

as it has ever been, and as it ever will be, our object shall be just to shew one thing, that the love of Jesus can never be fully known—that it “passeth all understanding.” And, dear brethren, the more I consider this subject, the more it overpowers me. Suppose I take a dim taper light, and go into a large room that is quite dark; I hold it above my head, and it only serves to shew me the darkness of the room. Now, suppose, passing into a larger room, I increase the light, say, a thousand-fold, into a mighty burning blaze, shining amid the gloom; does not that increased circle of light shew me an increased circle of darkness around it! It is so with us this evening; we may light the torch and go forth into the darkness of this mystery, and see more of it than we ever saw—and find that there is more of it that we cannot see, than there ever was before.—Not all the dawning light of that eternity which shall presently shine around me, can light up all the depth of this mystery—not all the light of that day, when the world burns as a red beacon, shedding a fiery glow far and wide over the great universe, shall shew me all the breadth of this mystery—yea, not all the glory of heaven, which shall shine in concentrated splendour upon its altar for evermore, shall rise high enough, or reach far enough to fill this measureless Temple of Mystery! The love of Christ is a mystery to all but God, and will be so, I believe, through all eternity. Be not surprised then at Paul's prayer: but, oh, make it your own, say from your heart—Oh, may I “know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge!”

In speaking upon this precious and blessed subject, I shall try to shew you seven views of it.

1. You never can fully know the *cause* of the love of Christ. 2. You never can fully know the *beginning* of the love of Christ. 3. You never can fully know the *greatness* of the love of Christ. 4. You never can fully know the *tenderness* of the love of Christ. 5. You never can fully know the *immutability* of the love of Christ. 6. You never can fully know the *value* of the love of Christ. 7. You never can fully know the *end* of the love of Christ.

In its cause, its beginning, its greatness, its tenderness, its immutability, its value, and its end, it “passeth knowledge.”

1. Now, what was its *cause*? There are some of you, I dare say, thoughtful persons. You may leave this sanctuary, then and shut yourselves up in your studies, and meditate upon Christ's love, in order to discover its cause, and all in vain. You may then turn away baffled, from the exercise of your own ingenuity, to books written by uninspired men, and search every work in every language, and not find the secret. You may then turn to the Word of God; and you may, I believe, search every book, and every chapter, and every page, and every verso, and every line, and every word, and every syllable, and every letter from the first chapter and word in Genesis to the last chapter and word in Revelation, without discovering it.

Now, consider, for a few moments. We know that the Lord Jesus Christ loves what is holy; therefore, if we were holy, He would have loved us for that reason.—Now, is this the the cause? Does He love us because we are holy? I ask you, Is a man who is blind with sin, deaf with sin, dumb with sin, crippled with sin, cursed with sin, dying with sin, and ready to be damned with sin—is such a one holy!—Such then are we; and yet He loved us! Oh, why?

Christ knew that Paul would be born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and yet He loved him. Christ knew that he would help the murderers of His blessed martyr, Stephen, and yet He loved him. Christ knew that he would make havoc of the Church, and breathe out threatenings and slaughter against His saints, and drag strong men and helpless women to prison, and all for His name's sake—and yet He loved him. Paul could say of Him, “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Now, we often love others because they love us; love in them to us begets love in us to them. Now, have we discovered here the cause of Christ's love to us?—Or, in plainer language, did He love us because we first loved Him? We are compelled to reverse this order; the Scripture says—“We love Him because He first loved us.”

Perhaps some of you say the cause of Christ's love to us is this.—He is our father, and it is natural in Him to love us. What do you mean: our father by nature, or our