doctrine of the Spirit, may well prepare us for discovering the origins of the New Testament doctrine in all places where our Lord speaks of the Divine Activity, especially in His parables of the Kingdom and in parabolic utterances whose symbolism may supply the germs of the Johannine development.

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## In the Study.

### Virginitus Puerisque.

'Rex eris si recte facies.'

BY THE REVEREND R. MARSHALL SMART,  
BERWICK-ON-TWEED.

'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'—Rev 2<sup>10</sup>.

CORONATION plans are being made daily, and daily we draw nearer the great day—the day when our new King and his Queen will pledge themselves before God and in His sanctuary to be good and gracious in their rule and reign over us. . . . I want to tell you about a cry that used to ring out loud in the streets of Rome and elsewhere in the old Latin cities—the cry was raised by boys at their

play—and the poet Horace either shouted the same words when a boy, or (it is more likely) heard the words when passing along a street in ancient Rome, for he quotes them in one of his Epistles or poetical letters. . . . It is the poet that overhears, observes, and uses what he finds—Jesus was a great poet, too—and He talks, too, of children playing in the market-place . . . at weddings and funerals. . . . But here is what Horace writes—shall I give you the full Latin? better, for there are two words that play on each other!—

At pueri ludentes 'rex eris' aiunt 'si recte facies.'—Hor. *Ep.* 1. 59.

What the boys shouted was, 'You will be our king

if you will play well, rightly, kingly.' You will be our hero, if you play like a hero. I use the words 'king' and 'kingly,' or 'hero' and 'like a hero,' for the poet Horace uses two words which come from the same root—*Rex* and *Recte* :

*Rego, Rexi, Rectum, Regere.*

King George VI. already reigns, but when, like the knights of old, he takes his oath at the Coronation to be just and true and good and kind and, what is better, lives up to his promise—the Anthem which the choir in Westminster Abbey sings after the King receives his crown is, 'Be strong and play the man'—then we will with sincerity and love line the streets to see him pass and to cheer him. He has only got to 'play the game' by his people and by his God to win our 'hero-worship.' Boys and girls in England and Scotland and Wales and Ireland, and all over the Empire, will say, not 'Rex eris si recte facies,' but 'Rex es quod recte facis' (You *are* our King because you do aright).

Jesus is our King because He does all things well, because He has shown us the perfect example of playing the game of life to the satisfaction of God. . . . He wasn't successful in the world's idea of success—the crown of thorns and the gibe 'King of the Jews' was the world's reward. . . . His death seemed like defeat even to His disciples. . . . But He had lived successfully and had died like a king and a hero. . . . Listen to the penitent thief: 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' He saluted Him as a king. . . . and King He was, in His bearing!

We may not be counted great or famous; we may even be defeated in the game of life, but we shall be counted His servants—servants of the King of kings—we shall be kings of men, if we do our best—play life's game with a will. On the gates of the University of Pennsylvania in America are these words:

'In the dust of defeat as well as in the laurel of victory there is glory to be found if one has done his best.'

Jesus can bring us through life triumphantly. He can put royal blood in our veins, and can make us 'kings unto God and his Father.'

'Faithful' is a word often used in the New Testament Scriptures. It means 'trusting in God and doing the right, and doing one's very best in the sight of man and of God.' There's a coronation for every faithful man or woman, boy or girl. Listen:

'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'—Rev 2<sup>10</sup>.

King George VI. will be our King if he is faithful to his high task. . . . and we will reign with him and he with us in the Kingdom of Heaven if we are faithful. . . . unto death. . . . to the very end of our earthly life. Let this be your response now:

Just as I am, young, strong, and free,  
To be the best that I can be  
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,  
Lord of my life, I come.

#### Hills of Vision.

BY THE REVEREND SIDNEY H. PRICE,  
GREAT SHELFORD, CAMBRIDGE.

'Which he saw. . . before the earthquake.'—Am 1<sup>1</sup>.

You all know what an earthquake is, don't you? You know how the ground shakes and sometimes buildings tumble down. It must be a terrible experience.

I have been reading a story by Lafcadio Hearn about an earthquake in China. A Chinese farmer working on the top of the hill belonging to his farm saw the sea suddenly disappear as though withdrawn by an unseen hand. He knew there was an earthquake, and that in a few minutes the sea would rush back with such force that the men working in the fields below would all be drowned.

Something must be done to save them. They would not be able to hear if he shouted, but somehow he must get those men on to his hill. Scarcely stopping to think about it, he set fire to his own rice ricks, then furiously rang the temple bell.

The farmers in the fields below thought his farm was on fire and hurried up the hill to help him put it out. They had just reached the hill in safety when they saw a great wave sweep over the land where they had been working a few minutes before. Then they understood that their neighbour had saved their lives by burning his own ricks.

Many years ago there was another farmer who did something like that. His name was Amos, and he too farmed a hill, growing fruit trees and tending cattle. As he worked on this hill he used to look over the plains below. Sometimes passers-by would stop and tell him the latest news of the towns of the plain, and sometimes he would go there and see for himself.

There were many things in the towns that Amos felt were wrong, and he spent much time thinking about them. One day as he looked from his hillside he saw something that made him feel very anxious about the people down there. It came to him as a vision. He saw the people were in great

danger, and that their danger was due to their own bad behaviour. They were dishonest and untruthful. Their judges and priests and prophets were unjust.

Up on the hills, God spoke to Amos, and told him to go and warn the people of their danger. They had allowed the tide of love to go backwards, and very soon a great tide of selfishness and wickedness would sweep over them. So Amos, like the Chinese farmer, did his best to warn his neighbours.

Both Amos and the Chinese farmer had an advantage over other people, for they worked on a hill of vision. When you and I come to worship, we too are on a hill of vision, for the hill of vision is the place where we see God and see the truth in things as they are.

The Chinese farmer saved his friends by burning his own crops and ringing the temple bell. Amos tried to help his people by going down to them, persuading them to come back to God's temple.

God needs people to-day—young people as well as old—who have been on a hill of vision, to help the people of our land back to the place of worship. Who will ring the temple bell?

#### A CORONATION ADDRESS.

##### The Crowning of the King.

BY THE REVEREND J. H. MORRISON, M.A., D.D.,  
BUCKSBURN, ABERDEEN.

'And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.'—  
2 K 11<sup>12</sup>.

Our eyes and the eyes of our whole Empire and of the world are turning towards Westminster where our King is to be crowned with the most solemn rites of the Christian religion.

The Coronation is pre-eminently a great religious ceremony and is closely modelled upon the practice of the Jewish nation in Old Testament times, as can be seen by comparing our text with the order of service prepared for the twelfth of May. Kings have often been raised to the throne by the shouts of an army; an ancient and widely used acclamation was 'Long live the King!' But it is the custom of our nation to say, 'God save the King!' The words may often be used without thought of their meaning, but they are significant of a deep and true instinct in the heart of our people that the King has special need of the divine help and blessing.

We can rightly participate in the Coronation Service only if we understand what is signified

by its various acts and symbols. In the carrying through of this high solemnity there are three principal actors—King, Church, and People.

1. THE KING.—He comes to take his place on the throne because he is of the Royal House, and has been called to that high office by the will of the nation. He can only ascend the throne under certain conditions which have been laid down from ancient times to safeguard the life and liberties of the people over whom he is to rule. Accordingly, as the first act of the Coronation Service, the King takes a solemn oath that he will administer justice with mercy, and will maintain the laws of God and the true profession of the gospel. It is a solemn oath which no man may lightly take upon his soul. When the young knight approached King Arthur's city, as Tennyson tells, he was warned to take good heed

for the King

Will bind thee by such vows, as is a shame  
A man should not be bound by, yet the which  
No man can keep.

So must our King take heed ere he ascends the throne, for there stands that mighty oath to bar his way if he be unworthy, for no man can honestly take that oath unless he be a true man and a Christian. No doubt kings have often perjured themselves and sworn solemn oaths only to break them, but to-day we are in the happy position of being firmly assured that our King as he ascends the throne will take that solemn oath in all sincerity and seriousness, having the full intention of upholding to the utmost of his power the highest moral and spiritual interests of his people. For this we thank God, and count it one of the happiest auguries for the success and prosperity of his reign.

2. THE CHURCH.—The Coronation ceremony is carried through by the ministers of the Church which is the body of Christ, His visible representative on earth. Now this is highly significant and worthy of note. One might have expected that the nobles of the realm, whose ancestors played so great a part in history and so jealously defended their own rights against the King's prerogative, would on this historic occasion have pressed to the front and taken a leading part in the proceedings. One might have expected that the army, by whose power kings have so often been elevated to the throne or hurled from it, would have asserted itself. But by common consent the Coronation of the King is left in the hands of the Church and is made a religious service from first to last.

(a) The Archbishop of Canterbury, as representative of the Church, anoints the King with holy oil. This is in accordance with very ancient custom, and in particular it closely follows the practice of the kingdom of Israel. In the Old Testament we read not only of kings but also of priests and prophets being anointed. The oil was the symbol of the grace of God, and the anointing symbolized the pouring out upon them of that grace by virtue of which alone they would be fitted for the duties of their sacred office. By the anointing, then, of our King we mean to say that his is a sacred office, to which he has been called in the providence of God, and for which he needs the grace of God if he is to fulfil its sacred duties.

(b) The King, having been thus anointed, receives next from the hands of the Church his crown, together with the sceptre of rule and the sword of justice. Throughout the Middle Ages there was a mighty conflict between Emperor and Pope as to which of them had supreme authority. Did the Emperor wield sword and sceptre by a divine right of his own, or only by a secondary authority bestowed upon him by the Pope? For us this controversy is long since dead, but we do maintain, and symbolize in the Coronation Service, that kingly power and authority is the gift of God. As it is written, 'By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.' Our King, as he thus receives his crown, his sword and sceptre, and his orb of dominion surmounted by the cross, is solemnly reminded of what our Lord said to the Roman governor, 'Thou couldst have no power except it were given thee from above.'

(c) Next the King is presented with the Holy Bible, as 'the most valuable thing this world affords, wherein is wisdom, wherein is the Royal Law, wherein are the lively Oracles of God.' It is given and received as that which is above all else to be the King's counsellor and guide, the lamp of his feet and the light of his path. The doctrine, which within recent years has found currency among some nations on the Continent, that public affairs are not to be guided by the Word of God, because the State is a law unto itself and subject to no divine authority, is a doctrine which both we as a nation and our King absolutely repudiate. He is charged in accordance with the best mind of our people to govern by the light of God's Holy Word, and we believe it would mightily promote the peace and welfare of the world if all rulers would do the same.

(d) Finally, and as the culmination of this most solemn service, the King partakes of the Holy

Supper. Laying aside his crown and other tokens of royalty, he advances to the Holy Table and kneels there as a Christian man, George by name, who owns his dependence on God and seeks the salvation of his soul in Christ the Living Bread. Three and a half centuries ago, when the Scottish king would have made himself lord over God's heritage, the Reformer Andrew Melville courageously declared to him that there were two kings and two kingdoms in the realm, King James the head of the State, and King Jesus the head of the Church, 'and in His Kingdom James is not a lord nor a head, but a member.' This truth, once matter of controversy, is now cordially accepted by our King in all Christian humility. Having been enthroned he kneels before the throne of God; having received the homage of his subjects he does homage to the King of kings. He thereby acknowledges that greater than kingship and all earthly royalty is membership in the Kingdom of God.

3. THE PEOPLE.—The King is crowned amid the joyful acclamations of the people who thus express their acquiescence in what is done. The king of whom we read in the text came to the throne by the goodwill of the people of Israel. The high priest could not have anointed him unless he had had the support of a popular movement behind him. Even so our King's throne is broad based upon the will of the people. This nation and Empire has freely elected to live under a constitutional monarchy. That decision was made and enforced at the Revolution Settlement when the nation set aside one king who had proved himself unworthy of its allegiance and chose another to ascend the throne. After that the ancient doctrine of the divine right of kings gradually withered away and is now only a harmless superstition.

No doubt many theoretic objections might be made to the form of government under which we live. Why should the choice of King be limited to one royal house? Why should it not be open to every subject born within the realm? Why should the election to the throne be for life? Why should not the ablest and wisest man be chosen for a term of years and re-elected or dismissed by a popular vote? The best answer to these and such-like questions probably is that, not being a logical nation, we are not greatly concerned as to what might theoretically be the most perfect form of government, but being a people with practical common sense we are satisfied that the form of government under which we live is as good as any other we can see in the world, and better than most. Under it we enjoy internal peace and a degree of

civil and religious liberty which many other nations envy. And so, looking round about upon the world, we see great reason for thankfulness. We covet no dictatorship whether Fascist or proletarian; we have no desire to intensify class or party feeling. We find our King an immensely valuable national asset. Removed from the arena of political strife and gathering round him warm personal feelings of loyalty, he stands as the symbol of our national unity and the visible link which binds together the far-scattered and diverse members of our Empire.

It is fitting, therefore, that the nation should rejoice at the crowning of the King, and hail the coming twelfth of May with acclamation, full of thankfulness for all the past and of new hope for days to come.

Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May;  
Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd away!  
Blow thro' the living world—'Let the King reign.'

Yet, through all the acclamations let a deeper note sound. When all the people shout 'God save the King!' let the words be uttered not in thoughtlessness but sincerely as a prayer, for in praying for our King we are praying for ourselves and all our people. With his welfare is bound up the welfare of this whole realm and of the world. 'GOD SAVE THE KING!' From the perils and temptations which beset his high position, from enemies within and without, from all those dark forces of evil that conspire against truth and freedom and threaten the peace of the world, GOD SAVE THE KING! By the gift of wisdom from above, by the daily renewal of his strength, by the cleansing of the blood of Christ and the outpouring upon him of the Holy Spirit, GOD SAVE THE KING! Through the years of a long and happy reign, amid all the changes and labours and joys and sorrows which may await him, in life and death and to eternity, GOD SAVE THE KING!

### The Christian Year.

• PENTECOST.

#### The Pentecost of the Soul.

'And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.'—Jn 16<sup>8</sup>.

In these mystic words Jesus revealed the coming of a new era in the religious life of humanity through the advent of the Holy Ghost. By that advent the heedless world would be given a deeper consciousness of sin, a nobler conception of righteousness, and a final assurance of the condemnation of God

upon all who do evil. There had been rare spirits in earlier ages who had passed through an illuminating spiritual experience. A poignant sorrow after sin, a vision of an austere holiness, and a confident conviction that there is a God who judges in the earth, breathes through the words of the Hebrew prophets. But all past experiences of the religious nature would be surpassed in that day when the Spirit of God would descend upon the spirit of man in a more intimate way.

That prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. As Christ's little company waited in the hush of desire, and lifted up their hearts in prayer, the Divine Personality came upon them. Their eyes were opened to see the invisible, and their energies were raised to power. Their hearts burned within them, and their tongues were gifted with a strange eloquence. But the greater marvel was this, that as they preached Jesus, callous consciences were quickened, and men were given a new conviction of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. That was the first of the days of the new era in religious life.

This Pentecost in history is really the Pentecost of the soul. There is a day when the man who has been attempting the narrow way finds himself at the strait gate. The word of God has come to him. The message of the grace of God in Christ has been heard, and its echoes abide in his soul. He has assented and hesitated, relented and hardened, again and again. Then, in a strange silence, the inner world of his soul is aware of the advent of the Spirit, and he finds himself on the threshold of a new life. Some have spoken of this hour as a mood of reflection; others, as an inexpressible tenderness of feeling; others, as an impulse into which the whole force of holy desire was poured; others, with a finer conception, have named it the heavenly vision. But this was the common certainty, that God had become the supreme reality, and that His love and longing in the call of Christ rang through the whole realm of the soul.

Look into this experience in the light of the words in which Jesus discloses its three features.

1. First, *He will convince the world of sin.* The confessions of sin poured out by earnest spirits have no more meaning to the secular mind than the impassioned expression of tragedy uttered in a Greek chorus has to a man who is a mere creature of the senses.

The conviction of sin seems to grow feeble at certain periods. It is not a feature of the religious life of large numbers to-day. This has been said, as

by Tolstoy, to be due to a lost sense of God. Others have affirmed that it is the result of a shallow conception of God. He is regarded as an easy-going benevolence, and the majesty of His infinite holiness, with its moral reaction against sin, is obscured. In most cases the reason is, as it has always been, an absorption in the life of the present world. Never was this present world so engrossing and so fascinating as now, and never were men so held by it.

Sometimes God brings the soul to repentance by His judgments, or He rouses the conscience by His law, or, again, He woos the soul by the attraction of moral loveliness. Yet how often do these fail? But now, in this new era, the guilt of sin is brought in upon the conscience by the Spirit of God, using that new and more potent truth of Christ, in whom men have not believed.

When a man sees that his sin is committed against knowledge, and light, and love, when a man perceives that his evil doing has been a defiance to holiness, and that his life has been a course of wilful disloyalty to love, he is convicted of his sin, often with an anguish of remorse. God's Spirit uses the holiness and the long-suffering love of Christ to bring in that conviction of the soul.

We know the spiritual darkness of the leaders of Israel in those days when Christ walked in the Holy Land clothed upon with the apparel of His perfect moral beauty. Yet these rulers and leaders who knew the words of the law, and chanted its sentences every day, were not convicted of sin. They consummated their iniquity when they crucified Christ and went down from the sight of the Cross with derision. But when Peter, in the power of the Holy Ghost, recalled that life whose holiness they had denied, whose grace and mercy they had slandered, and when he pointed to its crowning infamy, 'Him, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain,' their sin stood out before them. They were all abashed. Some were troubled. And some were pricked in their hearts, and cried, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' They were convicted of sin because they had not believed in Christ.

In the moment when God's Spirit gives a human soul to see the Cross of Christ, he will come with his confession, as that simple toiler came, who said :

He has made me weary of self and pelf—Yes!  
my Saviour has bid me grieve  
For the days and the years when I did not pray,  
when I did not love, nor believe.

2. Second, *He will convince the world of righteousness.* It is, too, possible to be convinced of sin but

not of righteousness. The world is full of men who are assured of the power and prevalence of evil. 'All men are liars,' wrote the Psalmist, and a man of the world has affirmed that every man has his price. Walter C. Smith in *Borland Hall* has told us the story of the man whose conviction of sin destroyed his conviction of righteousness. He discovered, after her death, that his mother, whose faith has been his bulwark against the sea of doubt, had lived a life of secret fraud.

Gone the fond vision of his trustful youth,  
Gone all the awe of natural reverence,  
Gone the pure love that seemed of heaven above,  
Gone all the certainty of worth and truth.

He will convince the world of righteousness, 'because I go unto my Father, and ye see me no more.' That word can be understood from our experience. When we have loved those whom we have lost, our memory and our judgment are busy with the estimate of their moral worth. Every man, though he be almost inarticulate and cannot find the words to express his conviction, hears the melodies of an *In Memoriam* when his trusted friend has gone to the Father and he sees him no more. From Telemachus, trampled to his death in the Colosseum, down to the last brave young missionary, who left home and love and alluring distinction behind, and now lies buried beside an African lake, how many martyr spirits pass before our minds, and we see them now clothed on with sanctity?

After the same fashion the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to men. It is a fact of history that, since Jesus has gone to the Father and the world has seen Him no more, righteousness has been discerned as it never was before.

The Spirit has been glorifying Christ down all the centuries. We know Him and see Him as they did not who touched Him with their hands. Every individual soul comes to the hour when, against all the wrong and sin of his own soul, he sets the righteousness disclosed in Christ. He realizes how crude were his first conceptions, how shallow his first knowledge. But now, he turns toward the unsearchable riches of Christ set in ever clearer light by the Spirit of God.

3. Third, *He will convince the world of judgment.* Conviction of sin and conviction of righteousness consummate in conviction of judgment. There are indeed times when this conviction fails, and force and fraud seem to get the victory.

There is a cartoon by Raemaekers, the Dutch

artist, in which, by his genius, inspired by his moral insight, he has set the illumination of the Holy Ghost in an intense light. The cartoon was drawn when Germany was passing over Belgium, and letting her soldiery commit deeds of unspeakable horror. The artist has drawn a head with the face of a fiend, set upon a gross neck and shoulders. The eyes gleam with the gratified malice of hate and greed. A chain round the neck carries a plate with the words, 'Gott mit uns.' But at the left-hand side of the picture there is drawn the lower portion of the Cross. Only the limbs of the figure and the two feet, pierced by the nails, are seen. As the eyes are lifted from this devilish face to the Cross behind, and as its witness, and its passion, and its sacrifice, flash into the mind, the judgment of the Holy One is passed upon the iniquity that leers out of the canvas. Whatever men may do, however low they may fall, this stands true, that the prince of this world is judged.

As we know, some men are first convinced of sin, and others of righteousness, and others of judgment. The order of conviction depends on the soul's quality. But whatever may be the order, conviction is not complete until the Holy Spirit effects them all.<sup>1</sup>

#### TRINITY SUNDAY.

##### The Response to Revelation.

'Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'—Is 6<sup>5</sup>.

'Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?'—Jn 3<sup>9</sup>.

These two quotations from the Old Testament lesson and from the Gospel for the day bring into contrast two Bible characters, who were brought at very different times into close contact with God—Isaiah and Nicodemus. Both were men of high standing. Isaiah was a young courtier of patriotic instinct and well-inclined purpose. He had not hitherto, however, advanced very far in the knowledge or service of God. An event of national importance led to a great change in his outlook. The king died. Uzziah had reigned over Judah for fifty-two years. He was much loved by his people and lamented in his death. The loyal heart of Isaiah, who was still a young man, was deeply moved, and he went into the temple to worship. He saw there such a vision of God's glory as he had never seen before. In matchless language, which

it is impossible to paraphrase, he describes his vision. 'Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' He was humbled with a sense of unworthiness of seeing so wonderful a vision. In self-abasement he exclaimed: 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.'

When Isaiah's fears were allayed, he heard the voice of God calling for volunteers: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' He at once responded to the call. 'Then said I, Here am I; send me.' What a work he did for God. Now he is in the temple, exposing with merciless sarcasm the hypocrisy and hollowness of the religion of the day. Now he pushes into a meeting of the Royal Council and faces without flinching the king and his advisers, demanding a change of policy. Isaiah proved to be a great force in the nation. May we not see the secret of his power to lie largely in the spirit of deep humility and awe and in the spirit of self-consecration in which he received the Divine revelation?

Nicodemus was a man of high standing among the Jews, 'a ruler,' a member of the Sanhedrin. He was a Pharisee, a scrupulously religious man, perhaps more so than Isaiah, though Isaiah impresses us as the finer character of the two. He was interested in what he heard of Jesus. He wished to see Him and to question Him. At the same time pride would not allow him to come as a simple learner. He approached Him in a superior manner. He assumed a critical attitude. The same proud spirit would not let him come openly to Christ. He must go by night. Our Lord received him in a kindly way. He told him a primary spiritual truth, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' It was humbling to Nicodemus to be treated in that way, and he met the revelation of spiritual truth with the cynical and sceptical inquiry, 'How can these things be?'

There are some who approach the festival of Trinity in the same sceptical way. To-day the order of the seasons of the Christian year reaches its culmination. All that went before was not devoid of difficulty. Advent—could God reveal Himself to men? Could He come into the world in human form? Christmas—Was the Incarnation a historical fact? Is the Virgin Birth a necessary Article of the Christian Faith? Easter—was there a physical rising from the dead? Was the empty tomb an actual fact? Does faith demand more than a spiritual resurrection? The Ascension—Did Jesus Christ actually move from the surface of the earth in the direction of the skies? Whit-

<sup>1</sup> W. M. Clow, *The Evangel of the Strait Gate*, 92.

sunday—are we to take the story of the visible manifestation of the coming of the Holy Spirit as literal truth? Nevertheless, whatever the difficulties of belief may have been, these festivals stood for great spiritual realities. These realities were accepted and perhaps rejoiced in.

The festival and the doctrine of the Trinity are on a different footing. They bring perplexity without carrying conviction. 'He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.' Why should this be necessary? In fact, some are tempted to ask, in the spirit of Nicodemus, 'How can these things be?' These critics are not unwilling to believe. They believe in God. They are seekers after truth, but the difficulties of belief seem to them insurmountable. It is not for us to condemn their attitude or to regard it as unwarrantable. At the same time we can legitimately call attention to the contrast between Isaiah and Nicodemus. We may inquire which of the two, Isaiah or Nicodemus, achieved the more in life. Nicodemus recognizes divinity in Christ. Yet he hesitates. He does not commit himself.

In the seventh chapter of the Fourth Gospel we meet him again. The Council were discussing a proposal to arrest our Lord unjustly and to condemn Him without trial. Here was a case for a strong and decided protest, but Nicodemus made a rather halting objection.

In the nineteenth chapter of the same Gospel, Nicodemus appears again. The Crucifixion was over. At last Nicodemus pays his tribute to devotion. Why did he not speak out earlier? A strong protest at the trial of Jesus might have been of priceless value.

At last Nicodemus had come out boldly for Christ. He had brought his myrrh and aloes to anoint the body of Jesus. There would be no going back now. Nicodemus had committed himself, but why so late? <sup>1</sup>

Recently a fine religious play *Nicodemus* has been written by the Rev. A. J. Young. In the second scene Nicodemus is speaking to John.

*John.* Remember when you came to Him that night?

*Nicodemus.* Remember! How can I forget that night?

I live there yet;  
No sun for me has risen on that night;  
It is still night; that night. . . .

*Nicodemus.* But tell me why; why did you follow Him?

<sup>1</sup> J. T. Inskip, *The One Foundation*, 33.

*John.* I think it was our feet that followed Him;  
It was our feet; our hearts were too afraid.  
Perhaps indeed it was not in our choice;  
He tells us that we have not chosen Him,  
But He has chosen us. I only know  
That as we followed Him that day He called us  
We were not walking on the earth at all;  
It was another world,  
Where everything was new and strange and shining;  
We pitied men and women at their business,  
For they knew nothing of what we knew—.

The final scene is at the Holy Sepulchre.

*Nicodemus.* O Risen Lord,  
I do not ask you to forgive me now;  
There is no need.  
I came to-night to speak to your dead body,  
To touch it with my hands and say 'Forgive,'  
For though I knew it could not speak to me  
Or even hear, yet it was once yourself;  
It is dissolved and risen like a dew,  
And now I know,  
As dawn forgives the night, as spring the winter,  
You have forgiven me. It is enough.

Oppositions of science to-day are not what they were. We may be thankful for the recognition by scientists of a Creative Power and a Directive Mind, but we need more than that. We need to know God. Jesus Christ reveals the Father to us by the Holy Spirit, and we enter into personal relationship with God through Christ. What discovery can be greater than this? Sir James Simpson's name will ever be had in remembrance as the discoverer of chloroform. In his earlier days he was sceptically inclined with regard to the Christian faith. At the age of fifty years he recognized in Christ the Saviour that he needed. Asked in later years what he considered to be the chief discovery of his life, he replied: 'That I am a sinner, and that Christ is my Saviour.'

Our coming by Christ to the Father prepares the way for the doctrine of the Trinity. We come on to know a little of the personality of the Holy Spirit. Then the doctrine of the Trinity becomes less difficult. The best way to receive the revelation of this doctrine is by the road of experience. If we receive it as a matter of reason, we shall not get very far. Nicodemus made that mistake in his reception of our Lord's teaching on the necessity of the new birth.

It must not be supposed that our reception of the doctrine of the Trinity makes little difference to our spiritual life. It is true that the most important crises in a man's life are related to the growth or impoverishment of his conception of God.

The path of service is the best way to enjoy the full experience of the knowledge of God. George Bowen, who gave forty years of his life to India, was a brilliant scholar; a poet, philosopher, and musician. He was at one time a pessimist and a sceptic. He felt a great need in his life, and one night he wrote: 'If there is One above all who notices the desires of men, I wish He would take note of the fact, that if it please Him to make known His will concerning me, I should think it the highest privilege to do that will whatever it might be and whatever it might involve.' Jesus Christ came to him and gave him a vision. There was no question in reply, 'How can these things be?' Bowen was true to his word. His response in effect was, 'Here am I, send me.' He faced through the forty years that followed persecution and plague at Bombay. There he lived. There he died. God's revelation to him justified itself in his life.

#### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### Love's Refusal.

'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free.'—Ex 21<sup>4</sup>.

No man of living sympathy could be quite insensible to the pathos of a scene like this. Incidents of just this type must have occurred from time to time at a certain stage in Hebrew history. It was a question of the treatment of slaves. Many of these were broken and bankrupt Hebrews. They had been sold to satisfy their creditors, and the law of Israel, which dealt with slaves in a spirit of comparative humanity, made an effort to have them treated kindly in the wreck of their fortunes. They were not to be assigned the meanest forms of work; in particular, after seven years they must go free.

But the slave, if he had come to his master alone, was to go out alone.

Like most tragic or noble things in human life, the scene is a parable we can all understand. We can fill it up with a Christian meaning and apply it to ourselves. We can do that without becoming in the least fantastic.

1. First, love at its best will always mean renunciation, and, in a special sense, the renunciation of freedom. Take any great religious teacher, and much of what he has to say bears on *obedience*.

Freedom 'to be able to follow one's inclination without restraint,' the absence of control, is the ruin of all true living. It will not bear being put in practice. Indeed, there are analogies in Nature herself which proclaim as much. As a scientific writer has pointed out: 'There are certain volatile substances, such as free hydrogen, which occasionally succeed in escaping from the earth's attraction, and wander forth into space never to return. The slave has broken Nature's commandment—it has burst its fetters and is free . . . all hope of promotion in the scale of existence is at an end.'

The same thing is familiar in human life. Here is a man who, as we say, has just set up a home for himself. He has bound himself with loved and honoured ties. And instinctively he feels that in one real sense his liberty has been curtailed.

Come to the highest realm of all. Take now the man who has made a new beginning, this time one who has begun to be a Christian. He now loves Christ, and knows that he must have Christ for his helper and friend. Bonds of new desire and faith and ambition are forming every day. An infinite gratitude is slowly taking possession of him. And it all means that he is less and less free to take his own way. He cannot do the things which before he used to do unthinkingly.

Now all through life openings are constantly occurring when the old freedom is proffered to us once more. Either it may be that we are fiercely tempted by some particular sin, or times may seem to come when we are drawn to reconsider generally the whole idea of following Christ, and the possibility of casting off His service opens up. Strike off the chains and step out into the sunlight, with the high road under our feet that leads wherever we long to go. These are the whispers; but cannot we tell in advance what the answer of the faithful heart will be? Freedom is good and Christ gives it abundantly; but freedom without Christ, freedom rather to put Christ away, is evil through and through. Whatever we must renounce is as nothing to that which we have found in Him. So the matter

is fixed and settled. We have no choice but to say : I love my life in the Master's house, I will not go out free.

2. But, secondly, the episode pictured in the text makes us think how the effects of Christian experience are cumulative. It was in the *seventh* year of bondage that the chance of freedom came to the slave, and he rejected it ; but can we tell how he might have acted if it had met him in the *first* ? That is how it goes with Christian people, too. Life is the great teacher, we often say ; and there is no subject on which it has so much to teach as the sufficiency and the faithfulness of God. There are certain thoughts about God which He does not put into our mind at the start, for they are unsuited to our age, and in place of being a strength to us they would be a burden. But as we go on, if we steadily add year to year of prayer, of cultivated acquaintance with Bible thoughts of Christ, of earnest trying to obey the higher impulse, little by little we grow in certainty and grasp of our own faith and in the corresponding power to help others. The months and years tell.

It is the same with the true kind of home. All the years the husband and wife have been faithful to each other, and now their mutual knowledge is something with which no outward event or words of man can interfere. They are not even tempted now to ask whether love is a reality, or whether God leads those who put their lives in His hand.

So the Christian's relation to Christ to-day is no mere mushroom growth, no mere extempore bond, no transient feeling or tendency. It gathers up into itself the life of years. Cut down the aged tree, and for every year one may count a ring of fibre ; so take, as it were, a cross-section of a Christian's trust in his great Lord, and if only we had the magic glass, we might read in it the story of God's goodness and the man's faith through all the years.

We have often heard it said that in religion we cannot live upon the past. And that is true. We must indeed make our way to God newly every morning and see His face before we set out to live and act. But in a sense not less true it is just upon the past, our own past with God, that we all of us are living. Our trust in Him is rich with what He has already been to us. Our thought of Him has been deepened by what His Spirit once taught us to see. Our vision of duty for His Kingdom has in it the impulses, the gathering and creative powers, of all those bygone days in which He showed what He would have us do. These things have given a freedom and confidence and depth to our sense of

the unseen Father that could not have been crowded into the first weeks of conscious faith, and which, therefore, His kindness has allowed to come to us piece by piece, according to the need or joy of the time.

It looks as if there were two classes of mind to which this great truth, that Christian faith is an accumulating thing, might well be presented with special force. There is first the man who cannot make up his mind whether or not Christianity is true. Some day he meets an older friend whose Christian character he trusts, and to him he states carefully the objections he has heard or thought of for himself. And his friend's answer seems to him a very poor one. He goes away feeling as if there were less in Christianity than ever. But may we not remonstrate ?

What we have to do, if we are successfully to turn down the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to prove absurd not some hasty or nervous phrase in his explicit argument, but the man's communion with the Father—that great friendship which stretches back to his distant youth and by this time has set openly upon his nature the beauty of holiness.

The other mind to which the cumulative power of believing experience may need to be suggested is the Christian whose heart misgives him as he looks out to the future. The advances of science depress him, they seem to threaten faith so darkly. Social unrest fills him with gloom, he cannot see any good hope for the world. At times he feels as if religion itself might lose its hold upon his heart, not because God is less loving or less true, but because he distrusts his own nature.

'Ye have not chosen me,' Christ said to His disciples near the end, 'but I have chosen you.' Manifestly that is true concerning the outset of the Christian life. God's own love or the example of good men and women may often lead a man into faith almost before he has had time to think. But, as life goes on, as experience becomes deeper, nothing grows more clear than this, that we *do* come to choose Him, and this at the last with an intensity of decision and longing that could bear no separation.

And if in some strange passing dream we could conceive the Father offering us release, then the memories of His love would come in upon us like a flood, and we should answer in the old words of settled deep affection : 'Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee ; for where thou goest I will go, and thy people shall be mine.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Mackintosh, *The Highway of God*, 183.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Stillnesses of Life.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN K. CARTER, M.A.,  
GRANGEMOUTH.

'Be still, and know that I am God.'—Ps 46<sup>10</sup>.

To-day more than ever we must commune with the deep stillnesses of life. Modern life is a strain. Although we may not be aware of what exactly is the cause of it, we do know in our own mind—ay, and in our nerves—that the strain is there.

'Be still . . .' In the whisper of the word itself we hear again the swishing of gentle waters, a forlorn bird's-call in a darkling wood; and recall the occasion when we rebelled, just for that moment, against the relentless pressure of modern life:

A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare!

It is not in church only that the required stillnesses of life are to be found.

Once again 'the year's at the spring,' and the call of the open spaces makes our blood flow a little faster. We are reminded of the strength we can and ought to derive from *Nature*. And oh, the stillnesses of Nature! There is something wrong with a civilization which does not give us the time to walk more than we do through the woods, or drink into our very souls the living solitude of a glen or the peace of far-stretching waters. As things are, the choice for many people, the tragic choice, is between Nature and Nature's God. To enjoy the part, the meaning of the whole is to be neglected.

In the second place, *friendship and love* will satisfy our need in part. Only they must be intimate, and very real and sincere.

It is a common saying that if we want to test the reality of our friendship with any one, we can do nothing better than go for a three hours' walk in the country with him, and let each of us say not a word!

The communion of lovers goes even deeper. Rebecca West, in one of her novels, makes one of her characters come upon two others, sweethearts. The man is stretched out, asleep; the woman is bending over him tenderly. He had not been able to sleep at nights, because of the strangeness of the house he was living in, and the strangeness of the people in the house; they did not understand him. But, so soon as he met the woman he loved, he could relax and find the refreshment in sleep which he so badly needed. In love he found peace with the world.

Such are true friendship and love. They illustrate faintly what is necessary, if our lives are to be serene in their completeness. Happy is the man or the woman who has them.

It would be easy, in the third place, to indicate how *great literature* teaches us something about how to be still and know. Included in literature, and the best example of all, is the Bible. In the March copy of *Life and Work* it is told of a man who picked up a little book. 'With a mind half-absent, he idly read a few lines in the middle of the book and was startled awake by the sheer beauty of the style, its flow and rhythm. It was several moments before he realized that what he was reading was from the Authorized Version of the New Testament!'

A well-known American preacher has reminded us of a character in one of Arnold Bennett's last novels. 'She was a woman of the extreme modern type, unconventional in manners and morals, who to the astonishment of her worldly acquaintances took to reading Shakespeare and the Bible for diversion. One day she came upon the forty-sixth Psalm and in particular the words: "Be still, and know that I am God." She was not sure what they meant, but she found herself strangely startled and impressed. She talked about them to her friends, who also admitted that they did not understand what they meant but found in them a mysterious impressiveness, some magic of the style, perhaps, some deep serenity in the idea, speaking to their hectic lives like a voice from another world. They went no farther with the matter. They never did discover what the words meant, but sometimes they would talk together about why it was that even when they said them the words seemed great: "Be still, and know that I am God."'

'Be still, and know that I am God.' We to-day want to know what that means. How could we be reconciled to, or be friends with, life otherwise? Not to know the stillness of the soul is comparable to being condemned to be chained, year in, year out, to the constantly grinding wheel of one's work in some great, murky city, without ever getting the chance to—

go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea  
and the sky.

Not to know life in this quiet, intimate way is as unsatisfying, and provoking, as to keep company for years with a friend and yet never to know him beneath the surface. You know what that means. Sooner or later, the friendship gives rise to strain. So it will be with life, unless we know it beneath

the surface. To know the stillnesses of life is the great thing, if we want to possess that priceless treasure, serenity.

But how difficult it is for us to-day to get into a quiet place! It is just *impossible*, if we do not *make a point* of getting our quiet time. Yet, if we are going to live ordered, symmetrical lives, we must know what it is to be still. At one period, life was overwhelming the prophet Elijah. The story of how he was saved from that condition culminates in this: 'A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire, a still, small voice.'

There are some things that can be done in a manner corresponding to the great and strong wind, the earthquake, or the fire; but life must have also the still, small voice.

Think! We cannot expect to understand people aright, if we do not think of them and our common problems in a quiet corner. For example, if a son or daughter wants to do something, or has done something, of which we disapprove, we are not going to help things much if we say our last word in the moment of our annoyance. Would it not be much better to say: 'I'll think over it, and give you my answer in the morning'? In quietness we could take the opportunity to think about these changing days and about what liberty other parents are conceding their children; and then, having looked at the matter dispassionately from every point of view, we might reach a solution. Especially during critical years of quick change we all have much need of thinking out our attitudes in solitude. We cannot expect to understand people aright if they, and our common problems, are never in our minds except in the disturbing moment.

Similarly, we cannot expect to understand ourselves aright if we do not observe the period of quiet reflection. A desire to see the other fellow's view-point is one of the special virtues which the post-war generation has nourished. At the same time we must keep in the forefront 'Know thyself.'

'Know thyself.' It seems an easy thing. Actually it is probably the most difficult thing we have to do. In André Maurois's *Climats*, the central character explains that he is quite conscious that he is four different persons rolled into one. On the surface is the Philippe his parents know; a simple sort of being. Next is Philippe the lover. Then the Philippe who keeps company with one friend,

called Bertrand. And fourthly, the Philippe whom Half (another friend) knows. He adds: 'I know that underneath is still another Philippe, truer than all these others, and who alone would have made me happy if I had "coincided" with him, but I did not even look to get to know him.' There it is! We do not even search for our real selves. Nevertheless, at all costs, we must attend to this matter.

How?

Far and away the best way of being still is through religion—through private devotion, through the hymns and prayers of public worship, and, chiefest of all, through the celebration of Holy Communion.

Hymns which sometimes do not fit our mood at all may be trying, in their own imperfect way, to supply our need:

Blest is that tranquil hour of morn,  
And blest that hour of solemn eve,

No words can tell what sweet relief  
There for my every want I find,  
What strength for warfare, balm for grief,  
What peace of mind.

We do not need to be reminded of that method which has belonged to every religion and every age and race—the habit of prayer. Fundamentally, prayer does not consist in a repetition of words—it is an attitude of reverence before God. 'Be still, and know that I am God.'

The required feeling of awe is communicated to us through private devotion and public worship; but particularly through the Communion Service. There, at the Lord's Table, as God's forgiveness and grace are held out to us in the broken bread and the cup, if we realize the profundity and immensity and beauty and simplicity and wonder of it, our hearts must be awed and feel touched by an eternal stillness. We have a hushed sense that we are touching and handling the symbols of the holiest and highest in life, and we feel the Breath of God moving over the face of 'that opaque and fathomless pool' which we call our soul; and we do not need to be told that

God is here, and that to bless us  
With the Spirit's quickening power.

Round the Communion Table gathers the greatest, most alive silence of all. It is a silence of life. It is a silence just waiting to be active. If only, in that stillness, we are true seekers, our hearts will indeed know God and rejoice.