

**No.216.**

**Sidelights on the Deity of Christ.**

**OUTLINE OF ADDRESS:—**

1. The Glory of our Triune God.
2. Christ's Stress on Himself in contrast with His people; e.g. Mark 12. 6, John 12. 26.
3. Worship Invariably Approved.
4. The Atonement implying Christ's Deity.
5. Devotion to Himself in the Epistles.

**W**ITHOUT any hesitation, without any side-thoughts of doubt, our hearts acknowledge that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And we KNOW Him. This is not a matter of bare argument. We KNOW and rejoice to know that He Who came of the seed of David according to the flesh, was over all, God Blessed for ever. We confess His Name as the One Who was the Great I Am. He Himself said, "Before Abraham came, I am." Christ is to us not a created being, not merely a glorious Messenger, not only a Prophet, not barely One Who has wrought a work of marvellous attractive power, but the **One Whom our hearts acclaim with believing Thomas,—“My Lord and My God.”** "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." This conclusion is not reached by verbal reasoning. If any have been brought to know Him, it is the work of Divine grace, and our hearts can praise-fully rejoice in that which our lips would readily confess. The glory of our Triune God shines out in the Scripture, from one end to the other. The very first verse declares "God (plural) created (singular) the heavens and the earth." The very first chapter emphasizes "Let US make man in OUR image." When God's glory was seen and felt by Isaiah, he HEARD the utterance "A Holy One, A Holy One, A Holy One is the Lord of Hosts" (Isa. 6. 3). Soon the question of authority and love reached his ear, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for US?" The subject, beloved friends, is manifestly important, for at the present time there are many attacks on the Tri-unity of God. It is evident, therefore, that Satan has a bitter opposition to the Person of Christ,—a bitter opposition to this part of the truth, which, moreover, is travestied among the many Satanic travesties in the book of Revelation. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet are plainly a caricature of our TRIUNE God. What Satan hates he often parodies. We call to mind the harlot, a travesty of the bride. The deadly wound healed presents a travesty of the death and resurrection of Christ. Satan, therefore, HATES the Triune Nature of God, and parodies it. But that which Satan hates we would manifestly hold the more earnestly and proclaim at the present time of need. We would be spurred to more godly enthusiasm, for that which the devil would set on one side must have a special present meaning, to reach our hearts and strengthen our hands.

The PLACE which our Lord Jesus Christ occupies in the Scripture, from beginning to end, makes it evident that He is God. APART from the many DIRECT statements, this is again and again IMPLIED, and the whole structure of Scripture would involve idolatry in its exaltation of Christ, were He not essentially God. Being in the form of God, He emptied Himself to become a Servant:—He was, therefore, not a Servant

essentially. He was essentially ABOVE A SERVANT, essentially FULL. That which would be an exaltation to a created being, even a perfect position of uniquely privileged service, involved FOR HIM a humiliation, and strikingly He sets forth this aspect where He alludes to re-instating, "Glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17. 5). Again let me say that the place Christ has from the beginning to end of Scripture would involve IDOLATRY, if He were not essentially "Over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9. 5). Among the names which He has we find "The First and the Last," names which are essentially linked with Deity, and SET FORWARD AS A MANIFESTATION OF DEITY. Names which COULD NOT be taken by another unless there were robbery (Isa. 44. 6 with Rev. 1. 17). He is, moreover, "the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending," and thus the vowel letters suggest that the New Testament is only explicable in relation to Him, and that He also vocalizes the unpointed Hebrew Scriptures, and becomes their key. In accord with this, He is IMPLIED in the first verse of Genesis, but mentioned specifically in both the first and the last verse of the New Testament. Not only "implied," for the UNveiling is found in the Greek Scriptures, and we have Christ as the gloriously unveiled One. Nor can we know the Father except by Him. He Himself declared this. Nor can we have the Father unless we have Him. 1 John 2. 23 is decisive. We cannot separate the persons of our Triune God, as to nature or purpose. If we take from the glory of One we diminish the glory of Each Person. If we fail to understand something of the dignity of One we degrade not only One but All. Ah, beloved friends, I long to keep in front of you and of myself this precious and delightful thought:—Christ is God, and yet He became Man to die for sinners, to die for me! We are not speaking of an academic subject, but of a Person Whom we love, One, Whom we know, because He first knew us, and in Whom we rejoice because He was pleased to come unto us. Christ is not to us the bare spelling of a half dozen letters. He is not only a Name on the pages of history. He is real, and while we speak of Him, He lives to intercede FOR US (Heb. 7. 25). If He is real to us we are real to Him, and if we remember Him in measure, He forgets us never. It is an overwhelming thought. The Lord Jesus Christ is ALWAYS distinguished from created beings. We shall see this more fully afterwards. The highest created beings are seen in Isaiah 6, and throughout the book of Revelation. They utterly distinguish themselves from the Lord Jesus. They acknowledge their lowness. They never say one word to suggest His lowness. He is from THEIR standpoint the Highly Exalted One, and this is actually the special subject before us. We are

not now dealing with the direct statements of the Deity of Christ, but with the INDIRECT witness of Scripture, the sidelights on His glory which have proved helpful—helpful beyond measure to not a few of us.

I have been impressed of late with Christ's own stress on Himself. Have you read through the Gospels to see **how** He mentions Himself? It is an important subject. Let us remember that He was the humbled One, and YET He reveals the exaltation of Himself throughout all the time of His humiliation. I venture to say if a created being were to set forth one tithe of what Christ sets forth of Himself, we should feel that he was wrongly honouring himself. We should say such language hardly seems humility. Are we not in a difficult dilemma? Is it not true that we must ever deny the humility of Christ or accept His Deity? Ah, beloved friends, it is not a dilemma to us. We accept His Deity in a moment. We have long accepted it. But if any doubt has risen on any mind upon this subject, if the Deity of Christ is set on one side, His humility must be set on one side also. At once His character is robbed of its glory. It is not a question as to whether Christ was Divine, or the most glorious created being. He is either Divine OR proud. He is either Divine OR an impostor. There is nothing between the two. Those who would exalt Him professedly, yet deny His Deity, are confused. They have no basis in Scripture. Grant His Deity, every difficult expression can be understood. Deny His Deity, all the four Gospels lead us to confusion. Christ's stress on Himself is remarkable. We have such words as "I am the Bread of Life," "I am the Vine," "I am the Good Shepherd," "On this Rock I will build My church," "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," "Before Abraham became, I am." Such expressions are the more remarkable because they are repeated so frequently, and on no occasion does He speak in measurably parallel words of ANY other. Christ was not One to degrade others. He honoured them: He honoured His servants. He spoke beautifully of them, but never used words at all parallel with the words which He used of Himself. Take one striking illustration. Christ honoured John the Baptist. He praised the faithfulness of John the Baptist. John was not a reed shaken with the wind. Among those born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. Here was Christ's startling testimony, asserting that the forerunner has as high a record as any among men. If Christ therefore was only a man, He would come to the level of the highest among those born of women, but He does not suggest this at all. He sends the messenger to John,—"**Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me,**"—as if lovingly blaming John, with gracious firmness, for not realizing that Christ must be the One trusted, and viewed as the Resting Place

of His people. This becomes the more remarkable when we see how John speaks of himself and of Christ. The contrast is impressive. But every word is fitting, when we see the Divine **Saviour** and a godly **man**. There is no other key. I think we also agree that Christ exalted such as Abraham and Moses. He honoured them, but did He for one moment put Abraham on a level with Himself? "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and rejoiced." "Before Abraham became, I am." Abraham's position is marked as infinitely lower than His own. Could a holy created being have spoken thus? There would not have been truthfulness, and there would not have been graciousness, and there would not have been lowliness in such words. If the Deity of Christ is not real, the humility of Christ is not real, and the whole of His character is shattered. We are compelled to lay a prayerful stress on this. Moses and Elias were with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. Here were they in glory after their earthly life had been followed by years of unseen privilege. We should no longer view them as failing men, but the Lord Jesus did not treat them as like to Himself, nor own Peter's request, nor did the voice that came from heaven put them at all on a level with the Lord. They were **COMPARATIVELY** nothing. They were left out of account. Peter's proposal that tents should be made for them **AS WELL** was through sheer ignorance, and the voice said, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Moses was faithful as a **SERVANT**, but Christ as Son **OVER** His own house. He stands out in remarkable glory. Would Christ have degraded David? David He honoured, as the faithful king, the king after God's own heart; but when He referred **BACK** to David, He asks why David calls Messiah "Lord"—"The Lord said unto my Lord." When we think of the height of David's exaltation and privilege, Christ's allusion to David in this connection plainly shows that He viewed Himself as infinitely beyond David. Nor are those individual cases alone. When the Lord Jesus speaks to all His disciples He tells them their privilege is to follow Him, and that **ONE** is their Teacher. He does not suggest for a moment that any of them were at all comparable with Himself. Their rejection was to be for His Name's sake. They were to go forth and represent **Him**. He sent them. Rewards are to be in accord with the fact that cups of cold water were given "because ye belong to Christ." What created being could speak thus? It is not that He says, "Those who are unfaithful are much below Me." He ever assumes that the most faithful of His people would regard Him on an infinitely different level, so that they would find their glory in emphasizing that they belonged to Him. It is clear that the highest believers, the most godly ones, devoted in their love to God,

and so worthy of every encouragement, are brought to acknowledge their highest dignity is in belonging to **Him and pleasing Him.**

Nor is it otherwise in the parables. He **ALONE** obtains the field. He **ALONE** purchases the pearl. He **ALONE** is the Good Shepherd. He **ALONE** deals with the case of the man who went down to Jericho. The servants in Luke 19 receive the pounds. He marks Himself out as the One Who presents, and will receive a reckoning. He does not for one moment suggest that when the servants came up for reckoning it will be the time when He will be brought up for reckoning. He regards Himself as in simple and full authority. All are His servants. He is not on their level, nor are they on His. It is deeply important when we find this throughout the parables. In Matthew 21, the Father has One Beloved Son. Whom He sends. **ALL** the prophets are but servants. There is One Who is distinct. The feast of Matthew 22 is made for the King's Son alone. There is no doubt as to the One to Whom Christ refers. Others are to share in the feast. Others are to be welcomed to it, that is their high privilege, but **HE** is the One for Whom it is prepared: all is for His glory. If even one parable were thus it would be remarkable, but in every parable He is the **ONLY** One Who is thus honoured and exalted. The **ONLY** One Who is central.

Let us once more think of John the Baptist. Let us notice now his words concerning **himself**. Speaking of the Lord Jesus, he says, "Whose shoelatchet I **am not worthy** to unloose." Further, "He That hath the bride is the Bridegroom":—I am only "**the friend of the Bridegroom.**" Christ is the Possessor. This humility is fitting. If we find any created being, we expect that his height of godliness will mean a wonderful depth of **humility**. Hence we understand such an attitude in God's servants, as Isaiah, John or Paul. **We have looked in vain for such expressions on the part of Christ**, though if He were a created being beyond John, we should expect in the days of His humiliation some similar expressions,—but we cannot find them: they are not to be found. John revealed his true glory by humbling himself before Christ, and Christ revealed His true glory by exalting Himself, in the midst of His very humiliation, without any exception. Thus His Deity is not a matter of degree, or of greatness amid created beings. He is not merely Divine in a measure of dignity, but essentially God. Different in kind, and not only in degree, from those who are caused by grace, and by grace alone, to share in His glory. It is well to repeat this from different standpoints, that He may be honoured aright.

Christ's attitude in regard to worship is equally a side-light. God is jealous of worship, and when a Herod gives not

God the glory, in Acts 12, he is eaten of worms. The climax of Antichrist is the mesmerism and control of the worshipping tendency of man, toward Himself, and the dispensation ends with the worshipping of the beast. I venture to suggest that if Christ were not over all, God Blessed for ever, the stress on worshipping Him which we find in the Scripture would amaze us more than the worshipping of the beast! It is terrible when an evil power seeks worship, but if one who appears consistently glorious should seek and approve worship, though unworthy of it, the subtlety of the snare would be greater for those of us who wish to glorify God alone, and therefore the danger would be greater, and thus the evil wrapped up would be greater:—and the only escape from this conclusion is the acknowledgement that Christ is absolutely worthy of worship, not through the height of His personal character and work as a Delegate, but through the essential nature of His perfect, eternal Godhead. Peter in Acts 10 refuses worship on the ground that he is but a man (verses 25, 26). The angel in Revelation 19. 10 rejects worship, NOT because his degree is not high enough, but because God alone is worshipped. Worship, therefore, is not a matter of degree of dignity; it is ONLY for God; and the higher a created being, the more may we anticipate he will repudiate worship, that God alone may be exalted. There are degrees among created beings, manifold gradations, but they are gradations. There is only One ABSOLUTE line of demarcation, that which exists between the Creator and the created, and if we carefully study the Scripture there can be no doubt as to which side of that line Christ is. That He emptied Himself (Phil. 2. 7) and took upon Himself the form of a servant is evident. That He was pleased to take a body prepared for Him is plain. Plainly the body was not eternal, THAT was prepared. He became man in fulness of time, and as such a Servant; and the fact that He took a prepared body, and the fact that He became Man, thus having a beginning to His life as God-Man,—that fact accounts for all the expressions of humiliation, for all the expressions of the glory laid aside. So we have TWO SETS of passages, perfectly consistent,—some which assert absolute glory, and some which deal with voluntary and perfect humiliation. The latter passages are explicable BECAUSE He laid aside His glory. The former are inexplicable, UNLESS we acknowledge the glory which He had essentially. The glory of "Himself"! He emptied Himself, but remained Himself. Let it ever be realized that worship was not only acknowledged on one or two occasions, or in an indirect way. It was consistently and openly acknowledged. In Matthew 2. 2 the wise men came to worship Him, and they worshipped Him as a Babe (11). Mary is explicitly contrasted. They came to the young Child and

His mother, and worshipped Him. That is the Divinely worded contrast. It is worthy of notice that the Lord Jesus, Who always accepted worship Himself, was stern against Satan seeking worship in Matthew 4. 9, not only because of Satan's iniquity, but because worship is restricted to God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" was Christ's declaration. If He took that standpoint, YET accepted worship, He contradicted Himself unless He were God Himself. Thus the very temptation of the evil one serves to bring out the more clearly the Deity of Christ. The leper came to worship Him in Matthew 8. 2. In 9. 18, He was again worshipped in the working out of His miracles; Those in the ship in the 14th of Matthew, and the Syro-phenician woman of 15. 25, and Salome in chapter 20. 20,—all worshipped Him. There are some who will tell us that He was thus exalted in resurrection. We grant it, but there is an equal stress on worship before resurrection and afterwards. He was worshipped when a Babe, not only as a Man. It is not simply worshipping because of the glory of a special work, but the worshipping because of the inherent glory of His nature. In resurrection He still accepted worship, as Matthew 28 shows (verses 9, 17). And not only so, but we find our beloved Lord never reproved a man for exalting Him. A Nicodemus said, "We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God." Christ would not allow this partial acknowledgement, but led on Nicodemus to the thought that He was the Son of Man Who is in heaven. The ruler came to Christ, and was willing to acknowledge Him on the level of a good man. Christ would not recognise this. "WHY callest thou Me good?" He did not repudiate the stress on goodness, but He did repudiate the ground on which the man called Him good, and showed that if it was on the ground of 'humanity there was no goodness, and that the goodness could only be acknowledged on the ground of confessing His Deity. In other words, the Lord Jesus never reproved a man for exalting Him, but He reproved those who had a partial view of His exaltation. What striking evidence is this.

**W**E go a step further, and we find that not only is this worship throughout Scripture, but it is Divinely commanded with respect to His return in glory. "Let ALL the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. 1. 6). Every created being, of every dignity, is hereby called upon to acknowledge One Greater. He is distinguished from ALL the angels, and in the same context He is called God. THEY are messengers, THEY are to worship, HE is to be the worshipped One, worshipped by ALL. The line of demarcation is clear. The archangel, whose name signifies, "Who is like God" is a contrast with Lucifer who says, "I will be like the Most High,"—the archangel rebukes Satan in Jude, but the Lord Jesus Christ is seen as the One Who bears the Name—the Name of glory.

Further, the Atonement implies His Deity. It is worthy of notice that where atonement is brought before us we have, in more than one passage, a very remarkable stress on Deity. Exodus 34 says, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, BEARING iniquity," and Micah 7 calls attention to this startling view of grace. "Who is a God like unto Thee, BEARING INIQUITY?" The translation "pardoning" refers to the EFFECT, the Hebrew word to the CAUSE. Deity and atonement are in the same verse. Israel reject these two points. Like to believing Thomas they will yet see the two together, then they will acknowledge, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." When looking upon Him Whom they pierced they will enter into this precious aspect, "They shall look upon ME Whom they have pierced." But not only have we this unveiled aspect. The very PRINCIPLE of atonement involves Deity. This subject has been impressed upon me of late. When we think what atonement means for a great number whom no man can number delivered from wrath, and made to possess eternal life, our hearts are amazed; and, if we are heirs of God, if we are those brought out of death into life, well may we rejoice already with something of joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our sins are cast behind God's back, and we ourselves are accepted in the Beloved. The Holy Spirit, Who exalts Christ, always leads to a joyful recognition of this finished work. But you will observe, beloved friends, that in the atonement Christ stands out as the Contrast with His people. Every one of them needs atonement. He needs none. Even as He said, "Ye ought to wash one another's feet," but never suggested "Ye ought to wash Mine," so is it here. In the epistle to the Hebrews we are reminded that Aaron offered **for Himself**, but Christ offered

**HIMSELF FOR** His undeserving people. Without exception, the godliest of believers are viewed as requiring atonement (cf. Ex. 30. 15), for before their godliness they were equally sinners, even as others, but He is never viewed in such a connection,—never viewed as needing a work for Himself, but always viewed as the Contrasted One, Who wrought the whole. Amazing grace,—without preparation on His people's part, without assistance from them, **He wrought the whole work.** The line of demarcation between created being and Creator must be here.

I go further. Without substitution, wrath on the sacrifice, would be unjust. There are many who teach that the atonement is but a display of the mercy of God and of His moral government, with His hatred of sin. But if it were not substitution, if He were not taking my judgment, it was injustice for Him to die. The atonement demands substitution. You may call

it the commercial view of the atonement, if you will, or rather, if you dare, but let me call it the covenant view since Scripture calls it this. The covenant is not a matter of chance. Atonement is not a theory, and salvation is not a mere possibility. God has wrought a glorious work of permanent certainty. But, beloved friends, I go a step further,—if Christ were not over all, God Blessed for ever, we should have the laying of judgment upon a created being. I do not know how you feel, but my heart, in the light of Scripture, would shrink from this. A created being is necessarily a dependent being, and to bring a dependent being into the position of bearing substitutionary wrath, would seem to put an unfair and impossible strain even on the highest created being. The Holy Spirit never suggests bringing a dependent being into such a fulness of vicarious judgment. The objection which we often meet in the streets is, "Do you think it fair that Someone else should suffer for you?" I answer, "No, if that one is a created being." But if That One is the Creator, against Whom I have sinned, Who has, in grace, humbled Himself and **become** the Perfect Servant, then He has a perfect **right of love** so to do. There is nothing of compulsion, there is nothing of forcing of another to bring it about. It is an absolute fulness of His love. Deity is wrapped up in the thought of atonement.

I go a step further, my mind is rightly drawn to love the One who died for me, and I long to love Him more. Nor do I feel I can love Him too much. If He has delivered me from the wrath to come, I ought to love Him fully—infinity. But in loving Him with a fulness of love, I find a problem if He is a created being,—in loving Him as I must love Him. Thereby I diminish the love to God. A created being becomes too glorious in my view. Not only do I diminish the love of God, but, imperceptibly, I find another thought arises in my mind,—I see One Whose work has delivered me from judgment, from absolute judgment for ever and ever, and I think to myself, if God gave up one who was essentially and altogether less than Himself, and contrasted with Himself, He put the greater burden on one whose nature was less than His Own, and I think **THAT ONE** did more for my salvation than God did, and I begin to love Him the more. My view of Deity has gone. My love, too, has gone. I have become an idolator, and I am lost for ever. A wrong view of the atonement undoes the atonement, and there is only confusion. But if I acknowledge that the One Whom God gave up was equally God, the giving up by the Father is **EQUALLY** love with the bearing of wrath by the Son. If He gave one who was less than Himself, His love was less in that He gave a created being. But if He gave One Who was essentially as Himself, the giving and

giving up were a display of love equally great with the bearing of judgment. To give up one less than oneself is NOT an act of supreme love. But for God the Father to give up One co-equal with Himself, and infinitely loved as such, is an act of equally supreme love with the bearing of doom. And thus the whole principle of atonement demands the absolute, essential and eternal Deity of our beloved Lord. These aspects have been deeply impressed upon my heart and mind of late, and I feel that they are in Scripture the Holy Spirit's resting place for God's people from which there is no escape in any other interpretation. Nor do we wish it. We desire to be drawn to love Christ more, and in so loving Him to feel that our love is toward the Triune God, for is it not written "the Lord our God (plural) is One Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God (in His Triune glory) with all thine heart."

Finally, for this evening,—yet not I hope finally, rather initially with a view to a life of more conscious nearness,—we reach "Devotion to Christ in the Epistles." Here the Holy Spirit unfolds to us our Lord Jesus Christ in connection with the inner life of such an one as "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ." Here is a man, no bare enthusiast, a man of great ability, a man who had of old thought he ought to do many things against Jesus of Nazareth, which also he did. A man who had, in early life, advanced beyond many his equals, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers—not a man of fanatic weakness, not a man of easily turned brain, but a man who had experienced a miracle of grace, and had grown up manifestly as one full of sober thought, a man of deep love to God who dreaded sin and hated it with the strongest kind of hatred, even in its beginnings, a man who trembled at all idolatry and any rivalry between the creature and God,—yet that man writes in the spontaneous language of love which always distinguishes Christ from himself; and Christ from all the people of Christ. Unhesitating he places the line of demarcation THERE, and associates the Lord Jesus with God the Father. Paul was a bondservant, and Jesus Christ was the Master. Believers are all viewed as related to Him, and dependent on Him. "Ye are Christ's." HE is the Possessor. He alone gave Himself for them, and everything they have is linked with Him, and comes to them through Him. The desire of Paul's heart was to know HIM, and the longing look forward was to see HIM. But not only have we here the expression of a devoted heart, we have the writing of an inspired pen. Yes, this inspired testimony is the Holy Spirit's own exaltation of Christ. Tell me, beloved friends, that a godly man exalts a created being to this extent, and I say the man is encouraging me to an

idolatry which forgets God. Tell me, if you can venture so to do, that the Holy Spirit inspired epistles to exalt a created being to this extent, but I can only shudder at the thought. The only solution is that Christ is Over All God Blessed for ever. Granted THIS, and all the constellations have found the centre around which they revolve. There is no difficulty now. Grant His perfection in the perfection of essential Deity, I understand Paul's love. It diminishes not one iota from true love to God, for Christ is God. I understand that every particle of his love to God the Son exalts God the Father, for God the Father did not give up one less than Himself. Every iota of love to the One involves a fulness of love to the Other in the perfect unity of that inexplicably glorious Triunity. I can understand it now. I can understand why Paul wanted to know HIM, and the power of HIS resurrection, and the fellowship of HIS sufferings. Everything is clear; but everything is mist and confusion otherwise. If we acknowledge that the Holy Spirit exalts the Glorious One Who BECAME a Man for us, we not only see the perfection of Scripture, but our hearts are brought to recognise the Holy Spirit's view of Christ, and how He would have us view and love Christ in our daily life. I dread lest these meditations should become in my life, or in yours, bare thoughts of argument, to meet objections. If they remain in our head, we shall lose heavily for our greater knowledge, and less obedience, at the Judgment Seat of Christ; but if, by grace, applied in the working of the Holy Spirit they fill our lives, then, recognizing that we in ourselves were nothing, and that all our merits are by His finished work, enabled day by day, our heart will stretch forth toward Him Who has become our Centre, and day by day will experience something similar to the enjoyment that belonged to one as great as any among those born of women when John said—"He must increase, but I must decrease." And thus shall we look devotedly for our Lord's Coming. CHRIST is the Centre of Scripture, the Centre of prophecy. His finished work and future glory shine forth in amazing unity. His past Coming and future Coming are graciously entwined. Happy are those who can say, in the unity of the redeemed which He has brought about, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine" :—"Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

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