

THE Portrait of Christ, as sketched by John, would not be complete without a reference to the *Vital Relationship* that exists between Him and His people. A word of explanation as to the exact meaning of this term may be in order.

"Vital" is simply a Latin word, meaning "living". A relationship between two things is said to be "vital" when their separation causes the death of at least one of these things. For instance, though parent and child are very closely related, yet the relationship is not vital. Their separation does not necessarily mean the death of either. The relationship of husband and wife is very intimate. Yet it is not so intimate as a vital relationship; for their separation does not destroy the life of either. The hand, however, is vitally related to the body. Their separation cuts the cord of life of the hand, and it becomes dead. The relationship between a vine and its branches is vital. The branch depends for its very life upon its connection with the vine.

In the Bible, God is frequently described as our Father, thereby expressing one idea of the relationship between Himself and His people, His children. Again God is described as the Husband of His bride, the Church. Isaiah says, "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee". (Is. 62:5). And in the Book of Revela-