

*WHEREWITH.*

WE can learn something of God from His works around us, and from the study of our ourselves. But we feel that all we can thus know falls very far short of the truth of what He is who has made us and the world we live in. Words that come to us from God tell us more clearly and fully of Him with whom we have to do. They help to throw light on what is often hard to understand, shewing us, at least in part, the meaning and aim of God's ways. What we can learn of God's holiness and the knowledge of right and wrong which is ours by nature, might guide us, more or less fully and clearly, how to live so as to please God. But we are thankful for the laws which tell us what He wills, and how we ought to live before Him. If His word did not teach us, much of our duty, in the doing of which we gain much blessing, would not be thought of.

So it is with worship. We feel that God should be thanked and praised. There is that in us which seeks to draw near to Him who makes so great a claim on us. And there is that in us which bids us be careful how we come. We want to bring the right offering in the right way. We dare not take for granted that anything will do for God, and that we can lay it before Him anyhow. If God did not guide us in this matter we should be right to do our best, trusting that He would forgive our mistakes and accept us. But we are not left thus to feel after God, and to think out for ourselves a way of coming to Him. In the days of the Jewish Church all was laid down with great fullness; so that His people knew how to act in

all their times of drawing near. Christ has not left us in our ignorance to use ways of our own. We are told how to be made His at first, and how to keep up our union with Him. We are told how to bring our prayers and praises so that we may have sure faith that they are heard. We are unthankful and presumptuous if we fail to use teaching which God gives. If we neglect His rule and follow our own will, we have no more right than Cain or Saul to hope that our offering will have any worth.

Christ teaches us plainly, if He teaches us anything plainly, that Baptism is the way of coming to be born of water and the Spirit, and so to enter into the church, the kingdom of God. Why He chose this way, and how this way leads to the end, we do not know; nor does it matter whether we do or not. All we know is that if we seek His gifts in the way in which He tells us, we shall find that He is true to His word, and to those who in trust obey Him.

Again, He teaches us in His own words and those of His Apostles, that in some way which He knows, we dwell in Him and He dwells in us, by our "eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood." He tells us also that what we receive in the holy Communion is His Body and Blood. It ought not to be too hard for our faith to take this as true and act on it. We are foolish if we think we can understand everything, or if we ask God to make us know all that He knows about what He gives to help us. Our part is to draw near for God's gifts, as He pleases; His part is to bestow what He bids us come for, as He pleases.

Christ teaches us, moreover, that our hope in prayer, and in all the