

THE INDWELLING CHRIST.

Some Bible Hints.

For Christ to dwell in us means that much else must not dwell in us—whatever would displace Christ (Col. 3: 8).

If we would receive the Christ, we must first receive the Bible through the Spirit, who will take these things of Christ and show them to us (Col. 3: 16).

There is no such thing as an indwelling Christ without an out-welling Christ (Col. 2: 6).

Whatever you lack, whatever with a godly mind you want, you will find in Christ as certainly as you find oxygen in fresh air (Col. 2: 10).

Suggestive Thoughts.

This one thought, fully apprehended and followed out, would make a perfect Christian: I must make my life fit for the indwelling of Christ.

If Christ lives in us, we shall be pleasant for others to live with.

Let us make our hearts not only places where Christ will endure to live, but places where He will delight to live.

Do not try to understand how we can dwell in Christ and He in us. Live each truth out, and you will readily understand it.

A Few Illustrations.

No king will remain in a house where he is not the chief guest. And Christ is the King of kings.

Some guests are a constraint upon the household, but Christ in our hearts introduces us to ourselves and to one another.

We have "company behaviour" and "home manners." Christ recognizes only the latter.

Where heat is, there cold cannot dwell; where you would have Christ, you must banish sin.

To Think About.

Am I waiting for Christ to force Himself into my life, or am I inviting Him in?

Am I harboring any sin which would keep Christ out of my life?

Is Christ all to me that He should be?

A Cluster of Quotations.

Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee In closer, dearer company.—Gladden. Familiar, condescending, patient, free, Come not to sojourn, but abide with me. —H. F. Lyte.

In the secret of His presence you may every moment hide.—Goreh.

Open the door with shame, if ye have sinned;

If ye be sorry, open it with sighs.

—Jean Ingelow.

Endeavors Out-of-Doors.

In summer (or spring or fall) it is a beautiful custom to hold an occasional prayer meeting out of doors. A sunrise or sunset meeting on a hilltop is especially impressive.

Our societies do not as often as they should hold their socials outdoors, with outdoor games.

Some societies have organized Endeavor cycle clubs, that travel off (on week-days) on their wheels, and hold evangelistic services in neglected places.

Christian Endeavor flower gardens have been made in many places to furnish all the flowers needed for the church.

An Endeavor field-day might be held once a year, with a series of athletic contests carefully planned and carried out with spirit. Fix it for some patriotic holiday.

Christian Endeavor walking clubs will strengthen the body, develop delightful companionships, and bring the society into all the most beautiful and interesting spots of the community.

Get some bird student to take the society on a bird walk, or some geologist or botanist to lead a scientific excursion, or some astronomer to take the society out under the stars to learn the constellations.

DAILY READINGS.

M., July 3. "Hid with Christ." Col. 3: 1-4.  
T., July 4. By obedience. John 15: 9-16.  
W., July 5. One with Him. John 17: 22-26.  
T., July 6. His temples. 1 Cor. 6: 15-20.  
F., July 7. Dead to the law. Gal. 2: 19-21.  
S., July 8. Abiding in Him. 1 John 2: 6, 24-28.  
Sun., July 9. Topic—The indwelling Christ. Col. 2: 6-10; 3: 8-16.

HEAVEN.

That there is one is an almost universal belief; but it would be very difficult to write in the compass of an editorial a fair presentation of the forms the belief takes in the minds of men and women. We confess we have no idea of heaven that we could put into coherent words. We take the word of Jesus as an absolute truth and rest in it, and work away untroubled. "I go to prepare a place for you," he said. That is enough. It will be well prepared. He did nothing here on earth by halves; and he will not in heaven, of course.

Various persons have had ideas of heaven that they have expressed in concrete way. But they are inadequate. Paul knew better than to try. He said it was not lawful to utter what he saw when caught up into the third heaven. Whether there is a first heaven and a second heaven through which he went to reach the "third," he does not tell. But he was very confident that he was to go to receive his crown of life: "I have fought; I have finished; I have kept," he writes, and therefore "there is laid up for me a crown." Coronation seems to be Paul's idea: he was to be one of Christ's kings; and "fighting" "finishing," "keeping" were his title to that coronation. John had a vision of heaven. He did try to write it, but we doubt if he knew the meaning of all he wrote, and we are sure we do not know. He said he saw a Lion which looked like a slain Lamb, and where there is probably sublime spiritual truth in that phraseology, it yet defies explanation to the ordinary unspiritual mind: for lions and lambs have no resemblance to each other.

Painters of the medieval school loved to paint heaven, but their heavens were Dutch, or Spanish, or Italian, according to the nationality of the brush wielder, and they were very earthly heavens too. Poets have sung about it: they do better, for real poem is or pretends to be anything more than the flights of imagination, or the heavings of emotion. Preachers have tried to wake human desire by word pictures, or by appeals out of surcharged hearts, but in spite of all, we are left without a conception of what it is, or an idea of where it is.

And yet how do we try to express it. How we long to concrete the unconcrete. We call it a place. We call it a thing. We say of things, these will be in heaven; these will not be in heaven, and we ask each other will there be Bibles in heaven, and we write "Gates Ajar" books, and do many like things. But the conceptions are born of our own human limitations, wants, desires, or ambitions.

Has a longing for luxury, ease, comfort, elegance, and wealth, after hard earthly life, taken possession of us? We will go about singing the song of the Sable Children of Expectation of a Southern plantation. "Dem golden slippers, I'm gwine fer to wear, Oh, Sinners, fare ye well." How strange ideas are. We sang a song in our Sunday-school days which must have been written by some one who slept under the attic roof, with unshunted rafters, out on some mountain road where the winds shook the structure, and rafters and shakings were wrought into his soul: for he wrote,

"Oh, golden hereafter, whose every bright rafter

Shall shake with the thunder of sanctified song."

We wish we had kept a clipping-book of oddities and endites about heaven. It would make the most grotesque, picturesque, and impossible presentation of this

subject that has ever been seen. We have kept some: not in a clipping-book of paper pages, but in a clipping-book of memory. And here is one from a sermon by a plantation preacher in the days "befo' de wah," who closed a fervid harangue about heaven with the following peculiar eloquence:

"My brotuhahs, heaven is lak a lake of m'lases; lake a lake of m'lases, my brotuhahs, wid a islan' in de middle; wid a frittah tree a-growin' on de islan', wid de branches spreadin' wide; an' dey hang down low, to de surface of de lake, all roun' de islan'. An' we pote sinners on de sho' of sin; an' de boat of salvation on de sho': an' de oahs of faith in de boat, an' we git in de boat, an' we grab de oahs, an' we pull away in de gospel boat, away, over de lake o' m'lases twel we come to de frittah tree: an' my brotuhahs, yo' rach up yo' han', an', my sestahs, yo' reach up yo' han', an' you pull off de frittah, an' yo' dip it in de m'lases, an' yo' eat forevah an' forevah—m'lases and frittahs, frittahs and m'lases, forevah and forevah! Sing, brotuhahs, sing, sestahs —Swing low, sweet chariot, gwine for to carry me home."

We seem to hear the song die away in the distance. The pathos of that checks the laugh which the fantastic thought awakes. But if we do not laugh we remember, and the preacher's conception comes back to us again and again. What a heaven! Sweet heaven; sticky heaven; sweet and sticky heaven; heaven of an appetite: heaven of a soul that has not risen above that which belongs only to the animal side of life. And we think, we realize that here is the sadness of it all. We concrete the unconcrete.

We find ourselves facing the fact that in all literature and history the idea of heaven that rises above the material, or at least above the level of the dominant influence in life is the rare exception. There is a Persian heaven, and a Hindoo heaven, and a Moslem heaven. The American Indian thought of happy hunting-grounds: the American negro says, "I am willing to die today, for tomorrow I will be white;" and the weary sons of toil think there's a time not far away, when "in the sweet by and by they shall rest on that beautiful shore." Always heaven means something in connection with personal desire. Said a child in our own childhood's home many a year ago, "Won't I be glad to go to heaven! Then I shan't have to wash dishes any more." That tells the story. Have we not struck a string whose high harmonic answers out of your soul, reader? We cannot answer for you, but we can for ourselves: don't tell any one, but we confess to you there is a little "frittah tree" growin' on an islan', and there is a little lake of m'lases" in our own soul. Is there not in yours? Just a little one. And while you are thinking whether there is or not, let the melody of a beautiful song which the dear old New England Quaker sang sink into your ears:

"I know not where His islands lift

Their fronded palms in air;

I only know I cannot drift

Beyond his love and care:"

For beloved, those islands are better than "frittah tree" islands, and "His love and care" must be heaven.—R. S. H. in Philadelphia Westminster.

He who goes to school to Christ will not want for an honorable diploma.

If you desire heaven you must win it; for heaven is a temper, not a place. . . . You must win it by that obedience to God's laws which nothing but the grace of Christ can enable you to render.—Archdeacon Farrar.

Cultivating the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, patience, temperance—which are the different departments of the kingdom, is the most needed work in the world.—Mary M.A. Lullie.