

thought that, if we believe, God's anger with the soul which He has made will not continue to the end. And, on the other hand, it implies the helpful warning that we should not poison the soul by continuance in sin, but that we should favor it, and spare it, and shield it from corrupting influences, because it belongs to God on the ground that He has made it. The confession that God created man after his own image does not exhaust the fulness of the thought in hand. The plummet goes far deeper. The saving and uplifting power of this confession is only felt when each morning is begun anew with the vivid realization of the inspiring thought that the soul in us is a work of art, made by the High and Holy One, on which his Honor hangs, over which therefore He watches with holy jealousy; and that we can not ruin it by sin except as we commit crime against that, to which God sustains the peculiar relation of being its Author and Maker.

Thus "The souls which I have made" does not say anything more, save that we should realize that we are the children of God; but it states it in a more gripping way. It declares that he who by sin denies his heavenly Father, violates God's honor and grieves the Fatherheart.

3

"RICH IN GOD."

Jesus has appreciated the grave character of the struggle in life between God and money. It may be said that this struggle is even more violent in Western lands than in the East, where he preached and went about doing good, because

there the common necessities of life are more easily procured than here. The large part which money plays in life is too generally ignored. Aside from wealth and love of simplicity, life unfolds differently when there is a free hand financially than when hard work for sheer sustenance of self and family must fill the hours of day. The concentration of every effort upon making money may soon degenerate into sinful passion, whereby the money-slave ignores all sense of honor; although by itself it is natural and free from blame that utmost pains are taken to improve financial conditions. Only think of how much there is at stake in this matter, as regards the education of the young, our own moral and spiritual development, and the cause of God's kingdom in the earth.

Money is a great power, and in times of pressing needs the lack of it renders one painfully helpless. Wherefore the influence of money upon an unconverted heart can not be estimated. When even godly people are caught at times in the snares of money, what must be its banal force with those who, though they know of more ideal aims, have never made a definite choice of God and of his Christ. Money and Satan mingle freely in such minds, and this opens the way for mammon. And though at first it may be tried to keep money and mammon apart, the endeavor soon proves futile. Money is a power in hand. But before we know it, it soon becomes a power over us; a power that rules over us and draws us away ever farther and farther from high and noble interests and makes slaves of us in the service of mammon. Jesus foresaw all this. He fathomed the disgrace and the shame of it. And

moved with compassion for this gilded slavery he called the people that flocked to hear him, from money back to God.

This sharp antithesis alone should inspire us to resist the tyranny of money. When we are truly servants of God, money will be a servant to us. When, on the other hand, we seek protection in our own strength from the baneful influence of money, and from its strong temptation, we meet with dismal failure. Deeming that we are our own master, we find that the power of money lords it over us. Jesus therefore puts the two kinds of riches in contrast with each other: riches in money and riches in God. Not that one excludes the other. If we are rich in God, it is nothing against us to be rich in worldly goods. For then we will be well aware of the fact that we are but stewards of the Almighty, and money will serve both us and God. If we are rich in God and poor in earthly possessions, we will be satisfied and happy with the higher riches of the soul. But if a man is poor in God, worldly wealth is but vain and hollow mockery. Material riches and sensual pleasures do not ennoble and refine the soul. Moreover at death they fall away, if not before, and leave the soul empty and shorn. It is harder still to be both poor in God and in worldly goods. This provides nothing for the enlargement of life; nothing to sustain and hold one up. It brings bitter discontent alone, which feeds upon the vitals and robs existence, heavily freighted with carping care, of its latest possible charm.

To understand what constitutes riches in God, imagine for a moment that all your earthly riches had taken wings, and that bereft of all you had,

you are forgotten by those who once knew you. In this utter forsakenness of soul ask yourself: What have I left? What do I now possess? This will be our state in the hour of death. We will go into eternity alone. What will we take with us? We must leave money and houses behind. We must part even from our body. There will be nothing to us but the soul, our spiritual self. Shall we be rich then? If so, it can only be in spiritual goods. When we die we are either rich in God or poor in God. It will not do, therefore, to defer searching self-examination. When I am alone with my soul, what have I; what is there of me? Does my money impart to me my worth as a man, or am I something myself? Are there treasures stored up in my heart? Apart from all material interests has my personal self any significance worthy of mark in God's sight, or am I actually nothing?

Let us not deceive ourselves. Apart from coveteousness it is quite possible to enlarge one's intellectual equipment, to cultivate the aesthetic nature, and to excel in cleverness and in achievement. All this has worth of its own, and is not acquired apart from God. But it belongs to the life of this world, and loses its significance the moment life on earth fails us. There remains of it only so much as has imparted a higher and nobler bent to our person, and has established and broadened our character and our spiritual powers, and thereby has become our property, which can not be taken from us by either catastrophe or death.

And without more, even this will not do. Personality that is well developed, character that is firmly established, inner strength of spirit and of

will-power can be of use to us only when we can apply them to good and noble ends. Satan is the most strongly developed personality conceivable. Any one can train himself in sin. Hence the question remains: Have we developed the traits of character, and powers of personality, which are in harmony with the life of eternal blessedness? If not, at death, they will be of no use to us. Hell is full of strongly developed characters and cultivated talents. But they afford no pleasure, but rather add pain to pain, because it all goes without God, and increases no riches in him. Like sets of fine sharp tools by themselves, they are utterly useless. Thus the heart can only speak of possessions, when such powers and capacities have been so trained that they will permit admittance into heaven, will make us feel at home there, and will enable us to exert heavenly influences there.

These heavenly properties are never acquired save through fellowship with God. From God as the Source, the powers of the Kingdom must operate in us that will entitle us to heavenly citizenship. In Christ we must be reconciled to God. The Father must come and dwell with us. For then the new life will be quickened in us, which draws its nourishment from heaven and imparts higher powers, and fills the soul with all the fullness of God. Thus to be rich in God is to own God himself; to be a temple of the Holy Ghost; to carry Him, the Holy and Glorious One, in the heart wherever we go; and every evening and every morning to be refreshed in the inner man at the fountain of the Water of Life.

Many obstacles prevent the full enjoyment of these blessings here. But this is the privilege of

being rich in God, that the more we become detached from the world, the richer we become in God. And when at last the world shall fade from sight, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of these riches will unfold itself to our eyes. For this heavenly wealth will not waste, but ever increase in glory. It will be interest upon interest always in the very holiest sense. It will evermore be the Fountain and never again the cistern. It will be treasures that shall always exceed our boldest expectations, because they are centered in the Infinite.

In addition to all this, according to the Scripture, there is the inheritance of the saints in light. The difference between these two is determined by the difference between the inner and the outward life. The riches in God have to do with the inner life of the soul—already here in part, and presently to be revealed in full. To this inner life belongs an outward state. We do not have this here. It only comes with the division of the inheritance which is stored for us in heaven; even the inheritance of glory, the companionship of the saints made perfect, and of all the holy angels. The life in the palace of God's everlasting Light. The fruition in glory such as here has never entered the heart. No more sin. No more sorrow. Eternally in Christ with God in fullest, largest satisfaction of what in its noblest flush of anticipation the heart can expect or desire.

Rich in God, and therefore rich through God. O, how deeply have we fallen that these riches in God attract so few hearts; and that they who have won these heavenly possessions still hunger at

times for the things that wean the soul from God and must needs impoverish it.

4

“IN THE COVERT OF THY WINGS.”

The profoundest question that governs true piety relates to personal fellowship with God. In the Psalms, which are the most beautiful utterances of a devout mind, this Divine fellowship is ever longed for and sought after. The tie is there mentioned that binds us to God as the Creator and Supporter of all things. The relation is there stated, which he who fears the Lord sustains by faith to the Holy One. But these are not fellowship with the Eternal. He who fears the Lord does not rest until he has entered into such conscious fellowship with Him that there is mutual knowledge between the two. Even the clear sense that God knows him and that he knows God.

What we call friendly intercourse among men, intimate fellowship, sympathy of heart with heart in faithfulness and love, is the meaning of Ps. 25:14: “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.” As close friends on earth go through life together and reveal themselves to each other, and in this intimate walk become the confidants of each other’s secrets, so it is told of the Old Testament heroes of the faith that “they walked with God.” And although these are but figures and terms that are borrowed from human experiences, and although we ought not to use them ourselves when we would speak of our fellowship with God except