

Meditations on the Lord's Supper

MEDITATION No. 7.

The Promises of the Holy Spirit.

READ ST. JOHN 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13, 14.

In these verses we have seven distinct promises regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Let us meditate on them consecutively and try to grasp the meaning of each for us.

1. "He shall be in you." In our last meditation we considered this promise in relation to the Old Dispensation. To-day let us focus our thoughts on the fact—God the Holy Spirit is in me. The thought is so awe-inspiring that it is hard to proceed. How have we treated the Heavenly Guest? Have we forgotten Him times without number? Have we defiled His dwelling place by sin, by selfishness, by temper, by disobedience? If a Royal guest came to stay in our home should we not make his comfort, his desire, his will the supreme thought? But when God the Holy Ghost has come to dwell in our hearts, to go with us in the daily round of duties and pleasures, have we not forgotten Him too often? Shall we not, then, claim by faith a fresh cleansing of our hearts by the Blood of Jesus Christ? Shall we not make a fresh dedication of ourselves to His Service? Shall we not accept by faith a fresh outpouring of Himself into all our lives?

2. "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." (14:26.) These two promises can be treated as one. Every teacher knows the need of review, of reminding his pupils of old truths, of explaining new ones. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher. The theme of His teaching is what Jesus Christ has said to us. Our part is surely to read again and again the words of Jesus Christ and to ponder them in prayer that God the Holy Ghost will unfold and explain them and remind us of them day by day according to our need.

3. "He shall testify of Me." (15:26.) The indwelling Spirit will bear witness to Jesus Christ. It is many years ago that He lived on earth. But His Life can be manifested in our lives by the Holy Spirit. Do we not need this to-day that Believers everywhere should testify to the reality of Jesus Christ by the Spirit working in their lives, and showing by their conduct that they have something which the world has not?

4-7, Chap. 16:13, 14.

4. "He will guide you into all truth."

5. "He shall not speak of Himself. Whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak."

6. "He will show you things to come."

7. "He shall glorify Me."

These are days of doubt and uncertainty. Old truths are challenged, old ideas are revised. New ideas are being propagated. The world holds its parliaments of religions and puts everything into the melting pot of enquiry. But the believer need never exclaim with Pilate, What is truth? The Holy Ghost will guide us to all truth, and these truths will be the things of Christ taken from the presence of God Himself. The counsels of God overheard, as it were, by God the Holy Ghost and revealed to us showing us things to come and glorifying Christ in it all. The Holy Spirit is not given to us to make us puffed up, but to glorify Christ.

* * *

"Let us be quiet. In quietness there is strength. Many a life is distressed and distracted because its owner does not take time to get himself quiet.

From Week to Week

Spectator's Discussion of Topics of Interest to Churchmen.

An astonished world has held its breath in utter amazement at President Wilson's astounding message to the belligerent nations at a critical moment of the most vitally fateful war of history. With a special rattle of sabres, our arch enemy shouted upon the housetops of Europe his willingness to discuss peace with his beaten and benighted adversaries. He intimated that peace could only be bestowed upon the blood-stained countries of the earth through his gracious and victorious personality. Before the trembling and terror-stricken governments of the Entente Allies had time to frame an answer to this grand purveyor of bounty to a grateful world, the head of the great American republic leaps unbidden into the discussion. He practically demands that to him shall be made an explicit statement of the objects for which the war is pursued. He intimates that all belligerents are on exactly the same footing in his mind and in the minds of all neutrals. The word of one is as good as that of another. The motive of one is just as high and worthy as that of another. They are all striving for the same great ends. All desirous of protecting the weak, living in peace with their neighbours, securing peace for the future. But American interests are now disturbed. They shall have to be safeguarded in the future. Is this an intimation that American interests no longer hinge upon war since war contracts are being withdrawn? Has ever before such a bald, unadorned statement of national selfishness prefaced a State document of such moment as is found in the last note of President Wilson? He speaks of himself as a friend "whose concern for its (the war's) early conclusion arises out of a manifest necessity to determine how best to safeguard those interests if the war is to continue." Has the United States of America been over-run by a blood-thirsty enemy? Have its women and old men been bayoneted on the public streets and children hewed to death before the eyes of their parents? Have American citizens been carried into slavery to prepare munitions to slay their brothers; or take up arms against their fellow citizens? Then why speak of "an intolerable position" when there isn't an official word on behalf of the tortured, bleeding, broken citizens of Belgium, Serbia and Poland? And who are fighting to save these down-trodden victims of brutal savagery? Is it Germany? Is it Germany's allies? Who has endeavoured to preserve the humanities of war and rob it of its bestial ferocity? Is it Germany or Germany's allies? Why, then, this grouping of all belligerents in one class as though all were doing the same thing and right and wrong were equally divided between them? If a nation hasn't the courage to say which side is in the wrong or which is in the right, then in the name of high heaven let it refrain from lumping all together in equal approval and disapproval.

This extraordinary note will stand out among the countless notes of a president that wields an unusually active pen, as among the most inopportune, most clumsily expressed in thought and word, most barren in vision of a nation's duty, most calculated to produce disturbance when its aims are peace that have ever issued from the hand of a man in high position.

* * * *

The timidity of the Revisers of the Prayer Book is shown in their failure to give us a distinctive name for the Canadian Church. By common consent we are calling our Church the

Anglican Church of Canada and on the principle laid down in the new preface of confirming what is in general use it would be an easy and a natural step to have taken. Two years' official and experimental use of such a name would have settled the question without much difficulty.

The next manifestation of weakness and uncertainty on the part of the revisers is shown in the retention in our Canadian book of the "Ornaments Rubric." A few years ago Spectator pointed out that the translation of that rubric from the English to the Canadian Prayer Book would undoubtedly give official authority to the plain interpretation of the words as set down therein, without the shadow of a reason for the gloss that is now advanced for proving that the rubric means exactly the reverse of what it sets forth. In that case, all our churches, cathedrals and college chapels would have to at once introduce chasubles, candles, crosses, etc., such as were in use in the second year of King Edward the Sixth, or stand clearly convicted of disobedience. It is evident that this point was seized by the revision committee and in order to preserve the *statu quo* position on this subject, the Act of Uniformity of the first year of Queen Elizabeth has been incorporated in our new Prayer Book also. The freedom of the Anglican Church in Canada to enact its own ecclesiastical rules of worship presumably enables the Church to give effect to this act as a guide to our Canadian forms of worship. The above act says that the ornaments referred to shall be in use "until other order shall be therein taken." No other order so far as we can see, is taken in this book, so they must stand. There are many features of the Act that make weird reading for Canadians if it really is to be taken as the law of the Church. For example, for the third conviction for any act of disrespect, "speaking anything in derogation, depraving or despising of the same Book," "shall forfeit to our sovereign Lady the Queen all his Goods and Chattels and shall suffer imprisonment during his life!" That is pretty strong legislation and yet we suppose that if one portion of that Act is to be recognized as valid, all stands in the same position of authority. Of course, nobody means anything of the sort. There is no intention of insisting upon absolute uniformity of use in our churches either from one side or the other, then why not admit it and cease this comedy? The thing manifestly to do is what the Church in Ireland and the Church in the United States have done, and that is to delete the ornaments rubric and the Act of Uniformity and leave to the Bishops, clergy and laity to use such "ornaments" as may be found edifying and expedient under differing circumstances.

"SPECTATOR."

* * *

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

(Continued from page 827.)

selves Christians; or else apply ourselves with all diligence to such a drastic search for the spiritual Treasure, the Pearl of Great Price, as will be rewarded by success. The man or the Church who possesses a vital experience of the Christ is inevitably missionary. The man who lacks this experience does not yet know what Christianity is.

* * *

Growth in grace means thankful acceptance of whatever comes to us in order of divine providence and increasing adaptation to the duties that belong to all our relations with our Lord and one another. This definition points the way for that growth that is gracious and endless.