

Joy and rest that come from communion at the mercy seat and you have made him dead to the world. Temptation has lost its power over him, he has the Divine Orpheus within. We cannot by our entreaties draw the members of our churches upward, we cannot scold them into a higher life, but we can reveal to them what the High Priest of our confession has done for them, as He has passed "within the veil," and opened the way into the very presence of God.

(c) Still more, He has entered on our behalf. "Whether the Forerunner even Jesus is for us entered," etc. Aaron clad in white, once a year passed through the outer court, in through the holy place, and then entered within the veil. He went into the presence of God, not for himself alone, but as the representative of the children of Israel. He went within to the mercy seat to bring the people with all their needs, their sins and sorrows to God, and to bring God in all His fullness and strength to them. Now listen to Paul as he speaks in triumphant tones of the High Priest of our profession, "For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands—the type of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf," (9:24). We may well emphasize the words "for us" or "on our behalf." We readily accept of the fact that Christ stood in our place at the cross, but do we as firmly grasp the truth that He now stands for us in all His love and might "within the veil?" Do we as firmly believe that He ministers for us in the heavenly sanctuary, and that He is ever presenting the merit of His atoning work on our behalf? Paul says, "We have such a High Priest, a minister of the true sanctuary, which the Lord pitched and not man." Many are ready to say we believe Christ as the world's High Priest is on the throne, but what is that to us struggling down here with sin and temptation and trials? They do not see the vital connection between Christ's presence within the veil, and their weak and unstable lives. But the apostle proclaims to these Hebrews the glorious fact, that all Christ is and all He does before the face of God is on their behalf. Hear him in that beautiful benediction at the close of this epistle, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep," etc. He is our Lord Jesus "within the veil." I well remember when the Holy Spirit made that truth live anew to me. I saw it as I never did before—Christ my High Priest appearing in the presence of God for me. His very presence, with the marks of Calvary on Him, meets my every need, and answers every demand against me. Is He "crowned with glory and honor" at the Father's right hand? He wears that crown on your behalf my brother, and as you, in your weakness and discouragement, look up to Him, He points to that crown and says, "I have conquered sin and death for you, I am Lord of all, draw on Me for all you need—this crown that I wear is the guarantee that you too shall tread sin and self under your feet, and sit with me on my throne." So the apostle hopefully exclaims, "We see not yet all things put under man, but we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor," and that is the pledge of man's triumph, and man's exaltation. Christ "within the veil" is more than our pattern, He is our power as well. He lives to make us like Himself. He is our Redeemer at the cross, He is none the less ours as He appears before the face of God in heaven. There is power in that truth, brethren, to break the chains that binds us earthward—power to fill the struggling soul with hope and give dominion over evil within and without.

(d) Now see for a moment the only way the high priest could ever pass within the veil. We read, "Not without blood." Call to remembrance the great day of Atonement, see the high priest with a vessel of blood in his hands as he leaves the altar of sacrifice. As he passes through the holy place the golden altar of incense is sprinkled with blood, and as he lifts the veil and passes into the most Holy place, he must needs sprinkle the mercy seat seven times with blood. The nearer he comes to God, the more the blood is seen. The way from the altar of burnt offering to the Shekinah—symbol of God's presence—was marked with blood. So we read of our great High Priest, "Neither by the blood of calves and of goats but by His own blood, He entered in once into the Holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." As those who follow our Forerunner we enter in the same way. Christ's blood is the only passport into the presence of God. So Paul sums up the doctrinal section of this letter in these words: "Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near," etc. The bleeding Lamb of Calvary is the only basis of our access to God, and of all true worship. I love to think of the way to God being stained with blood. That blood has a tongue, and it pleads with an omnipotence that cannot be resisted on behalf of sinners: If we want to eliminate salvation by blood, or the "Theology of the Shambles" so called from our preaching and our creed, we must steer clear of the epistle to the Hebrews, for the great apostle magnifies and exalts the blood in the eyes of these Christians. It has been truly said "That the blood is to the gospel what the vowels to our language." Strike out the vowels and you can speak no word of comfort, you can sing no hymn of praise. Take away the blood and you can utter no word of pardon to the guilty, no word of hope to the despairing. We may be content with Christ as our Great Teacher, our Example, our Divine Philosopher, when we feel ourselves to be Pharaonic sinners—"fifty pence debtors,"—but when we feel the poison of sin in every vein, when we feel its defilement in every fiber of our being, when we get a vision of ourselves as Job and Isaiah did, then it is our hearts cry out for a Priest, with a vessel of blood in His hands from the altar of sacrifice. Well may we sing,

Thou dying Lamb thy precious blood,
- Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God,
Are saved to sin no more."

Or again,

"Thy blood" dear Jesus thine alone,
Hath sovereign virtue to atone;
Here will we rest our only plea,
When we approach great God to thee."

(3) Let us consider Him now as the Priest who has sat down on the throne. To impress this truth upon the hearts of his readers, the apostle repeats this fact at different stages of his argument. That was a new sight,—that the high priest should sit and minister in the sanctu-

ary. Under the old covenant the priest was ever standing and ministering at the altar: That the High Priest of our confession has sat down proclaims the fact of a perfected redemption. He is a Priest for ever after a new order—that of Melchisedek. "For the law maketh men high priests who have infirmity, but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son who is perfected for evermore." The offering of Himself then was a final sacrifice, and final because a perfect one. Under the Mosaic dispensation the work of the high priest was never finished, for every sacrifice was stamped with imperfection. But the perfect victim has at last come. "But this man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of the Father." He will not rise till all His enemies be made His footstool. Look up then brethren and behold the attitude of your High Priest before the face of God. Not another sin to be expiated, not another drop of blood to be poured out, not another groan to be uttered, not another tear to be shed, all is finished, your salvation is secured, your peace purchased, your ultimate triumph is assured. The Lamb of Calvary is seated on the throne.

(4) But more, our High Priest is seated at the right hand of God. This speaks to us of His complete acceptance, and of our acceptance in Him. When Christ Jesus went back to the throne from Olivet, and took His seat at God's right hand, He did so, no longer as the Eternal Son of God, but as the sinner's Substitute and Surety, as man's High Priest. Has God accepted of Him who died in the sinner's place, and who has gone into heaven as the sinner's Intercessor? Then He has equally accepted of the man who says, "I take Christ as my Substitute and my Priest." You are thus with Him, my brother, and as much accepted as He. When the Jewish worshipper of old put his hand on the head of the lamb and said, I take this lamb as my sin-offering and substitute, henceforth he and the lamb were looked upon as one, and what was done to the lamb, as though it were done to him. It is ever so with the Lamb of God and the man who lays his hand by faith on His head. Has God accepted of Christ, and placed Him at His right hand? Then if you trust Him, you are likewise there at God's right hand. Believers are one with Christ in His death, but none the less in His resurrection and ascension to the throne. As every believer in the mind of God was somewhere sheltered in His side on the cross, so now is every one hidden in Him as He has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God," (Col. 3:2, R. V.) This hope-inspiring truth is very clearly set forth in the epistle to the Ephesians, "God has raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together in the heavens." These verbs express a definite, past act. It is not that we hope one day, to rise, and sit with Christ, but that even now, in God's thought and purpose, we are there with our great High Priest.

Was not God teaching His chosen people this wondrous truth by type and symbol, when Aaron stood before the Mercy Seat, under the wings of the Cherubim, in the Holy of Holies? For we read, "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate upon his heart, and upon his shoulders, when he goes into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually." The names of all the tribes of Israel glistened in precious stones on his breast and on his shoulders. The breastplate and the Ephod, on which the names were engraven, were an essential part of his dress. He must not come into the presence of God without them. They were a very part of him. Thus the high priest, and the people with him stood accepted in the symbolical presence of God, but the High Priest of the new covenant, and the redeemed with Him, stand accepted in the immediate presence of God in heaven.

"So near, so very near to God,
Nearer we cannot be,
For in the person of His Son,
We are as near as He."

Is it any wonder that the apostle exclaims, "Seeing then we have a great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession?" Here is a truth to nourish our faith, to invigorate hope, to establish the wavering steps, and put new power into the whole spiritual man. Such a High Priest, appearing before the face of God on our behalf, in the power of an endless life, calls for a heavenly walk on earth.

Let us ask in closing—

III. What should be our attitude toward this High Priest? The Holy Spirit speaking through the apostle gives the answer, "Wherefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the High Priest of our confession." It is not enough to have such a High Priest, we must needs consider Him. Attentively behold Him, concentrate your thoughts on Him, study Him as the original word suggests. Consider Him as the astronomer studies the heavens, and gazes patiently and fixedly into the blue vault above him.

We want today in our churches more steadfast Christians, Christians as Drummond has said, of a "higher type." Now is it not possible for us to work along wrong lines to bring about the desired end? There is much said and written these days about the Holy Spirit—about the Baptism of the Spirit, about His indwelling, and His endowment with power for service. We need clear and Scriptural views on this subject, and I do not wish for a moment to seem to minimize the need or the work of the Holy Spirit. True, this is the dispensation of the Spirit, but for that very reason it is a dispensation in which Jesus the Son of God must be exalted. For we must remember that it is the work of the Holy Spirit "to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us." He speaks not of Himself, but of our risen Lord. The Holy Spirit can only strengthen and enrich the life, as He reveals Christ at Calvary, and on the throne in His Priestly ministry. Do we want a more unwavering faith, more abiding peace, a deeper fellowship, a more triumphant life, then we want to know more of Christ "in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The Holy Spirit brings power and rest to the soul by making Christ a blessed reality to us. The Spirit is the telescope which reveals the glory of the crucified and ascended Redeemer.

But if we do not see and know Christ in the completeness and fullness of His work for us,—if we only know Him on the cross, and not in all His might and sympathy

and love "within the veil"—then the Spirit can only reveal to us a half Christ. But you and I must needs see a full-orbed Redeemer.

If, in our conception of truth, Christ is only a little twinkling star, then the Holy Spirit can only give us a small measure of light and joy, but if, on the other hand, in our view of divine truth, He is like yonder sun, then the Christ the Holy Spirit makes real to us will bring abundance of light, of warmth and of strength to our lives. We see then the great need of the study of the doctrines of the word, that we may "grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Is it not quite possible then to day, to lay so much emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit,—to so turn the thoughts of Christians inward, and to set them watching their hearts to see if the Spirit is there in power, that they grow weak rather than strong, and walk in darkness rather than in the light? And why? Because they have turned their eyes away from Christ—the light of the world. It is as though an astronomer, night after night should sit in his observatory, and pollish the great lenses of his telescope, and peer into it with much earnestness, and yet never turn the instrument upward to the sky, when worlds of wondrous beauty are waiting to reveal themselves.

It is the upward look, it is the prayerful contemplation of the High Priest of our confession that is emphasized in our text. The apostle throughout this whole epistle proclaims to these wavering Christians, that if they would hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of their hope firm unto the end, if they would run with patience the race set before them, they must look off unto Jesus—they must see him as he has entered within the veil as their Forerunner and has sat down on the throne. This outward, upward look is absolutely essential for growth in holiness, and for a strong and overcoming life. An old Christian monk used to say to Martin Luther, "Do you want to know what God thinks of you? Then look at the wounds of Christ." We want more looking to the objective side of Christ's redemptive work. One great need of the church today is to see with clearer vision the High Priest of their profession—what He is to them and what they to Him. And when we get this view of Christ, we will not need the spur to lead us to holier lives or enlarged liberality, but as plants brought from the darkness and cold of the cellar, into the light and the warmth of the sun, burst spontaneously into bloom and beauty, so will we with hearts warmed and cheered by this clearer vision of Christ gladly open our whole being to Him and "present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service."

Prayer's Life-Giving Power.

Prayer is a breath of fresh air,—much else, of course, but certainly this. Must a man working under water come to the surface to breathe, or have the diver's supply of upper air? As surely must we who breathe the exhalations of evil, the germs of sin, the floating dust and decay of society. "Shut thy door" on smoke and soot and fog as often as may be, and on the hilltops with Christ take deep breaths of "ample ether and diviner air." Such inspiration will send you with shining face into the world. But we can not be there always, nor most of us long. What then? We can "look up," can breathe for a moment the breath of aspiration or trust, penitence or praise, and find another atmosphere about us, tho surrounded by infection, and new power to do or bear, tho fagged and almost faithless a moment before. Isaiah speaks of the Promised One as "drawing his breath in the fear of the Lord." By the purity and peace and changeless love of his unbroken communion with the Father may we be summoned to mix more and more "vital breath" with mortal, till no inhalation of worldly air can infect our thought, chill our love, or rob us the voice of melody.—Sunday School Times.

How Christ Makes Something of Us.

An English preacher used the following illustration: "Once there was a brier growing in a ditch and there came along a gardener with his spade. As he dug round it, and lifted it out the brier said to itself, 'What is he doing that for? Doesn't he know that I am only an old worthless brier?' But the gardener took it into the garden and planted it amid his flowers, while the brier said, 'What a mistake he has made, planting an old brier like myself among such rose trees as these!' But the gardener came once more with his keen-edged knife, made a slit in the brier, and, as we say in England, 'budded' it with a rose, and by and by when summer came, lovely roses were blooming on that old brier. Then the gardener said, 'Your beauty is not due to that which came out, but to that which I put into you.'"

This is just what Christ is doing all the time with poor human lives. They seem to be of no use, with no hope that they will ever be of use. Then Christ takes them in hand, pours his love upon them, lifts them up out of the dust, puts something of his own life into them, and by and by they begin to be like him, little branches of his own beautiful life.—Ex.

McClure's Magazine for September opens with a poem on the Dreyfus affair by Edwin Markham which proves that the mark reached by Mr. Markham in "The Man with the Hoe" was not beyond his reaching again. It is truly a high and noble strain which he strikes here, exhibiting in apt, strong, rhythmic phrase the inner, universal import of the most singular episode of recent history. Following this comes a character sketch of Admiral Sampson, by Ray Stannard Baker, giving many interesting incidents and anecdotes of the Admiral's life as boy and young man in his home town of Palmyra, New York, and estimates and reminiscences of him by his associates in the navy. It is illustrated with a series of portraits of Sampson and various other pictures. The S. S. McClure Co., 141-155 East 25th Street, New York City.