

"But I have heard many folks say," remarked Samuel, "that we feed upon Christ when we read about Him, and think about Him."

"So have I," answered Fletcher, but I never found any words in the Bible about feeding on Him, except those that speak of the Holy Communion. Folks are so apt to think, it seems to me, that our Lord used words only to puzzle us. If He had meant what you say, then why did He not say, 'The Bread that I will give is My Word, or the Bread that I will give is My Spirit, or the Bread that I will give is a feeling of pardon and acceptance?' But He did not say so. He said, 'the Bread that I will give is My Flesh.' And it seems to me that 'My Flesh' is only one part of Christ, and that if He did not mean that we are to feed on Him, but only to fix our thoughts on Him, He would have spoken of His whole self, not of His Flesh only."

"Well, no words can speak plain-er," I remarked.

"And you just read what the Jews said next," said Fletcher.

I had my Bible open, and I read, "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?'"

"And so many a one says now. 'How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?' say they. They won't believe that Christ really, though in a spiritual manner, offers us His Body, because they say, 'How can it be?' But we are never told we must understand," continued the old man, "only believe."

"It's faith that's wanting then, not knowledge," said I.

"Notice too," said Fletcher, "that when the Jews asked, 'How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?' our

Lord did not answer them by saying, 'I only mean a meditation on me,'—no, He went on to say, 'Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and *drink His Blood*, ye have no life in you.' He adds now that we must drink His Blood, so how can He be talking of anything but that Eucharist, that Feast of Thanksgiving, which He was going presently to ordain, in which He gives His Blood as well as His Body."

"I see," said Samuel, "that it is a wonderful gift indeed which is offered to us in Holy Communion. And such a gift must do a wonderful deal of good, I suppose, to those who receive it."

"Wonderful good, indeed," answered our old friend. "It gives eternal life to both soul and body, 'I will raise thee up at the last day.' By it Christ dwells in us, and we in Him, 'He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him; can there possibly be a closer union with Christ than that?'"

"How if an impenitent sinner were to go to Holy Communion in the midst of his sin," asked I, "or an unbeliever who refuses to discern the Lord's Body?"

"Then of course he receives none of these benefits, and does himself infinite harm. No one has ever said that Christ could dwell in such."

"I wonder," said I, "if any of these Jews believed what our Lord said."

"I think not, for even many of His disciples said it was a hard saying, and they could not bear it."

"And did our Lord explain it to them in any other way then?"

"No, He only impressed on them still more the great mystery of this