

LIKE CHRIST IN HIS USE OF SCRIPTURE.

FROM A WORK BY THE REV. ANDREW MURRAY, ENTITLED, "LIKE CHRIST."

"That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."—*Luke xxiv. 44.*

What the Lord Jesus accomplished here on earth as man He owed greatly to His use of the Scriptures. He found in them the way marked in which He had to walk, the food and the strength on which He could work, the weapon by which He could overcome every enemy. The Scriptures were indeed indispensable to Him through all His life and passion: from beginning to end His life was the fulfilment of what had been written of Him in the volume of the Book.

It is scarcely necessary to adduce proofs of this. In the temptation in the wilderness it was by His "*It is written*" that He conquered Satan. In His conflicts with the Pharisees he continually appealed to the Word: "*What saith the Scripture?*" "*Have ye not read?*" "*Is it not written?*" In His intercourse with His disciples it was always from the Scriptures that He proved the certainty and necessity of his sufferings and resurrection: "*How otherwise can the Scriptures be fulfilled?*" And in His intercourse with His Father in His last sufferings, it is in the words of Scripture that He pours out the complaint of being forsaken, and then again commends His Spirit into the Father's hands. All this has a very deep meaning. He was Himself the Living Word. He had the Spirit without measure. If ever any one, He could have done without the Written Word. And yet we see that it is everything to Him. More than any one else He thus shows us that the *Life of God in human flesh and the Word of God in human speech* are inseparably connected. Jesus would not have been what He was, could not have done what He did, had He not yielded Himself step by step to be led and sustained by the Word of God.

Let us try and understand what this teaches us. The Word of God is more than once called Seed; it is the Seed of the Divine Life. We know what seed is. It is that wonderful organism in which the life, the invisible essence of a plant or tree, is so concentrated and embodied that it can be taken away and made available to impart the life of the tree elsewhere. This use may be twofold. As fruit we eat it, for instance, in the corn that gives us bread; and the life of the plant becomes our nourishment and our life. Or we sow it, and the life of the plant reproduces and multiplies itself. In both aspects the Word of God is Seed.

True life is found only in God. But that life cannot be imparted to us unless set before us in some shape in which we know and apprehend it. It is in the Word of God that the invisible divine life takes shape, and brings itself within our reach, and becomes communicable. The life, the thoughts, the sentiments, the power of God, are embodied in His words. And it is only through His Word that the life of God can really enter into us. His Word is the Seed of the heavenly life.

As the Bread of Life we eat it, we feed upon it. In eating our daily bread, the body takes in the nourishment which visible nature, the sun and the earth, prepared for us in the seed-corn. We assimilate it, and it becomes our very own, part of ourselves, it is our life. In feeding upon the Word of God, the powers of the heavenly life enter into us, and become our very own; we assimilate them, they become a part of ourselves, the life of our life.

Or we use the seed to plant. The words of God are sown in our heart. They have a divine power of reproduction and multiplication. The very life that is in them, the divine thought, or disposition, or powers that each of them contains, takes root in the believing heart and grows up; and the very thing of which the Word was the expression is produced within us. The words of God are the seeds of the fulness of the divine life.