

"THE BODY IS NOT ONE MEMBER,  
BUT MANY."

Christ is your King. He has been anointed King not merely over Zion, the mountain of his holiness; not merely King, after the earthly Zion had been profaned, over God's kingdom in the earth. No, Christ is also King over the persons who are subject unto him. Our personal relation to Christ can not be expressed in a single word. It is many-sided. When we think of the guilt of sin, which threatens doom, Christ is our Reconciler. When we seek safety with Christ against the power of sin and of temptation, he is not our Reconciler, but our Redeemer. Or when we look to Christ for direction and guidance in the labyrinth of life, the selfsame Savior is not our Reconciler, not our Redeemer, but our Shepherd, who has gone before us in the way, and has left us an example.

But even this does not exhaust our many-sided relation to our Savior. For that self-same Christ is also our glorified Head with the Father, the Lord before whom our knee must bend, and whom our tongue must confess; and therefore the King who has incorporated us with his people; whose subjects we have become; and in whose palace we shall once be expected. The honorary title of King is even so little accidental, that the great plea on Golgotha is at length fought out under it, and at the bar of Pilate the conflict between the Emperor of Rome and the Anointed One of God concentrated itself in the struggle for the honor of Kingship. As announced to John

the Divine, in Revelation, the Lamb is not alone our Reconciler and Surety, not alone our Redeemer and Savior, and not alone the Shepherd and Bishop of our soul. No, the Lamb of God—and in this antithesis you feel what strikes and irritates—the Lamb of God is also Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev. 17:14). The Lamb with the crown is the exalted, the holy combination of self-effacement and dominion.

Your King! But in what sense? Is earthly kingship here the real, the actual, and is the kingly image of the earthly prince applied to the Savior, merely by way of comparison, by which to express his power and honor? Christ your King! Does this title of honor merely serve to have you think of Christ, as in a distant hamlet the man behind the plow thinks of his sovereign in the royal residence? This is to him a secret and mysterious power, expressed in the image on a coin, but for the rest it is a power which remains foreign to him, a power far off, of whose splendor and lustre, of whose glory and pomp, he can form no faint idea, but which he honors from afar. A sovereign in the glorious palace, but who is unapproachable by him, to whom he pays tribute because he is his subject, and for whom, if he is pious, he intercedes in his daily prayer.

And truly, there is likeness here. Christ also is enthroned in a palace of glory, even in such a palace, that all royal pomp on earth pales before the splendor of its greatness. The subject of Jesus also sacrifices for his king his child in Divine service, his money in the labor of love, his strength in what must be done in behalf of his kingdom. This King also has his throne afar off, and here

on earth the King of God's kingdom can not be seen. But with this the likeness ends. That Christ is your king is as a figure of speech, so little derived from earthly princes that on the contrary the kings in the earth are only image-bearers of his glory, and that true, real, actual kingship is never realized in a prince on earth, but is known in Christ alone.

Head, Lord and King are but three rays of the selfsame glory. Head points to the inner relationship and sodality of your life, existence and inner being, with the life, existence and being of your Savior. Lord expresses that Christ owns you, that you are his property, that you belong to him, that he has redeemed you from the power of Satan, and that he has bought you with his blood. And only in this two-fold relation, because he is your Head and Lord, he is also your King, who has taken you up into his Kingdom, incorporated you with his people, made you sharer in his lot, and rules you by his royal law of life. You are his subject, but only because thereby you are a member of the body of which he is the head.

This seems at first hearing an enigmatical union, but it is one which beautifully explains itself when that body, and in it the significance of the head, and what under the head every member is, is clearly understood. Imagine man, to take a perfect instance, as in paradise he came forth from the hand of God. The clean, pure, beautiful body, and in that body the several members, in which it revealed itself, and its noble head, with the fullness of facial expression, with the fine, expressive features, with the animation that uttered itself in them. Thus only can we have

the image before us of the body of Christ, of the members in that body, and over all these members, the glorious Head.

The image here, however, is not merely the human body. Body in this connection rather indicates in a broader sense what we more commonly call an organism, even in the sense in which an animal also is an organism, and the plant an organism, and as we apply the figure of a body or of an organism to all sorts of association of man with man. Thus we speak of a corporation (which is nothing else than a body) signifying thereby all sorts of unions, societies and confederations that are formed. So we say that the family has an organic existence. So we speak of the body of the state, and of the body of the people. And for this reason, and in this connection, we call him who directs such a corporation, the head of such a corporation, or the head of the body of the state. It is even the rule to call those who belong to such a society or body, members of the society, or members of the church. To become a member of a nation, is to become incorporated in that nation.

And this is the figure of speech which the holy apostle applies to Christ and his people. The organism of the plant also renders service here. Did not Jesus say: "I am the true vine, and ye are the branches?" And does not St. Paul speak of having become one plant with Jesus? It is always the one effort, to make it tangible and clear, that Jesus' Kingship is no external dominion over us from without, but that before we become subjects of Jesus, we are linked into his life, and that with the thread of life itself, if we may so

express it, we are bound to him; so that it is one blood of life that circulates in him and in us; and that it is one spirit of life that animates us and him unto life. Yea, that as little as the head can be moved from one place into another, but the foot, the hand, the eye and the ear go with it—so also every vital movement of our King of itself stirs also in us, and puts us into motion with him. Thus Christ is our King, because of itself and of necessity the members follow the body, and the body goes wherever the head directs it.

### “LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY.”

If the temper of the soul were harmonious, you would never feel nearer unto God than in prayer, and in prayer you would never be far away from God. To pray and not be near unto God, rightly interpreted, is impossible. And yet what prayer is not made each day in every city and village, yes, we may say in every house, again and again in which the soul never for a moment comes under the overwhelming impression of standing before the face of God. Sin weakens our inner life in all sorts of ways. Hence the mainspring of the life of the soul can not properly operate as we should ardently wish it might. Then we feel that we can not pray. Yet we do not want to neglect prayer. So we fold our hands and stammer our petitions. But when the Amen has been said, we feel discouraged by the lack of elevation and inspiration that has marred our devotions.

Apart from leading others in prayer, every one must and can pray, and yet to pray well is an