

but very wonderful. The first is, "Go to my brethren." He is not ashamed to call them brethren, but we do not read of any one who presumed to call Him "brother." First He called them *servants*, John 12, 26, then *disciples*, John 15, 8, next *friends*, John 15, 15. Now He calls them brethren. And yet all these brethren had but just forsaken Him. How undeserved and immeasurable is this condescension. But the message implies His infinite dignity. He says, "My Father and your Father," not *our* Father—"My God and your God," not *our* God. God was *His* Father essentially—*ours* not so; *our* God essentially—*His* not so. His God only in connection with us—*our* God only in connection with Him (Brown's Com. on John).

SECOND SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *Jesus and Thomas*, John 20: 21-31.

The Resurrection of Christ was an event so important that it had to be confirmed by the very strongest evidence. Such evidence Christ furnished His disciples during the forty days that elapsed between the Resurrection and the Ascension, so that every shadow of doubt was removed. He appeared to them time and again, talked with them, ate before them, &c. The reluctance of the disciples to accept the testimony from heresy and their demand to see for themselves have been overruled for good. This was especially so in the case of Thomas. He was unreasonable in rejecting the testimony of his fellow disciples, and in refusing to believe unless he not only should see Christ, but should see and *feel* the scars of the nails and spear. Yet this unbelief has accomplished good. If Thomas was convinced, none now can doubt.

V. 24.—This appearance of Christ was on the evening of the first day of the week—the Christian Sabbath. (See v. 19.) Why Thomas was absent we know not. Some think it was through sullen despondency. The fact of the absence is stated "as a loving apology for his slowness of belief." He missed much however by that absence. Let us learn to prize every opportunity of getting spiritual benefit.

V. 25.—Thomas's language is very strong. He does not say, *If I see I will believe*; but, *I will not believe unless I see*. This disciple was inclined to look at the dark side. (See 11 ch., 16 v.)

V. 26, 27.—*After eight days, i. e.*, on the eighth day, the second Sabbath of the New Dispensation. By Christ's thus appearing again on the recurrence of His Resurrection Day, He would give it a special sanctity. *Peace be unto you*. The same salutation as he used at his first appearance to them (v. 19). This was no meaningless greeting. The fact of the Resurrection was the basis truth. How kind in Christ not to upbraid the doubting disciple! "The bruised reed He will not break." Yet He would show

him that he was wrong in doubting. (He purposely uses Thomas's words; and the, "Be not faithless, &c.," was after all a reproof, however gentle.)

V. 28.—Thomas was thoroughly convinced—convinced, it would seem, without the touch; for Christ (v. 29) says, "Because thou has *seen* Me thou hast believed." This was a noble confession. At one bound Thomas reached high ground. My *Lord* and my *God*. Jesus, then, in the estimation of His disciples, was no more man who died because he could not help himself, but *Lord* and *God*. "He is overpowered, and the glory of Christ now breaks upon him in a flood. His exclamation surpasses all that had yet been uttered, nor can it be surpassed by any thing that ever will be uttered in earth or heaven." The Socinian, to get rid of the proof which these words afford of the Divinity of Christ, says that Thomas merely called upon God in a fit of astonishment—thus making him a profane "wearer!" Away with such a horrible thought!

V. 29.—Christ shows here that the evidence of the senses is not necessary to beget faith—*testimony* should be accepted. Blessed are they who have accepted the testimony of the Scriptures, and who believe that Christ rose for their justification.

V. 31.—This is the key note of John's Gospel. His grand object in the selection he makes from Christ's words and works is to show that Christ came from God, that He is divine, that He was sent to save sinners, and that whosoever believes in Him shall be saved.

LESSONS.

(1.) How thankful we should all be for the full record of the proof of the Resurrection of Christ. Had there been any lack in the evidence we might ever have been in doubt. But there is no lack. We can confidently say, *Christ is risen*.

(2.) Let us love the Sabbath which commemorates the Resurrection. As often as it returns may we think of the Resurrection and the grand doctrines which it involves.

(3.) Learn how unreasonable it is to demand the evidence of the senses for every thing we are asked to believe. We have never *seen* Christ, and yet if we accept not the evidence the Bible gives of His person, character, work, death, resurrection and ascension, we sin in shutting our eyes against the light.

(4.) We can be saved only by believing in Christ.

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*Jesus and Peter*, John 21: 15-22. Golden Text, John 21: 17.

The disciples had according to Christ's command left Judea and gone to Galilee. And there by the lake side, the old, familiar spot, with boats and all other appliances for fishing at hand, Peter is tempted to resume his former occupation. "I go a fishing"—is his word to his companions. And