

# LECTURE ON JOHN XVII.

*Delivered by J. N. D., at Halifax, July 28th, 1869.*

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**I** NOTICE first in this chapter that there is responsibility, but of an entirely new order; a responsibility which is connected with Christ, and which He has discharged; "I have glorified thee on the earth," "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." A responsibility which in righteousness towards God, and in grace to us, has put us into the same place as Himself. The Word has come down to us; and words have been brought, and we have believed them, and have known surely, as Jesus said, "that I came out from God."

If we think of what was previously given by Moses—the Law—it was but the measure of man, come down to the earth, and which claimed from man what he ought to be. A perfect rule for man. It was connected necessarily with responsibility, but the responsibility of the creature, and in which he failed; God was hidden behind it—He not coming to man, nor man to Him. But under it he fails. Then because of this breakdown, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," but came in when this need was thus made plain. Man failed in Paradise, and failed out of Paradise. He failed upon the question of righteousness by law; and rejected Christ come in grace. If we look at Jew or Gentile, we see Christ taking up *this* responsibility too before God, and putting away sin for us, by the sacrifice of Himself. He dies and closes up the whole scene in which that responsibility was. All is summed up in the words of Jesus, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Another thing is stated in this chapter, "I have glorified thee on the earth." He came into the world

not only as a man, but as the heir of promises ; and they rejected Him in whom these promises were, as the promised seed. But He has secured the *promises* by the cross ; and also laid the foundation for all the purposes of God in His death and resurrection. He who came with all the promises of God in His hand was rejected and killed. Salvation on God's part is the answer to this wickedness on man's. It was not merely that man was a sinner, but all that God would do for a sinner was refused—"Last of all he sent his Son." My soul and conscience are cleared by the very blood which was the proof of my sin and guilt. The purpose which was before the world can now be brought out, for righteousness has come in, and Christ as *man* has got a place in the glory of God, because He deserves it ! This is the righteous foundation of the purposes of God ; and He is there too in a work done for us.

In this ascended Lord we see the power of a life which has triumphed over death, and all the testimony that now comes to us comes from thence. The Son is there, and there as a *man* in righteousness, according to God's own nature. But God is not merely glorified in righteousness ; but the Father, in love ! "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self." The Father's name is the spring of eternal life to us in the Son ; and the Son as *man* has brought it in, and we have received it. It is not what Jehovah had given to the Messiah, but what the Father has given to the Son. "These things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." He has given the words to us that the Father gave to Him. These are the privileges that belong to us as believers.

The first three gospels present Christ to be received by man ; but in John's the people are called out by grace ; it begins with His rejection—and they are separated from the world, and brought into this place of possession also. "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them," this is the full grace of Christ. The Father's words communicated to Christ are to bring us into every place which belongs to Christ.

This is the revelation of God's heavenly thoughts through His Son, where there can be nothing of responsibility as to man, as when under law—though man is treated by the gospel as a sinner, and needing grace. Christ is the revelation of what a perfect man is, and what every thing in the world is to God. We are not of it.

When we look at Christ's person, what do we see? The Father in His Son! For it was the revelation of the Father in Christ. The disciples said, "*Show us the Father.*" The expression of the Father was the living Christ. It was a revelation in the way suited to man as he was down here; for it was seen in the man who tabernacled with us, that we might associate our hearts with the Father as His was.

"The glory thou has given me I have given them;" again, "The love wherewith thou lovest me." Every thing which He is and has in Himself He brings us into; except, of course, what is essential to His eternal Sonship. The words, the life, the glory, the love, with all the blessedness He has, and, what is not so pleasant to us, separation from the world. But it is a portion with Himself now and hereafter. Moreover, He puts us in His own place of testimony to the world. He was of God in the midst of the world, and always *Himself* the revelation of God. And this is what a Christian is likewise.

"Sanctify them through thy truth." The word of God comes down (not like the law) and brings *to my heart* the measure and character of what Christ is. The truth, His word, which tells what God is, tells me what I ought to be as a child of the Father. Till God is revealed, how can I tell what I ought to be?—but grace and truth tell *me* what the Father is—what the world is: this is Cain's city. What is the telegraph to a man when he is going out of the world by death? But there is something more—"for their sakes I sanctify myself." Not simply a word come down, but a *man* gone up! Now I get where righteousness takes us, entirely separated from sinners, and gone into the place

where my affections are fixed on Him. He is the model man in glory, and I must purify myself by the hope of being with Him, as He is pure. The work is perfectly accomplished which makes me meet for the same place. The Holy Ghost takes these things and shows them to us. God hath revealed them to us by the Spirit, according to the purpose of God up there. The truth comes down through the rent veil to us, but I get the glory of the man gone up, and who for our sakes has sanctified Himself.

Another thing is, we should think of His glory and happiness. He expects us to be interested in Him ; " If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I go unto the Father." So entirely are we one with Him, and He one with us. He brings the love of God, wherewith He is loved, into the heart. The Christian is made up from this Christ. The eye that is upon Him sees God's path even through this world. The responsible man has failed, but the man of purpose was in love and grace below, and is now in righteousness and glory above.

The difficulty is to get a path through the world when all is wrong, and I have got it—got it in Christ. He has met and cleared the sins, and we have put off the old man, and got into the place of the second man, in perfect acceptance with God.

Our responsibility now is to manifest Him in our mortal body. " Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," was His character, and this is ours. We shall find our short-comings, no doubt ; but perfect grace has given us a place with Christ every where, and this must be held in spite of all failure. In truth, it is the recovering power of grace. The Lord gives us to believe in His love—that He has " sanctified Himself for our sakes ;" and He expects our hearts to meet and answer His own—blessed place and portion ! He sees in us morally, even now, the fruit of the travail of His soul.

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