

The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald Articles (1896)

The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Vol. 73 (1896)

March 10, 1896

The Christ of Judea - 1

W. W. Prescott

In Heb. 3:1 we read: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." There is really but one subject for the Christian to consider, and that is Christ Jesus. But the subject is a large one, and two phases of it are brought up in this text,-the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.

The Apostle of our profession. An apostle is one who is sent forth with a commission, and Christ Jesus was sent of God to this world. We read of it in John 3:17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." We read also in chapter 5:30, last clause, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Christ, the High Priest of our profession, who ministers in heaven for us, is the Christ for to day. He is the Apostle of our profession, Christ Jesus, the Christ of Judea, the Christ who was sent of God to this world, and it is he that we shall consider now. How did he come? Let us read Luke 2:10, 11: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." That is, the Christ of Judea, our Saviour, came into this world just as we came into this world, by birth. The Saviour *was born* unto us. This was the fulfilment of the prophecy in Isa. 9:6: "For unto us a child *is born*, unto us a son is given." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." He gave his only begotten Son *unto* us. *Unto* us a son is given, and he was given *to* us, by being born into our family, by taking our humanity upon himself by his birth.

Christ might have come to this world in the glory of the Father, but he did not come to be our Saviour as one outside of us, separated from us; he came to be one with us. And it is our study now to bring out the completeness with which Jesus Christ identified himself with the human family which he came to save. This is the only corner of God's universe where the inhabitants are out of harmony with God. This is the only place in God's universe where his will has not been done by created intelligences as it is done in heaven; and God, when he devised the plan of salvation for the human family in the days of eternity, provided that there should be a Saviour, even his own Son, who should come and completely and fully identify himself with those whom he came to save. This is the thought that we wish to emphasize now, Behold the man, Christ Jesus.

How did he completely identify himself with those he came to save?-By being one with them, and one of them; by being brought into the family just as any other member is brought in, by birth. And so Jesus Christ of Judea came here, and joined this family by birth. He was a member of the divine family, that family of the Father of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. But he gave up his divine mode of existence, and came to this world, and took upon himself the human mode of existence. We read farther of this in the second chapter of Hebrews: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Jesus Christ was perfect as the Son of God, but when he came here and took upon himself our human nature, he entered upon a new mode of existence: and as the Son of man, he was to be made perfect as we are made perfect, through suffering. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." This is the complete identification of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, with us in our humanity. "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Observe the simplicity and yet the clearness of the statement: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood." We know what that means, that is our mode of existence; and as he came to save us and lift us up, "he also himself likewise took part of the same,"-the same flesh and the same blood,-"that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." He became identified with us, subjected to death with us, for this very purpose. "And deliver them, who through fear of death were all the lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." How could the thought be set before us more clearly that Jesus Christ identified himself with us, by partaking of our flesh and blood and becoming one with us, a member of the human family, just as we are?

Adam lost God's image and begat sons and daughters in his image rather than in the image of God. God's purpose is that man shall be born again in *his* image; and he made a provision for this by Jesus Christ's coming into the world. So he came and joined himself to humanity, that the divine power in him might raise humanity to the place where God designed it should be. He came and connected himself with humanity, and reached out his hand and lifted us up. He became his one with us, and in his lifting up, we were lifted up. So we are what a complete identification there is between Christ, our Saviour, and man, who was to it saved.

It was the Word becoming flesh. The Scripture does not leave us in uncertainty as to what kind of flesh and blood this was. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." The flesh that Jesus Christ took when he came here was the only flesh that any one could take by being born of a woman, and that was the flesh of sin. No other flesh could be given. It was impossible that one should be born at that time into the human family, and become a member by birth, without taking flesh of sin. When God made man, he made him in his likeness, he was on an elevated plane, and when he fell, he not only changed his plane of living, but in the fall he became bruised and broken and powerless. Jesus Christ came to lift him up, not by standing aloof and giving him good advice, but by identifying himself with man. He did not take the likeness of man just as Adam was before he fell, but he came

153

down to the very plane to which man had fallen, and identified himself with him, and took upon himself the flesh of sin. w. w. p.

(To be continued.)

March 17, 1896

The Christ of Judea - 2

W. W. Prescott

We have seen how by birth Jesus took upon himself our nature. The object of bringing this point very emphatically before the mind is that we may see the nearness of Jesus Christ as our Saviour. He has become one with us, and joined himself to us by ties which will never be broken, because to-day and for eternity Jesus Christ is one with us in humanity, still bearing this human flesh. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2:5. He thus connected the human family with God once more.

Our God is a consuming fire. The manifestation of God himself is a glory before which sinful flesh cannot stand; but God gave Christ, who did not exchange his divinity for humanity, but clothed his divinity with humanity, in order that the human family might through his humanity and divinity be connected with the Father in heaven; so that we are brought nigh in Christ Jesus. This is set forth very strikingly in the dream of Jacob. The topmost round of the ladder reached up to heaven, where God was, and the bottom rested on the earth. Christ is the ladder reaching from heaven to earth, connecting sinful humanity with sinless divinity. This is the work of Jesus Christ. In its fallen condition, humanity is weak and bruised, and has no power or strength at all. It is unable to lift itself one inch toward heaven; but we find the divine Saviour right where fallen humanity is. There is none so weak that he cannot reach Jesus Christ, because

Jesus Christ has come down. Our work is not to lift ourselves up, but it is simply to lay hold of Jesus Christ where he is, and he will lift us up to God.

Jesus Christ established a new family, of which he became the head. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and after ward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaves. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Cor. 15:45-49. So Jesus Christ the Lord from heaven, the last Adam, in entering into this relationship with the human family, became the head of this family just as Adam was the head of the divine-human family originally. Jesus Christ was God in heaven, and he came to this world, and was born of the flesh, and thus he who had been born of the Spirit, was afterward born of the flesh, and by this double birth this family was established,-the divine-human family of which he is the head,-in order that we who have already been born of the flesh, may by his grace and the power of the same Spirit, be born of the Spirit,-that is, every member of this divine-human family is twice born. And Jesus Christ took the same relationship to this family that the first Adam took in the beginning, in whom were found all the members of the family. As in Adam every member was created, when he was given the power to reproduce, so in Christ every member of the family which he established, of which he is the head, was in him, and ns gathered into himself the whole family. The same relationship is sustained toward him as was sustained toward the first Adam. As what we receive by birth from flesh is the flesh of sin, with all the tendencies of evil,-for that which is born of the flesh is flesh,-and as by birth of the flesh we enter into all the experiences of Adam, by having his nature; so by this new, this second birth, we enter into the family of God and the nature of Jesus Christ our Saviour, becoming partakers of the divine nature. Jesus Christ identified himself so fully and completely with us in his humanity as our divine Saviour, as well as our brother in the flesh, that he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Now let us consider what the mission was on which he was sent to this world. We may say that his mission was to reveal God in such a manner that man could understand and comprehend him. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 1:1-3, R. V. Let us notice especially the thought that Jesus Christ is the effulgence of the glory of God, the pouring forth of his glory, the outshining of his glory, the very image of his substance. The relationship between God and the things outside of him, especially the human family, is such that God reveals himself only through his son, Jesus Christ. So complete was this revelation, that he says of himself in John 12:45, "He that seeth me seeth

him that sent me." He came in the flesh on a mission to this world, sent as an apostle to his brethren. He came that those who saw him might see the Father. Jesus Christ was God revealed and manifested in the flesh. When man so completely lost sight of the true character of God, his loving, divine, and compassionate character, even those divinely appointed sacrifice because an offense of him. Christ came in the flesh, and revealed God, that the human family might comprehend the true character of God. While he was human, he was also divine, and he revealed the true character of the true God "Philip saith unto him,

169

Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John 14:8-10. His whole ministry of three and a half years, which was just closing, was for the express purpose of showing the Father to the world; to reveal God in such a manner that the human family, fallen and sinful, might comprehend him; and Jesus Christ revealed the Father not simply in his words, but his life was a revelation of God's life. When he healed the sick, it was but showing forth the character of the great Healer. When he was lifting up those who had fallen down, he was showing forth the willingness of God to be the mighty Helper. That was the way Christ was revealing to the world the character of God. One purpose of his mission was to reveal God to the world in human flesh, that humanity might have a correct idea of the true character of God the Father.

Christ came as the outflowing of the love of God. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." It was because God loved the world that he gave Christ to die. One purpose of his mission was that he might reveal humanity God's idea concerning humanity-not simply that he might reveal God, but that he might reveal the image of God, as God intended it should be revealed in man. So Jesus Christ, the Christ of Judea, was the ideal man; he was our example of what man should be. In the beginning God said, "Let us make man in our image," and Jesus Christ was the one through whom this was carried out; for "without him was not anything made that was made." Jesus Christ was the agent of God in creating the nature of man, which he himself was afterward to bear in this world.

w. w. p.

(Concluded next week.)

March 24, 1896

The Christ of Judea - 3

W. W. Prescott

(Concluded.)

The image of God had long been lost, but Jesus Christ came, and has shown to the human family the character of the ideal man. He did not come as a full-grown man, but as a child, a young man, and a man at full age. He was in every stage of life the ideal for humanity. "Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." 1 Peter 2:21. He was the example to the world of what God intended humanity should be. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. The walking of Jesus Christ was the pattern for man's walk. Then a further purpose of Christ's mission to this world was to reveal the possibility of a life wholly dependent upon God, and yet in perfect harmony with the will of God. We are called upon to be perfect, as the Father in heaven is perfect; he also says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." But the power for perfection and holiness dwells not in man; he cannot of himself do anything, but Christ was both perfect and holy as the Son of man and the Son of God. Clothing his divinity with humanity, and taking upon himself all the conditions of fallen humanity, he was in his humanity an example to us of what it is possible for humanity to be by dependence on God.

In his work here as the man Christ Jesus, he did not avail himself of his own divine power in order to assist him to live the life of God. He might have done it for himself; but had he done so, he would not have been our example; we cannot do it; we have no divine power of our own. He voluntarily took that place of weakness with us. "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you." 2 Cor. 13:4. He took a place where he would not obtain strength in any other way than that open to us; and let it be remembered for our encouragement, that our Saviour, when he was here in the flesh, did not use any power for a righteous life which is not at our command to-day. It shows the possibility for humanity. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." John 6:57; 5:19. He voluntarily took that place where he could do nothing of himself. Why did Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, give up heaven, and come here as the Son of man, and voluntarily put himself in our place?-So that everything he gained as the Son of man might come to us. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set

186

down with my Father on his throne." And the very place at his own right hand belongs to Jesus Christ as Son of man; and as he won it as the Son of man, that same place belongs to every believer in Jesus. So Jesus Christ came here to reveal to us, in the flesh, what God's ideal for humanity is, and how it may be lived out.

What was accomplished for us by the Christ of Judea, our brother in the flesh, by his life and his death on the earth? "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the

world." John 1:29. The Christ of Judea came here to provide the sacrifice; not to appease the wrath of God, but to render stable the very foundation of his government, that God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." 1 John 3:5. He was the I AM as he says, "Before Abraham was, I am;" but it was needful that he should be manifested, in order that he might carry out God's plan, that there might be a sacrifice to take away sin. Angels could praise God; angels could do deeds for God; but only Jesus Christ the Son of God could *be* God in the flesh. So what was accomplished for us by his being here in the flesh?-A sacrifice was provided to take away the sin of the world, and this Lamb of God was also to be a substitute for us. The law having been broken, it demanded death. "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." These are the words of God. Christ came to do all this for us.

It was before any one repented that all this was worked out in the mind of God. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Whether one believes on him or not, all this was done for him just as much and just the same as though he repented. "Behold the Lamb of God which beareth [margin] the sin of the world"-not simply the sins of those who believe, but the sins of the world. So he was our substitute, as we read in Isa. 53:2-4: "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." He bore not simply the iniquities of those who believe on him, but the iniquities of us all. He bore them all, and Jesus Christ suffered and died and paid the penalty for the sins of the whole world. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 2. God took the whole world into account when he gave Christ, and he provided a sacrifice sufficient for all. Every man's sin has been atoned for. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;" "who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6. The work of Jesus Christ is for all, and if every sinner should to-day repent and accept Christ, no further provision would need to be made: for the penalty has been met, the price paid, and the ransom is sufficient for all. Nothing more could be given; nothing more need be given. He asks us simply to accept what he has done, on the conditions which he has established. Jesus Christ, the divine Saviour, can come in only when self goes out. He says, Take up thy cross, and follow me. Jesus Christ comes in when self goes out, and he takes the place of self. These are the conditions upon which he asks us to receive him.

Not only this, but he has provided for us, by his life on the earth, the righteousness which is wrought into human flesh. There is the righteousness of God,-God the Father, the eternal God, the everlasting God,-but his

righteousness, his glory, and character cannot come to our humanity directly from the divinity of God; there must be a mediator, and Jesus Christ came in his flesh and humanity, and wrought into his humanity, which is ours, the very righteousness and character of God, in order that he might present to us the righteousness which he has wrought into human flesh. "Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18. These are some of the results which were accomplished for us in the life and death of the man Christ Jesus, the Christ of Judea.

Let us add one more; and that is, by the work of the Christ of Judea in his life and death on behalf of the human family, that which otherwise would have been eternal death, is changed into sleep: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22. When Paul was preaching, he preached that there would be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. When Christ spoke to his disciples concerning Lazarus, he said, "Our friend Lazarus, sleepeth." So by the life, death, and resurrection of the man Christ Jesus, the Christ of Judea, in our flesh, that which otherwise would have been eternal death has been changed into a sleep for every son and daughter of Adam; and so all shall come forth from the grave. The work of Jesus Christ does not save us from this death, but it changes it into a sleep. At the resurrection we are rewarded according to our works, according as we have continued in Adam, or have been translated into the kingdom of Christ.

This is something of the work of Jesus of Nazareth, the man Christ Jesus in our humanity, the Christ of Judea. It is beyond the human mind to enter into it fully; but God designs that we shall enter into the experience, even though we are not able to enter into the philosophy of it. W. W. P.

April 7, 1896

The Christ for To-Day - 1

W. W. Prescott

We have already considered the Christ of Judea,-Christ in his humanity, the apostle of our profession, the one who was sent of God to this world to accomplish in his life and death here certain definite results. We found him as our brother in the flesh, having been made in all things like unto his brethren, who are partakers of flesh and blood. We will now consider the High Priest of our profession,-the Christ for to-day.

The Christ for to-day lives in heaven, that he may make effective in us all that the Christ of

218

Judea accomplished for us when he was here in the flesh. This one thought carried in the mind, meditated upon, and its meaning entered into as an experience, is enough. That is to say, Jesus Christ lived on earth to show us the pathway. Jesus Christ lives in heaven to-day, that he may be unto us the power for the pathway. Jesus Christ was the apostle of our profession, who came in our

own humanity, and lived here on the earth a life of dependence upon God, a life wholly given to God, a life wholly devoted to the work of God. He lives in heaven as High Priest of our profession, to give unto us the same blessings, the same heavenly life, the same heavenly power, that characterized his life in the flesh. It will be our present study to make as clear as possible from the word of God how we should live on the earth, through Christ who was in the flesh and is now in heaven. We have followed briefly the life of Christ until we came to his death; we wish to speak a word now of his resurrection.

Jesus Christ was here in the flesh, and lived that he might die. He came here and joined himself to our flesh, and took upon himself our mode of mortal existence for the very purpose of dying, that he might die for us. When Jesus Christ lived on the earth, he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He had the same temptation all through his life that we have,-a temptation that covers in itself all possible temptations. His temptation was, that after he had come here to live in the flesh, and to enter upon all the conditions of our fallen humanity, he should display himself rather than display wholly and only the character of God. His temptation all the time was to live by himself and not to live by the Father. He had a will all the time, and his will was set to this one thing continuously, that the Father's will should be wrought in him, and that every moment of his life should be an expression of the character of God in human flesh. The temptation brought to bear upon him was that he should express his own character in the flesh. His own character expressed would have been a divine character, but he was here as our example. Christ came to live his life in the flesh to show that it was possible by the grace of God to live in the flesh of sin, and still not reveal self. Our temptation comes under the same principle, and that is, to reveal ourselves.

Christ came to do the will of God. He says, "In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yes, thy law is within my heart." "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." These were his statements.

Now Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. It was impossible that he should be held by death, because the sting of death is sin, and as he had no sin, there was no sting in his death. He was raised from the dead to a newness of life. Now there came to him the life he had wrought out,-that perfect life, that life of victory over sin. That was the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. He ascended on high. Before his departure, he said to his disciples, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." He told them to wait for the promise of the Father. He had promised them before he left that there should be another Comforter to abide with them forever: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in

you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" John 14:16-22. Here is the answer: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Verse 23. The receiving of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was shed forth. Acts 2:33. They knew that the fulfilment of that word was granted to them on that day. By the giving of the Holy Spirit, by opening up the way for this gift to come to man, Christ opened the way for dispensing to man the heavenly life, the heavenly power, the heavenly blessing, which he lived on earth to win for us.

What we ought to be able to see clearly and simply, is just this, that what Christ wrought in his own body, when he was here in the flesh, in the way of righteousness and a life fulfilling the law of God,-the will of God,-he will to-day work again in his own body,-the church,-by the power of the Holy Spirit, by his presence in the church as the Comforter; and not only in the church as a whole, but in each individual case, for that is the way he accomplishes it in the church. Let us see this point clearly. The very character of God, which was wrought in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, is by his manifestation of the Holy Spirit to be wrought in us individually while we are here in the flesh. If there is anything to Christianity, it means a life like Christ's life. It is not simply an attempt to be like Christ; it is to live the life of the man Christ Jesus. Now all the work that Christ wrought for us as the Christ of Judea in the flesh on this earth, he wrought for the whole human family without exception, and he wrought for us without our request and without our co-operation. The ministry of Christ as High Priest of our profession is to minister this heavenly life with our co-operation. With our co-operation, by our request, Jesus Christ, by his Spirit, is to live that life over again in us. This is made possible by the fact that Jesus Christ lived in our flesh. He then united divinity and humanity in the life of the flesh, thus making it possible, and joining the human and the divine, in order that we might enter into that experience of the human and divine elements in our life. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3, 4. In Christ Jesus in the flesh there was a uniting of these two elements, the divine and the human nature, so that in every member of the human family it should be possible for this same experience to be entered upon, that there should be in every one the uniting of the divine and the human nature.

It is of no use in the power of the flesh to attempt to copy the life of Christ. Every one who has attempted it has failed, and will always fail, because the only one that can live the life of Jesus Christ is Christ himself, and the only life that can show forth the divine characteristics, the virtues and excellences, is that same life of Jesus Christ. We may talk about efforts in striving to copy the life of Christ, but no one can copy the life of Christ except Christ himself, and this is the

very heart and center of the Christian experience, to be partakers of, participators in, the divine nature which Jesus Christ has wrought into humanity. Christ was not simply given for us as a substitute, as a ransom. He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the world, and redeem us from all iniquity; but this was not all: he gave himself *to us*, "*Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.*" God gave his Son *to us*.
(*Concluded next week.*)

April 14, 1896

The Christ for To-Day - 2

W. W. Prescott

(*Continued.*)

It is a wondrous truth that to-day humanity is sitting upon the very throne of God. It is a truth in which each one has a personal interest, that Jesus Christ, having taken our humanity,-he came as Son of man,-lived, died, arose, ascended on high, and sitteth on the right hand of God as Son of man. Not that he bears in heaven our flesh of sin; he still bears our humanity, but it is our humanity glorified. It is the completion of God's ideal for humanity. He took humanity as we find it to day,-fallen, sinful. He lived in it, but he glorified that humanity, and he sitteth on the right hand of God to-day in our humanity glorified; and to-day our humanity is thus exalted of God, and having been freed from imputed sin, Christ is bearing our humanity as our brother in the flesh. God looks upon us in Christ as his completed work. Christ was here where we are, was subject to temptations, passed through the grave, was raised on high. That is God's idea of the experience of humanity. When we receive Christ in place of ourselves, we let ourselves go. Then we enter into the experience of our substitute, and God looks upon him, and sees there what we are in him, and then the work. Christ was here where we are, was subject to temptations, passed through the grave, was raised on high. That is God's idea of the experience of humanity. When we receive Christ in place of ourselves, we let ourselves go. Then we enter into the experience of our substitute, and God looks upon him, and sees there what we are in him, and then the work of Christ as our High Priest is to minister to us the power and life that will work this transformation in us. So God sees in him what he will be able to see in us when he takes us to be with him. That is Christian experience; that is the very experience that God has for every one.

Let us inquire, How is it possible for us to enter into this experience? Of what value is it to us to work for God, unless we enter into the experience as set forth? That is the only object, that we may be transformed into the life of Jesus Christ. We found that Christ came to our humanity by birth. The Scriptures emphasize the manner of his birth,-born of a woman, born of the seed of David. He was given to us by birth. And the announcement of the angels to the shepherds was, "*Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*" Now as Christ partook of our nature by birth, so we must partake of his nature by

birth. As Christ was twice born,-once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth,-so we who have been born once already in the flesh, are to have the second birth, being born again of the Spirit, in order that our experience may be the same,-the human and the divine being joined in a life union.

Salvation is not something which Christ brings to us and gives to us apart from himself. Salvation is simply Christ himself, and there is no salvation except in receiving Christ himself. We have just so much of salvation as we have of Christ. We are just so far saved as we have the Saviour, and it is by his coming in this way and dwelling in us, that we have salvation. Righteousness cannot be received apart from him; and we have just as much righteousness as we have of Christ, and no more. Unless he is the indwelling Christ, the Saviour that is in us, there is no righteousness in us. We cannot separate any of these things from Christ himself.

We must be born again. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:3-5. No one can enter the kingdom of God except he is twice born; once born of the flesh,-that which is born of the flesh is flesh,-and again born of the Spirit,-that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Let us go into the matter a little more fully, and see what it is to be born again, that we may know how to have the experience set forth here. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 16:13-17. How could the Father in heaven reveal to Peter the fact that Jesus of Nazareth, the man who that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but say Father which is in heaven." Matt. 16:13-17. How could the Father in heaven reveal to Peter the fact that Jesus of Nazareth, the man who lived, worked, walked, ate, and slept, was the Christ, the Son of the living God?-Only by the imparting to him of the divine life that dwelt in Jesus of Nazareth. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Then Peter, born again with that new life, by that very life recognized the same life in Jesus of Nazareth; and he confessed that he was the Christ, the son of the living God. This experience is just as much a real experience of a birth at it our physical birth. It makes no difference whether or not we have our birthday written down. If the graft is there, you know that the grafting has been done. If Jesus Christ dwells in the heart, he will be revealed in the life. The spiritual life is just as genuine a life as is our physical life. We may not be

able to tell how long since we were born again, but it matters not; if the life which comes with the new birth dwells in us and shows itself, that is all that is necessary. We are to enter into that experience which Jesus wrought for us and lives to minister to us. He is in heaven as our advocate, and he holds out to us his own heavenly life in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now to make possible in us the very life that Jesus Christ lived in the flesh, there must be the indwelling presence. He himself must be the power; he himself must live the life. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Here is the union of the new life, -I have been crucified with Christ; I have shared with him in his crucifixion, and I live; "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." w. w. p.
(*Concluded next week.*)

April 21, 1896

The Christ for To-Day - 3

W. W. Prescott

(*Concluded.*)

The purpose of our body of flesh is that we may express ourselves through it. We use these organs of sense in order to express ourselves one to another. Christ dwelt in a body just like ours; but instead of using that body to express himself, he simply used it to express God's self. So the words he spoke were God's words; the actions that he wrought were wrought in him by the Father; and his will was to do the Father's will, and that the Father should be expressed in him. One who is born of the flesh can express himself only; but the flesh of one who is born of the Spirit is used to express Christ. Christ by his spirit dwells in the inner life, and the organs of sense are used to give expression to his words and acts. We submit everything, that he shall express himself in our life. That is the Christian life. This life is made possible to us from the fact that that was the very life that Christ lived himself. He wrought into humanity a divine life. The life which he imparts unto us for living this life, is the resurrection life, the life of victory.

His life was the fulfilment of God's law.

249

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. 5:17. The law of God comes to us as a law which has been fulfilled in his flesh, that with our consent, by our yielding, that fulfilled law may rule in our lives, and that which was fulfilled in Christ *for* us may be fulfilled by Christ *in* us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3, 4. It was fulfilled in him, that it might be fulfilled in us. That which makes it possible for the very righteousness of the law to be fulfilled in us, is that it has already been fulfilled in

the humanity of Jesus Christ, and it comes to us as a law fulfilled in our humanity, making it possible for it to be fulfilled in us through Christ. This is the very purpose of the life of Christ.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18. Christ was the imago of God. God made man in his image. Man lost that image, but Christ came in this same flesh as ours, and he was the image of the invisible God. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." Col. 1:15. God was visible in him. We are to behold that image in humanity, and by beholding, we are to be changed into the same image. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." 2 Cor. 4:3. Now Christ is the outshining, the effulgence, of the glory of God. The gospel is the gospel of the glory of Christ, and the glory of Christ is the glory of God. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath sinned in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Verses 6-11. Christ, who is the forth-shining of God's glory, has shined forth into our hearts.

That is Christian experience. God desires that Christ's life should be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Christ came here and wrought all this in our flesh, as our substitute, as our representative, for this express purpose, and those who think that Christ's work for us was completed on earth, lose the very heart and soul of Christian experience. If Christ's work was completed for us on earth, his life was simply an example which we are to copy. But Christ's work is not completed; Christ's work is going on for us to-day in heaven, where he is ministering in our behalf. The Christ for to-day is the one who lives in us, and works in us. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12, 13. We read in the Scriptures that Christ is to be the indwelling Saviour, who lives in us to work in us the very life that he wrought when he was here in the flesh, the Christ of Judea.

To-day there is a great lack both of the teaching and the experience of this truth, and as a result, much of the professed Christianity has degenerated into that which has the form of godliness, but denies the power thereof. It makes no difference by what name we are called; unless we have the very power of God in Jesus Christ, our profession is vain; for he is the only power for godliness. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:16. If we profess that we know God, and yet in works go contrary to God, we are of that class spoken of in 2 Tim. 3:1-5: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." The whole work of Christ was just to bring this about, that the very life of Christ might be wrought in our humanity. This has always been the very heart of Christianity. Jesus Christ, the Christ of Judea, who came as the Son of man in our flesh, is to-day our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, there to appear in the presence of God for us, as our advocate to make intercession for us, and to dispense heavenly blessings to us.

This same Christ is soon to come to this earth once more,-not now as a lowly peasant, but he will come with power and great glory. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Matt. 16:27; Luke 9:26. Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him. When he comes, he comes as the Son of man. John saw one like the Son of man coming in the clouds. He comes as he went. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." John 14:1-3. This is his own prophecy. The angels told the disciples, as they watched Christ ascend into heaven, that he would so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven; and he left on record for us signs that should tell us when his coming is near. No prophetic period reaches to the coming of Christ, but it fixes the time so that we may know that he is near, even at the doors. We are in that time to-day; the coming of Jesus Christ draweth nigh, and he is coming to receive his own. When he came the first time, he came to his own, and his own received him not; but when he comes the second time, there is to be a people who are looking for him, and who shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." There will be a people watching and hoping for his return; and when he comes, they will be ready to receive him, and he will receive them. Now, in this time, he is working out by his power, his own image in those who will receive him, that when he comes he may see himself in his own people. That is why at this day this experience for us is especially to be emphasized; it must be entered upon, and everything else must be as nothing, compared with the experience of being like Jesus Christ, no matter what it costs or what the sacrifice is. Come out and be ye separate. Let this very life of Christ, the Christ of Judea, be wrought in our flesh by the power of Christ himself, that we may be transformed into his image, and be ready to hail his coming with joy. w. w. p.