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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

THE FAMILY OF GOD (PART I).

An Address (revised) at

St. Mary Axe,

5th September, 1914.

by

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THE FAMILY OF GOD (PART I).

An Address by Mr. P.W.Heward
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OUTLINE:

1. Adam's relationship to God.
2. The position of sinners after the Fall.
3. Plain Language, and Brotherhoods of saved and unsaved.
4. The need and evidence of the new birth.
5. A note on "Adoption".

Adam's relationship to God comes first before us. Adam, as you know, was unique. God made man upright, - upright, not perfect, for man was capable of sinning, and he did sin, and chose his own way. Adam is brought before us in Scripture as created with a will, and he used his free will against God, and since that man has had a will in slavery to sin. Adam in every respect was distinct from that which men are now. His position was in the garden, but all now are born outside it, and outside communion with God. As to his body he was probably arrayed in light, glorious in every way, remarkable as the crown of creation upon this earth, for we read how that God made the various plants and animals and then man and after man NONE OTHERS. Man was the crown and climax. Of man, and of man only, was it said, "In the image and likeness of God". In accord with this we find in Luke 3 that Adam is said to belong to God in a very special way. He was regarded as in the family of God, for such seems to be the evidence of the words from Luke 3:23-38. But though Adam was so favored and so wondrously blessed, he was nevertheless apart from eternal life which is in Christ Jesus. It was said to him, "In the day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die", and thus he was placed under a covenant in which he stood or fell, as an individual, and also involving a race with him. Believers, as we shall shortly see, are not legally viewed as standing or falling in themselves, but they are viewed as having a standing before God, in the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus. Adam's position was mutable, ours in Christ is immutable. Adam was capable of losing that which God had graciously

given to him, but those who are in Christ Jesus are so wondrously blessed, that we can say of them, "their life is hid with Christ in God", and therefore it is plainly impossible that God's wonderful covenant plan should be altered, and they themselves be lost. Should their earthly physical life be touched, their spiritual life is not affected. If their eternal life on earth, (for HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE), if their present experience of God's salvation in the soul could be put to death again, if such a thing were possible, it would altogether be out of harmony with the thought that the life is hid with Christ in God, and thus that wondrous passage of Col. 3 strikingly proves the eternal security of all who are once by infinite grace blessed and viewed in Christ Jesus. Adam's relationship, however, was mutable. If he had continued in obedience he would have continued in fellowship, but as he disobeyed, he was driven from the garden, driven away from God. "In the day that he ate he died, morally, he was separated. There was nothing of spiritual life in him, that life which had been given to him, which we may characterize as the nearest approach to spiritual life, in one who was never counted with Christ, that life in him which had known some harmony and fellowship with God, died. Even so within a thousand years his body became dust.

The position of sinners after the fall is strikingly brought before us in the Scriptures. Oh, if only we FELT this more, beloved friends. Do we not realize, and realize with shame that we are too light, and too flippant in connection with a ruined world? We are not simply going up and down an earth in which are many who are a half-failure, but we find those who are utterly away from God. Yea, every man is by nature in this awful condition. We are told that after Adam had died, - for in the day that he ate he died, - he begat a son in his own likeness, nor is this wonderful expression said concerning Cain; we might have understood the wording then, but it is said concerning Seth, and the line of promise. The line of promise was a line of saved SINNERS, not a line of those who were personally righteous. It is deeply important that we should notice those words about Adam's own likeness occur in Ch. 5:3. In accord with this solemn testimony throughout Scripture, we find in Ps. 51 that David speaks by inspiration of the fact that he was born in sins. Another Psalm declares that the wicked (and by nature

we are all wicked), go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies. Well may we ask with one of old, Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? and reply, Not one. Nor is this only the testimony of the earlier Scriptures. The Later make it perfectly clear that man's condition is awful. In accord with the testimony of Gen. 6 that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually, the apostle saith, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God. His testimony is very clear, let me repeat it, being alienated from the life of God. The same epistle declares, You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Only dead ones need quickening, every saved one is quickened, therefore every man by nature is dead. Salvation itself makes clear the awful state of those who are unsaved, - the awful position of those who are lost, and that word, which has just come before us - "LOST" - presents, in its earthly associations, heart-searching thoughts, but in its spiritual associations they are yet more heart-searching. LOST FOREVER, lost in a judgment from which there is no escape, for the wrath of God is not a changeable spasmodic effort of a fickle man. Sinners choose wrath because they choose sin, nor will wrath modify their sinfulness of heart, there shall be weeping and GNASHING of teeth. Separate from God, dead in sins, with thoughts only evil continually, having the understanding darkened, with blindness and hardness of heart. Language is heaped up to emphasize where man IS. Furthermore the manner of our Lord's birth is a striking testimony to the ruin. If there were no such thing as sin inherited, why was there the Divine arrangement that He should be born of a virgin? The wondrous words of the prophet, and the wondrous birth of the Lord Jesus indicate as clearly as anything else that all who are born naturally are born in utter dislocation from the things of God, in utter sinfulness of heart. It is well that we should have plain language in this connection. We must not modify it or tune our doctrine to suit the ears of the public. Here is a dirge, and it can only be a dirge. We must tell of man's lost estate. The Gospel has a dark background, but its brightness is the brighter when viewed on that background. The present day tendency is to minimize the awful condition of man, and thus reduce the power of the Gospel. Thanks be unto God, His Gospel which is His power unto salvation

is that which deals with guilty, lost and ruined criminals, helpless, hopeless, condemned, and hell deserving wretches. The grace of God steps in, and God works what no man can work or do in part, He graciously quickens to new life those who are utterly unworthy of it.

In this connection it is well to ponder human theories of brotherhoods consisting of saved and unsaved. I do not mean only those which advertize themselves in the form of pleasant Sunday afternoons, though they must be abominable in the sight of God, albeit some who take part in them may have intentions of pleasing Him. There are many other brotherhoods, brotherhoods for social purposes, brotherhoods in connection with friendly societies of various kinds, and trade-organizations. To say nothing of the secret, or semi-secret societies which may be termed "Brotherhoods". A believer should stand outside them all. His position is one of realizing that grace has brought him out of the family of Adam into the family of Christ, and therefore to him is given a very distinct though humble position. But, some will ask, May we not address the unsaved by the term "Brother"? Do we not find evidences in Scripture that the apostle said, "Men and brethren"? The questions are important. Undoubtedly there were in the early church inspired speakers, but we need to carefully think how the words will be UNDERSTOOD today. The inspired speakers who put everything very plainly, made it clear in what way the term "brother" was used. They would bear no hatred to those of the family of Israel, but would acknowledge that though they were now linked with Christ, yet they themselves who had believed upon Him were JEWS BY BIRTH; but if we use the term "Brother" today, entirely different thoughts come up in the minds of those who hear, and therefore it is important that we should not adopt phraseology which will have a different signification in changed times. Your words are not only, not PRIMARILY what you mean, but what other people understand you to mean. If you wish to have a dictionary of your own, you must only speak to yourself. I am sure that we feel it is a responsibility as children of God to endeavour to make matters of eternal importance very clear, and when we behold sinners imagining that there is a brotherhood, and that the distinction is not so vast between lost and saved, it becomes us though using all possible terms of courtesy, to make very clear to them that they are not in the

family in which they ARE and we WERE. Grace has stepped in, and quickened us, and we must do nothing to deny that grace. May I illustrate the Scriptural use of the term "brother", by our own term "friend". I take it that no one would misunderstand me if I said a believer should only be friendly to a growing believer, yet if we walked out into the street and began an open air meeting, the address started "Dear friends" you would find no contradiction. A word is capable of two meanings, and doubtless the word "brother" is. But if it will be systematically misunderstood, is it fitting that we should lay ourselves open to the objection of using words which mislead? You can tell the TRUTH with the object of deceiving, and it is possible to be most untruthful even while adopting words that have a definite signification otherwise to yourself. This is the theory of "reserve" in which you have a special meaning of your own, and it ill becomes the Lord's people who are to use great plainness of speech, having received grace that they may be faithful. We feel, therefore, beloved friends, that it is our responsibility, our duty, our privilege, to emphasize that brotherhoods of saved and unsaved are out of harmony with the unity of the Lord's people. Why do we desire brotherhoods with the ungodly? Imagine any having killed an earthly parent of ours, and our desiring, without confession of sin, that such should come into special relationship with ourselves. The idea is absurd, but the world stands charged with the murder of the Son of God's love, and the believer's position can only be one of studied and definite separation. We do not look at things aright; mixing with the world we are apt to get down on to the low level of comradeship instead of recognizing that we have been put into the family of God, greater than all families of royal blood, and we dare not degrade ourselves, nor degrade ~~XXXXXX~~ Him, to bring Him into a fellowship that is against Himself. How can we expect that the Spirit of God will amalgamate with the spirit of the world? How can we imagine a brotherhood between Christ and Belial? It is befitting that the Lord's redeemed having come out of the world should find their brotherhood with the saints. We have a very large family, the second largest in the world; it is fitting that we should seek to know more of those who are in that family, that there may be a bringing of such into holy and hearty, and earnest conformity, to the will of their Father. I do not mean for a moment, dear friends, that

you and I are to merely mix with all who call themselves Christians, it would oftentimes be unkind, but we are to go to those who bear that precious Name of the Lord, and to seek to find out if they are Christians by their attitude to precious Truth, and then if they are responsive and disciplelike we are to seek our friendships with them, and while they grow in grace we are to be friendly toward them, and seek to make manifest that our time belongs to them as well as our affection.

We come next to consider the need and evidences of the new birth. Scripture speaks of the new birth, a being born from above. Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Again, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born from above. You recollect the words, - Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and the first epistle of John has a similar message. We read of the two families, of the seed of the serpent, and of those who with Abraham, and like Isaac, are the children of promise, and the children of God. Concerning these latter, it is said, that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ hath been born of God! But the new birth, who can describe it? Who can explain what it means to be born from above, and to be born out from God? Different language with different aspects, but bringing out the one great fact that we who were once dead have been quickened, though we were dead ~~we~~ in sins, and it is the Spirit That quickeneth. There is a mystery in natural life and birth. No science can fully explain life, and the believer understands how spiritual life is beyond his comprehension, but we praise God ~~it~~ it is a fact. In connection with God's first working, who can say when He begins? No man can see this, but birth is rather a manifestation, I do not mean manifest to all, because if it were so, if birth were visible to everyone, it would imply that all saved ones had eyes to see with equal facility, and with equal understanding. This is not so. One may be born from above, and another believer have scales over his eyes not to detect it. The other sin is the more common, to imagine that some are born from above who are not really born, but it is possible to deny a work of grace and to be unable to see it, from lack of communion with God, or because it is veiled. But birth is visible as the result of a previous Divine work, it leads on to life which becomes yet more and

more visible. Thus we have in the figure God has used, His Divine beginning of operation, unknown to men; - then the development of that, the new birth born out from God, afterwards the growth of that life that God so graciously gives. I need hardly say that we cannot analyse this with mere logic, but, if we have experienced it, let us praise God let us acknowledge there is a new birth so that those who are in Christ are a new creation. Hence there is a need for evidences. Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ hath been begotten of God. Here is an evidence of direct faith. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, does not continue in a state of sin, if he sins he feels out of harmony with the sin, there is something painful to him, I do not say that he always checks himself as earnestly as he should. Oh, beloved friends, how we all fall short! But even though a child of God is not sufficiently earnest, and sufficiently alert to check himself, he perceives many things that those who are not saved would never perceive; and he realizes certain unpleasantnesses in going his own way, for God makes it painful for a believer oftentimes to wander, and this is it which is used by the Holy Spirit to draw us back. So the evidences of the new birth are new beliefs with heart power. New actions, as well as old actions removed, for is it not written, If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation, old things passed away, new things have come to pass, or have come into being, if you will? I am ~~was~~ afraid of the expression "come to pass" lest it have a secondary meaning in another sense to that which I have intended. They have come to STAY, by the grace of God. It is blessed to realize that salvation is ETERNAL life.

A note in closing on Adoption. This word occurs in our translation in Romans 8:15,23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5, and Eph. 1:5. The word literally signifies, "placing as sons". You sometimes hear dear believers say God has adopted us as His children. I should be very sorry to regard myself merely as an adopted child of God, in our English sense of the word. Such adoption is a make-believe. Thanks be unto God if we are in Christ Jesus we are BORN children, as Paul wrote to Timothy, "To Timothy a true born child ($\chi\upsilon\tau\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma \ \tau\epsilon\tau\tau\upsilon\chi\eta$). One who is actually and really born, a "genuine child". What then is the signification of this word rendered "adoption"? It is evidently a Roman legal term, and more nearly represents our English

idea of coming of age. In Rom. 8:15 we are told we have received the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of sonship, the Spirit of placing as sons, Who is also called the Spirit of promise, Who is also called the Earnest of the inheritance. When we receive the inheritance, and the promise, we shall be PLACED as sons. We shall have the coming of age, if I might so express it. We shall enter into our possessions. We are minors now, though in one sense we have been delivered from the tutelage of which Galatians speaks. We must realize that we still have our bodies, and as such cannot enter into the fulness of glory, sin is still present with us. We read in Gal. 4 that the heir as long as he is a child in no wise differeth from a servant though he be essentially lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so, when we were children ^{we} were in bondage under the elements of the world. Now here the word for "child" is rather the word "infant". Then the apostle goes on to say that the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of SONS, and adds "because ye are SONS". That we might receive the placing of sons. We ARE SONS, we are not simply infants; but the PLACING as sons, what does that mean? It is the manifestation of our dignity, it is the obtaining of our majority in a very wondrous sense. We shall come into our possessions, though faith anticipates them already, and we have the EARNEST of the inheritance. Thank God for the Earnest, but thanks be unto God that the Earnest is not the whole. Think what it means not only to be sons, but to be placed as sons, to be manifested as God's sons. Rom. 8 puts it clearly, the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for, or expecteth the unveiling of the sons of God, the sons of God are at present veiled. Veiled in a body which is the cause of sin, but the unveiling of the sons of God is coming. That is the *υιοθεσια* the placing as sons. God has planned this with an eternal purpose, and He will not be frustrated. He gave to Israel a typical glimpse of it, for ~~to~~ to them appertained the adoption. He has given unto us a fuller anticipation of it, for we have the Spirit of sonship in Whom we cry, Abba, Father. We are not afraid to repeat the words, Abba, Father. You would not speak to anyone of whom you were only afraid, with such a repetition of confiding words. Here is the confidence of the child, and the earnestness of the child, though of necessity, the words being in two languages bring out the thought of Jew

and Gentile one in Christ, but the climax is in view. Eph. 1:5 embraces both eternities, having predestinated us, or marked us out beforehand with a view to sonship, that is placing as sons, - Here is the final goal. Through Jesus Christ, with a view to Him, according to the good pleasure of His will, - There is the cause. To the praise of the glory of His grace, - there is the goal. In which He graced us in the Beloved One, - there is the means. And thus we have eternities embraced and a secure path in between. Such is our Father's love through the blood of the Lord Jesus, applied by the Holy Spirit to our hearts, that we may walk as children of light.

Q. As to the subject of new birth, there must be, of course, a particular moment when a soul actually passes from death to life, although there may be a preparation leading up to it?

A. That there is a moment of birth, I suppose we must agree. That this moment of birth is known, is, I think, often very doubtful, and I am not prepared to say in what manner God's preparatory work is to be regarded in this connection. In the physical it is wonderful, surely in the spiritual it is more wonderful.

Q. I have had the thought sometimes that in a good many cases what is reckoned as the period of conversion is more probably the moment when the person really realizes that he is born again; - when there comes the consciousness and assurance of eternal life, rather than the actual moment of regeneration.

A. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father". When the Spirit is sent into the hearts, of those who are sons already and they cry, Abba, Father, they regard that as the new birth.

Q. The analogy from natural things can be carried very far. We all had life a good long time before we realized it, before we were conscious of it?

A. Yes, we cried before we thought.

Q. You spoke of being friendly to a growing believer. But if you are fully persuaded that a man has been born again, yet he may not acknowledge doctrine that you feel he ought to acknowledge, in what way would you deal with ~~W~~ him? If God can save, and mercy can still strive,

though there may be according to the view of some, a walking contrary to His will, surely we ought also to be like unto Him and to be willing to be friendly...provided we can do so without having associations with sins.

A. The expression, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, be not partaker of other men's sins, keep thyself pure", shows how easy it is to be brought into contact with responsibility. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Failure to rebuke is hatred dressed up as charity. I suppose we might put it briefly thus, if we cannot find our brethren in a state to walk along with them, we must step down and wash their feet.

Q. You do not mean sever connections, and have no dealings with such?

A. Well, dear Mr. -- we have connection with the ungodly world, we go and preach to them Christ as Saviour, and surely we should seek those who bear the Name of the Lord, seek to bring before them His Lordship, and His will. There are occasions, however, when we must realize the force of the words in 2 Thess. 3. Note that man, and have no fellowship with him, have no mingling with him, that he may be ashamed, nevertheless do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Here is a precept very difficult to obey. It is easy to embrace, it is easy to strike, it is easy to rebuke.

Q. With regard to the Breaking of Bread in the morning, I do not know whether because a person breaks bread in the morning, you would separate from them, if you were living in the neighbourhood? On account of custom having prevailed for so long a time, it is hard in one sense for that man to enter into the Truth that ~~was~~ it was the NIGHT in which the Lord took bread, and so on.

A. Would you explain what you mean by "separate",

Q. Well you seemed to imply to me, when you were speaking of being friendly with a growing believer that unless a believer agrees with the doctrine which we teach, you ~~if~~ would not regard him as a growing believer, because he does not agree to the doctrine which we take to be the Scriptural doctrine, therefore you are not to be friendly to him because he is not a growing believer, because a growing believer would show that mind and readiness to accept the Truth?...

A. Let us just ponder the point ~~is~~ before the Lord: If anything we see to be the mind of the Lord, we ought to be concerned for our brethren

to see it too. Our position is to desire to press to the Lord's position, and the Lord says, Ye are my FRIENDS, if ye do WHATSOEVER I command you. If there is any denial of the "whatsoever" it hinders something of communion with the Head, and if there is anything of the "whatsoever" it hinders certain communion among His people, even unconsciously it must, I am not quite prepared to take exactly the attitude that you suggested, as to a kind of doctrinal examination. I believe that the hearts and minds are very closely linked, and that our beliefs are continually affected by our heart's love to the Lord, but nevertheless I should think it was a dangerous method to adopt if we emphasize, in intercourse among believers, in days of ruin, who seek to be of one mind, if we emphasize as the first thing, entire doctrinal agreement. The first point is, and so far as I can see, a deeply important point, affecting most things, - Is there disciplinelikeness? You will find a large number of believers who are not willing to come together to talk over differences. They are afraid you will get cross, or they will get cross, or it is too small a matter to talk about, or something of the kind. That seems to me a serious attack on disciple-likeness of heart before the Lord. Without pride, every believer who knows anything of the Lord should be sorry if anyone differs from him. Some people will bring it as a charge against others, "You think you are right", as if it was a credit to a person to think he was wrong! If he thinks he is wrong he is dishonest. If we know anything of the Lord we ought to think we are right, when we do any action. Anything else is dishonorable to Him, and for anyone to bring forward this "argument" and to insinuate pride. "You think you are right", shows one of two things, - either that the one who brings the charge has no thought of the authority of the Truth, or that the one against whom the charge has been brought has alas, been illustrating in his manner a great deal of the "I" THINK I am right, and not so much of the quiet confidence in the Lord and the Lord's grace. Mannerisms bring about more divisions than almost anything else. Love to the Lord kills mannerisms. Believers like to have their individuality and they are afraid of having too much uniformity. "I must be myself", they say. This is the very thing we are not to be. For they that are Christ's crucified the flesh with its affections and feelings. We are to represent the Lord Himself, and the more we are brought into harmony with Him, the more we shall become like

to one another. I know very well that in putting these words. I say that with which I suppose practically all of us agree, and there is the thought fixed in the mind - It is quite simple, and in accord with the mind of God in this matter, but it leaves the point untouched: - it simply dealt with generalities, and heavenly aspects, and leaves the point untouched! But I am persuaded that if our hearts are touched we shall touch the points from the right standpoint next. That if we are in communion with the Lord, this will draw His people more and more into harmony with Himself. I am looking forward to the time when the Lord's people will talk more definitely over differences. They used to do this. Perhaps even more so may have done in days when they were less favored with light. It should be ours to ponder differences. The general tendency at the present time is to look down upon everybody who differs from you. That is a most dangerous position, but it is equally dangerous to look up to him because he differs. You must feel that there is something sad about this, and every difference must or should, cause a certain pain of heart as it is felt and realized. The position of the apostle in Phillipians 3 cannot, I think, be absolutely generalized. I mean that, if it is generalized it is really perverted. Scripture says there, Let us therefore as many as be perfect, as many as be goal men be thus minded, and if as to anything ye be otherwise minded God will reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless with a view to that which we have anticipatively reached, let us ~~we~~ walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. We have anticipatively reached the glory. I know no translation bring out the thought of the chapter more fully than this. With a view to that which we have anticipatively reached. We are already perfect ones, we have anticipatively reached the climax, but we have not yet attained, neither already perfect, we have only reached it by anticipation. With a view to it, therefore, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. So the apostle really says, there is to be the fellowship among those who are living in the light of the glory of the Lord. And it is well in days of ruin when there are differences of ~~an~~ opinion that we should seek to come together and bring them to oneness of mind. Now I am perfectly willing to acknowledge that this HAS an absolutely general application, but we are all so ready to say that we are the people who are living in the light of the Lord's return, as the apostle was. Though you will come across believers

who are living in the light of the Lord's return as the apostle was, if you, by grace, dear friends, are in that condition of heart, then, I was about to say, it does not matter very much to what extent you differ today, you will not differ to the same extent tomorrow. The important thing, primarily, is not so much, in what do I differ? but , HOW do I differ? If my difference is with a knife, if my difference is with sullen indifference to everybody else's opinion, because it is MY OPINION, if my difference is that which is a matter to which I am determined to cling, and victory rather than Truth is my object, though the difference be a very small point, the attitude makes it a very large one. But if the difference be of a far larger portion of Truth, and I be very ignorant, but there is a desire toward the Lord in my heart, the Lord will see that desire and will draw His people together, and will remove the angles and take away the differences, and we shall walk in increasingly close fellowship. Notice those striking words "With a view to that which we have anticipatively reached, let us walk by the same RULE", and the rule is the Scripture, the Truth. The apostle does not simply say, Let us walk together, but, Let us walk by the rule, and if there is anything crooked in us, it will rub up against the rule, and the rule will ~~kn~~ rub it off, and it will be therefore unpleasant for us to walk by the same rule unless we are willing to lose the things that are not straight. Thus shall we be all together. I do not see how it is possible for believers to enjoy differences unless there is a heart of wandering from the Lord. I know very well that usually, when any of us meet for the first time, we differ on some points, I know that the various friends who come to this meeting here are not yet entirely of one mind, nor would I wish to hide the fact that this hinders a certain amount of friendliness in the full sense of the word "friendship". It must hinder this, Only absolute agreement and absolute spirituality can bring absolute friendship. Every spiritual defect, and every disagreement involves a certain spiritual defect, and must invalidate to some extent true friendship. But, if I mistake not, you are rather viewing the positions as two positions, friendliness and no friendliness, whereas it appears to me there are infinite gradations.

Q. I thought it had a bearing on your paper regarding 2 Timothy, the great house, where it seemed to me that you meant you were about to inaugurate a church, meeting, or a place, as it were...This was how I

read it, that unless any fully agreed with all your doctrine, would not recognize them as members of your meeting, or the church, and consequently as believers, and yet you would not say they were unbelievers. You would love them as unbelievers, and perhaps more so because there seemed evidence that the Lord was at work there, and they had a desire to understand some of the Truth. And then I think you referred to not lording it over their conscience. I could not see how the two were going to work together. The two statements do not seem to me to agree.

A. I suppose that the difficulty is partly this, that the words in one of the articles might be summarized as hating all sin, and the other one summarized as loving all the Lord's people. Now I do not find that these statements seem to agree if you take them as literal statements, to be interpreted by human logic - they seem in distinct spheres altogether. But when the Holy Spirit brings to us the two-fold action of hating all sin and loving all believers, in the ~~is~~ parallel and united working out, I think those two attitudes come more to the heart than perhaps they appeal to the mind. I think it is almost impossible to do anything except in the power of the Holy Spirit, in fact I am sure it is, and ~~therefore~~, all our arrangements must necessarily fall short, and we shall have entire confusion in fellowship of saints unless there is the work of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that the application of the work of the Holy Spirit largely affects this. Undoubtedly everything that is brought before us in Scripture, in 2 Timothy 2, would without the work of the Spirit of God lead to universal disorder. The Spirit of God binds together the Lord's people in whose heart the Lord is working, and if you were not off-hand, but affectionate toward a saved one who differed, yet severe against sin, I believe that you would find that he would be more likely to be led by the Holy Spirit to consider his position than if you said to him, Never mind about it, we are all one.

Q. I would not take the former attitude, I would certainly say be severe on that, but certainly it was a difficulty. You did not mind my mentioning it.

A. No, I am pleased you should mention it, and if our friends will bring along some of those who differ I trust we shall have an opportunity of explaining more by attitude that this is not the position of Isa. 65:5.
