

THE  
PERSON OF CHRIST.

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“The Person of the Christ,  
Enfolding every grace,  
Once dead, but now alive again,  
In heaven demands our praise.”

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**I** HAVE lately been much surprised and pained to find there are many of the Lord's own, who question His present personality. I have often thought there was a great want of clearness on the subject, but never for a moment would have believed that it was denied, and those who knew Him as a person treated as foolish, holding a nonsensical idea. Finding that this is the case, and knowing in my own soul a little of the great joy and blessedness of communion with a personal Christ, I have thought it might be profitable were we to look at the question a little. It may be as well, too, to trace the subject from its source, as far as we can, according to the word of God.

The well-known first chapter of John's Gospel opens out to us much of the person, and the personal glories, of the Lord Jesus. There He is declared to have been from all eternity the Word of God. It was the eternal purpose of God to make Himself known, but no man hath seen or could see Him. He is the invisible God; therefore, Jesus the Son, the *image* of the invisible God, came forth from God, to reveal Him. (Col. i. 15.) Hence He is called the Word of God, that is, the practical expression

of all that God is in Himself. God is love—He is the God of *all* grace, and Jesus has come and made Him known. According to the 8th of Proverbs, He was from all eternity set up the Anointed One, and His delights were with the sons of men. By the *eternal* Spirit, He offered Himself to God, and in due time came forth, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. “Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” (Heb. x. 5.) Thus, then, the Word of God, He who is the brightness of God’s glory, the express image of His person, was made flesh, and was seen, and looked upon, and handled. (1 John i. 1.) And in all His words and ways, fulfilled the mission for which He came, and that was, to reveal the mind and heart of Him who is love. When His hour was come that He should go to the cross, he hesitated not, but set His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem; and

#### ON THAT CROSS HE WAS A PERSON,

for there they crucified HIM, He having given HIMSELF for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. (Eph. v. 2.) There, by HIMSELF (Heb. i. 3,) He purged our sins, bearing them in HIS OWN BODY on that tree. (1 Pet. ii. 24.) He was taken down from the cross, and

#### WAS BURIED A PERSON.

“This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, and he took *it* down, and wrapped *it* in linen, and laid *it* in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.” (Luke xxiii. 52, 53.) And now we come to the more important part of our consideration, as, of course, there are none who would doubt that our Lord was a person,

on earth, and that He died a person. We come now to consider the *present* personal character of the Lord Jesus, in

### RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

By wicked and cruel hands He was crucified, but God raised HIM from the dead; and then appearing to His disciples, He ate with them. Jesus HIMSELF stood in their midst, some fearing Him, thinking that He was a spirit: in love and tender care for them He said, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? behold my hands and my feet that it is I MYSELF, handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." (Luke xxiv. 37—39.)

How precise and definite are His words as to His personality. He does not merely say "It is I:" though that might have been enough, for they who had ever been with Him ought to have known the voice of the good Shepherd; He is, I say, most definite and emphatic. "It is I myself." It is not another—it is not a spirit—not it is I, but it is I *myself*. It was Jesus HIMSELF that stood in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." (Luke xxiv. 36.) He was seen, too, of many others. "For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep; after that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (1 Cor. xv. 3—8.)

So, too, is He a person in heaven; He ascended as such. After that He the LORD had spoken to His disciples, HE was raised up into heaven.

Jesus said unto Mary, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go and tell my brethren, that I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." In Heb. i. 3, we see Jesus, who had by Himself purged our sins, seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high; and finally, on this point, we have the blessed testimony of Stephen to the person of the Lord Jesus. "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold! I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts vii. 55, 56, 59.) We might add also, the witness of Saul of Tarsus, who heard the voice from heaven in reply to his question, Who art thou, Lord? "IT IS JESUS, whom thou persecutest." Thus Stephen saw, and Paul both saw and heard, Jesus in ascension glory. Indeed, it is most blessedly true, that up there in heaven, God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ, and has highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess Him to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii.) It is of the greatest moment that we should understand that Christ is a person in heaven, at God's right hand, on the Father's throne (Heb. i., Rev. iii.); for

**A RISEN AND AN ASCENDED PERSONAL CHRIST IS THE  
OBJECT OF CONFESSION AND FAITH.**

It is written (Rom. x.), that if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in our hearts that God hath raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved. Salvation consists in faith in a personal Saviour—a Saviour-God. It does not merely consist in something about Him, but it is faith in and confession of HIMSELF, and owning Him to

be God and Christ, as God has made and exalted Him. Gods many, and lords many, we have had, and other lords have had dominion over us, and Satan has led us captive at his will, but now through grace, as brands plucked from the burning, we own and confess Jesus as our Lord, as so made by God, and as sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high, crowned with glory and honour. This confession of the Lord Jesus with the mouth, is of great moment, and it is not to be a mere silent or secret confession of Him, but an hearty avowal with the *mouth*. "If thou shalt confess *with thy mouth* the Lord Jesus," is the language of the Holy Ghost. Oh! dear brother or sister in the Lord, may we never be wanting in this, especially in a day of such immense evil and blasphemy against Him. May we never shrink from a true and hearty and faithful confession of Him as our only Lord now, who hath loved us and given Himself for us. Oh! may we so know and apprehend His great love wherewith He hath loved us, that it may be our constant joy to confess Him with the mouth, desiring to have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, yea, rejoicing that we are counted worthy to suffer reproach for His name's sake; and ever remembering that it is our appointed lot, for it is given to us on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but to suffer reproach for His sake. (Phil. i. 29; ii. 30; Acts v. 41.) Then again, a risen Christ is the object not only of confession, but of faith, for if Christ be not risen we are still in our sins, and our faith is vain. It is faith in a risen and personal Christ that saves the soul. If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Rom. x.) Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. It is of all importance, it is everything for our soul's peace and joy, to see and to rest on a risen Christ at God's right hand on the Father's throne, and that He was raised and exalted there by the power of God; for then we know

that He has done the Father's will to His entire satisfaction; and that He is indeed not only in life but in death, too, His own beloved Son in whom He is well pleased. Jesus came to do the will of His Father, and He did it, and on the cross cried, It is finished. It was the Father's will that He should drink the bitter cup, which was our proper portion, as children of wrath; this cup He drank up to the very dregs, leaving not a drop for us to drink. He did it to the full and entire satisfaction of the justice of God, and therefore God raised Him again from the dead, and on His own (the Father's) throne seated Him, crowning Him with glory and honour. It is of the last moment we should thus see what God thinks of, and how well pleased He is with, His Son's work on the cross, and it is this the apostle prays that we might know. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is *the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, ACCORDING to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.*" (Eph. i. 18—23.) The reason you find so many christians who do not know that their sins are put away is simply because they are taken up with their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences, instead of the thoughts and joys of God. If they did but see how well pleased God is with His own Son, how that He was God's elect one, and that He is precious in His eyes, then they would have peace and joy—settled peace and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Oh! may the Lord lead us all more

and more away from self, in all its various forms and aspects, into more intimate communion with Himself, and so, as it were, sitting at His feet learn of Him how He estimates the work and the person of His own Son. It is everlasting blessing so to do. Then further,

CHRIST IS A PERSON IN WHOM THE BELIEVER  
IS ONE. \*

By nature the believer is dead in trespasses and sins, but by grace he has received life and been made partaker of the divine nature. (2 Peter i.) He has received this life by faith in this risen Christ, who is Himself the way, the truth, and THE LIFE. He that believeth on the Son of God HATH everlasting LIFE. How does he get it? By oneness with a risen Christ, with whom he has been quickened, and this is accomplished by the power and the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii.) Thus it is a great and full salvation. We have one which none but He who is love could design and carry out. By no word or act of our own could we bring our dead selves into life. By no operation on the part of man could a dead sinner be created anew. It is impossible with man, but with God this and all things are possible. It is all of grace, full, free, sovereign grace. It is divine power alone that has met us in our need, and saved us with this great and everlasting salvation, which makes us one in a risen Christ. Old things have passed away and all things have become new, and all things are of God. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.) Do we wish to have this life more abundantly? we can have it, for Jesus has come that we might so have it. Then let us be more occupied with HIM who is at God's right hand, and who is the source of all blessing, yea,

CHRIST IS A PERSON IN WHOM ALL FULNESS DWELLS.

The Word of God, as we have already seen, was made flesh and dwelt among us. His glory



was seen, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father. He was FULL of grace and truth. He ever presents Himself as He is, a full Christ for empty babes. How beautifully you see this at the close of Matt. xi., where we see Jesus thanking His Father that He had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and that He had revealed them unto babes, for so it had seemed good to Him. Then having thus shewn the place we must take in order to get blessing, even that of babes, He presents to us Himself, and the amount of blessing we have in Him. He says, ALL things are delivered unto me of my Father; and then says, Come unto ME, come unto a Christ in whom all things are, come unto a full Christ, who so presents Himself to empty babes. In Christ dwells all FULNESS, yea, in Him all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. How wondrous is the

“ Person of the Christ,  
Enfolding every grace.”

Oh! that we were more self-emptied, that we might know and enjoy more of this fulness;—light and life, peace, joy, hope, truth, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, yea, every spiritual blessing, all, all is found in Him, and we who have taken the place of babes have all things in Him and abound; we are complete in Him in whom all the fulness of the Godhead bodily dwells—one in Him we are as to our standing and position—seated in Him in the heavenlies. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) In Him a new creation, and we with Him have all spiritual blessings. (Eph. i. 3.) Is it not then better, far better to have our minds and hearts occupied with this blessed Person in heaven, than our own wretched selves, feelings, and experiences on earth? But then how can we be occupied with Him in heaven while we are on earth? Well,

CHRIST IS A PERSON WE CAN SEE.

We see Jesus, says the Apostle. (Heb. ii. 9.) By faith, of course, and the eye of faith is far more powerful than that of the natural eye. He is a person we can see. Once we were blind, and we could see no beauty in Jesus to desire Him. There was nothing that attracted us, though we heard, times without number, of His unspeakable love towards us. His name had no charm to us, His work we felt no interest in. But now by grace our eyes have been opened and we can now see, and the more we look at Him the more beautiful He is. He is now to us the chiefest of ten thousand, yea, He is, look at Him how we may, *altogether* lovely. His name is as ointment poured forth, full of fragrance. His voice is as sweetest music. His mouth is most sweet. His love there is none like it, many waters cannot quench it, matchless it is. His eyes we can afford to look at, and allow them, though as flames of fire, to pierce into and illuminate the whole inner man—I say that we can afford for His eyes thus to search us, for we know that through His own precious blood we are as white as snow, and He says He sees no evil in us, but we are clean every whit. Well, then, I say, as we look upon Him in all His details, the more lovely, and beautiful, and gracious will He appear to us; the more decided and the more steadfast the gaze, the more shall we discover of His deep perfections, the more we shall be led to exclaim, He is indeed *altogether* lovely. Oh! then, may He give us this steadfast, this earnest gaze on Him, that with His beauty occupied we elsewhere none may see, but ourselves changed into the same image from glory to glory by His own blessed Spirit. And then, too, He is not only a person we may see, look at, and admire, but

CHRIST IS A PERSON FOR THE HEART,

for He is one we can love. Whom having not seen

(with the natural eye) we love. Yes, this blessed one is an object for our heart's deepest and fullest affections. By nature we are at enmity against God—we hate Him. But He in grace has given us a new nature—made us partakers of the divine nature, and with the Holy Ghost whom He has given, He has shed abroad in our hearts His own love (Rom. v.), so that now we can love Him, and the more we know of HIM, the more will our affections go out after HIM. It is in proportion as we see Jesus, and His love to us, that we love Him. How many dear ones of His are troubled about their love to Him, because it is so little and so cold, and so it will be, it must be, as long as we are occupied with self in any of its features. There can be no profit in looking at a dead thing. It is impossible for us to increase our love to Him by looking at our coldness and formality. Oh no! the way to increase our love to Him is by having our souls taken up with Him seeing and knowing His love to us. It is the nature of love to beget love. It is not our love that casts out fear, but it is God's perfect love, as revealed in this blessed person—the Christ of God. The veil of the temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom; the heavens are opened, and we by faith can see the Christ our Lord, and it is His desire that we should know His love, which indeed passeth knowledge. He, I say, is engaged with us. His love never fails, it is eternal and it is full. He is sanctifying and cleansing us with the washing of water by His word. He is true, depend upon it, to His own maxim. He said where the treasure is there will the heart be also; and as we are the chief treasure of His heart—His bride (2 Cor. xi. 2), sure I am He is ever occupied with us. Oh, then, may we be ever true to this same principle, that where our treasure is there our heart may be. If we be risen with Christ, our minds and affections should be set fixed on Him. The more we are acquainted with Him, the more will our heart's truest affec-

tions be entwined around His blessed person, for

CHRIST IS A PERSON THAT MAY BE KNOWN.

In comforting His sorrowing disciples on the prospect of His leaving them, He promised that He would manifest Himself unto them as He does not unto the world. Peter exhorts us, too, to increase in grace and in the *knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And if we walk consistently we shall abound, and shall not be unfruitful in the blessed knowledge and acquaintance with a personal Saviour. Solomon in his day could say, "Acquaint now thyself with God and be at peace;" but this can be said now with far greater meaning, for God has in the person of His Christ revealed Himself, and we can know and increase in the knowledge of God (Col. i. 10), and of His Son Jesus Christ. All hindrances are now removed, and that for ever, and we now can and do taste a love that knows no let. Oh! our God in Christ would treat us as friends. He would have no reserve in His heart, and would keep no secret. He desires in love and grace to reveal Himself wholly to us. All sin and condemnation are for ever put away, and we can joy in God. Moses, in the presence of God on Mount Sinai, said, "I do exceedingly fear and quake;" but not so with us, for God is revealed to us according to His own true and particular nature—love, and it is our blessing to joy in Him. His perfect love casts out all fear, so that we can approach Him, and hold communion with Him and His own Son, for, says the apostle, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ," and in that blessed communion He desires that we should increase in intimate and confidential acquaintance with Himself. Oh! the deep perfections, the inexpressible glories, the exquisite beauties which are in Him. In Jesus a fulness there is that is unsearchable, and there is a depth of love unfathomable in Him we as yet know

nothing about. The Lord lead our souls more and more into abiding fellowship, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that He may take of His and show them to us. By and bye in glory we shall know Him according to the measure' wherewith He knows us. He purposes to unfold to us *all* His excellencies and fulness, which will I doubt not take eternity to accomplish, but down here in this present time He would manifest Himself to us, so that we might know Him and all His many glories. The power whereby we can do so is being in a spirit of self-judgment, so that an ungrieved Spirit may have full liberty to shew us the Lord Jesus, and lead our souls into communion with Him. There is, I would just say again, no hindrance on God's part; He is holy and just in thus revealing Himself, and therefore it is all our own fault if we do not abide with Him. And now I know you will be delighted to be reminded that

#### CHRIST IS A PERSON WE CAN WORSHIP.

I say, I am sure you will be delighted to be reminded of this, as your hearts will now be earnestly desiring to bow before Him in solemn praise, thanksgiving, and worship, for all the wondrous display of His great love and grace. Oh! I know your hearts are ready to exclaim, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. i. 5, 6.) But you will say my expressions of praise are so poor, so unworthy of the occasion; language fails altogether to give out to Him all that which is so justly His due. He is worthy of *all* praise and *all* worship—that *every* knee should bow to Him, and that *every* tongue should confess Him to be Lord to the glory of God the Father. Well, how joyful—how it doth our spirits cheer to know that the throne of glory is His, and

God has arranged, and the day will yet come, when He shall have full praise, and when all shall bow to Him and own Him Lord of lords and King of kings. And while we thus lament our present inability to praise Him, He gives us the joy and comfort of knowing that

CHRIST IS A PERSON WHO WILL COME AGAIN;

and then we shall, in heavenly language, give Him full praise: how blessed are His own words on this point. He said, "I will come again and receive you unto MYSELF." (John xiv. 3.) The Thessalonians were waiting for God's Son from heaven; and the sorrowing disciples were assured that this *same Jesus* whom they had seen go up into heaven should so come again. Indeed it is a *personal* Christ that is coming. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

Thus, then, we have seen that our blessed Lord Jesus, is a person once dead, but now alive again, risen, ascended, and glorified on the Father's throne; one we can by faith see, one we can love and know, and worship, and long for his speedy return to take those to Himself He has loved, and washed, and led. Well, then, as we pass through this present scene, not of the world, though in it, may we indeed be strangers and pilgrims, with our spirits and souls and bodies wholly sanctified unto Him, who sanctified Himself for our sakes. May we be true to our mission here on earth, and glorify Him in fellowship with the Holy Ghost, and may we be His living epistle, following Him and holding forth the word of life; and by increasing in acquaint-

ance with Himself may we become more changed into His image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.

E. C.

126 Manor Street, Clapham,

London. S.

