

according to the delight of God's nature, for that is in Christ. It is fellowship with this, or restoration to it, which is the character of our approach to God, as simply enjoying it in the new nature ; it is not in contrast with evil, it is not forgiveness of what is past, sweet as that is in its place. I have, for faith—and shall have, in fact—entirely done with the nature which sinned, and the whole state of existence in which flesh moved. I exist only in the new creation. Hence the apostle says he did not even know Christ after the flesh any more. It is the joy of the new man in the presence and blessedness and glory of God.

The brazen altar is righteousness too, and divine righteousness, but in its claims on man's nature, not in the revelation of its own. Here the blood was sprinkled by which the sinner approaches God, and this will be the standing of Israel. How many of God's children remain here in fact ! How little have they boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus ! They remain outside, and hope, when the time comes, they will pass in judgment, and have a share in glory. They are in Egypt, looking to the blood to keep the holy Judge out ; not in the wilderness redeemed out of the bondage they were in and passed the Red Sea. They do look to the blood as that which is the ground of their hope against judgment, but they have no thought of having been crucified with Christ, and risen. They hope in Christ, as in fear of the righteousness of God, instead of in a new nature and life as risen with Christ, enjoying God as in the Spirit, and not in the flesh. One thing we must remember : that even there, where we enter into the full blessedness of God's presence, the Lamb that was slain will be the Object in whose perfection we have learnt that blessedness.