

minister, accepted and borne, we draw the line at finance, and trust to persevere therein to the end.

THE HOLY GHOST.—II.

A PRACTICAL PAPER.

Much obscurity prevails in Christian minds, from defects of spiritual discernment, between the first filial movement of faith toward God, and the free spirit of loving obedience which follows it.

Christ, our Lord, is the author and finisher of faith ("without faith it is impossible to please God"), and our faith, if real and loving, is a breath of Christ's faith. The believer in Christ approaches God in the right of Christ, led by the Holy Ghost in its breathing toward God. Otherwise the Lord's standard of all prayer would not harmonize with the operations of the Trinity. It is the filial spirit engendered by the Holy Ghost which, in the right and upon the reconciliation of the accepted Son, breathes forth the Lord's prayer to "our Father." In this, the model of prayer given to His disciples, how is it that Christ makes no mention of Himself, and none of the Holy Ghost?

Because Christ, the Son, is in the heart of the believer, and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Son, in the breathing desire of the believer who utters the prayer from his heart. The first three petitions are essentially filial, dictated by reverence and obedience; the others are those of filial dependence.

The whole prayer is the breathing of the reverent obedience of faith. And that breathing is returned in the soul of the believer, by the outbreathing of the free Spirit of God establishing the believer as a son, in consciousness and in feeling, in character and in conduct. We see this in 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

When we think only of an objective Trinity it is very difficult to understand the truth conveyed in the latter part of John vii. 39; but when "the Holy Ghost" there is understood to mean the holy breathing imparted to His disciples by the risen and glorified Saviour, the statement is not only reconcilable with other Scriptures, but assists us to comprehend the significance of apparently con-

flicting passages. The literal translation there is—"for there was not yet a holy breathing, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

Afterward, between His resurrection and His ascension (John xx. 22), our Lord breathed on His disciples, and said to them, "Receive ye a holy breathing." The verb is in the imperative mood, and proves that our Lord then communicated what He breathed into them; but the words (pnēmā hāgion), translated "Holy Ghost," are not the identical expression which is used for the Holy Ghost (tō pnēmā tō hāgion) when the third person, the Spirit of the Godhead, is indicated; as in John xiv. 26, and in Acts i. 16, x. 48, xi. 15, xiii. 2, 4.

It is surely most important to know what our Lord did then (John xx. 22) communicate to His disciples consistently with His own further declaration in Acts i. 8, that they should "receive power after that the Holy Ghost (expressed here with the Greek article) was come upon them." Whatever was then given (John xx. 22) led them to await obediently in Jerusalem for "the promise of the Father," which they afterward received at Pentecost.

The accepted "Son of man," justified in Spirit, and "declared to be the Son of God with power by resurrection from the dead," breathed His own filial obedient spirit into the spirits of His disciples, that they might thereafter approach God with the breathing of sons—loyal and devoted. The filial spirit was infused by Christ, the Son, before His ascension, and it is a holy spirit, a holy breathing "according to the Spirit of holiness," (Romans i. 4) attested by His resurrection.

But the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of godly power, which Christ is said to have received from the Father (Acts ii. 33) after His ascension, Christ poured out on the day of Pentecost. This same effusion of His own Divine Spirit (and God is Spirit), in Acts ii. 17, God is quoted from Joel as promising to pour out upon all flesh in the last days.

Is this Spirit ever granted except to the obedience of faith? Does not the filial spirit of child-like confidence invariably precede the reception of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind?

"Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

"And we are His witnesses of these things and