

XX.

God the Holy Spirit the Love which Dwells in the Heart.

"It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments." — *Psalm cxxxiii. 2.*

522

The fact that love can radiate within man does not insure him the possession of true and real Love, unless, according to His eternal counsel, God is pleased to enter into *personal* fellowship with him. So long as man knows Him only from afar and not near, God is a stranger to him. He may admire His Love, have a faint sense of it, be pleasantly affected by it, and even rejoice to see others drink from its Fountain, yet never come a step nearer to it. In God's hand he may be the means of showing others the way to it, without knowing it by personal experience.

The true Love is one with and inseparable from God. It may radiate its brightness even in the animal, but Love itself can not enter the heart except God come first. And God's elect have the royal privilege of calling this gift their own. All their wealth and treasure consist in the fact that from the hand of their Lord they have received this gold tried in the fire.

Not, however, as tho this love, wholly possessing them, shall henceforth be of all their actions the only impulse. From St. Paul we learn that, while the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, much evil may be found among us; wherefore we are admonished to exercise patience and self-denial. But tho, like faith, Love may be in the germ and nothing be visible on the surface, in the warm soil, germ-like, it may swell, sprout, and strike out its roots in the ground. Hence, however defective and incomplete its form, Love itself dwells in our hearts; and by our own experience we are conscious of it. Who of God's children does not recall the blessed moments when this Love fell upon the soul as mild dew drops upon the thirsty leaf, filling him with a felicity unknown heretofore? This blessed experience was heavenly and supernatural. The soul actually felt the everlasting arms underneath, and acknowledged that God is good and essentially Love. It is true the divine Majesty as it were consumed the soul, but at the same time it uplifted and glorified it. The soul realized that it was surrounded by Love, uplifted above the low plain of vanity, and, more blessed still, that it had received power to embrace God with the arms of its own love. It is true this does not last. The evening star of hope is followed again and again by the dawn of the common, every-day life; but by that experience we have seen the heavens opened, the sign of Eternal Love descending, and, heard the music of its voice saying: "*Behold your God.*"

523

Hence these *two* must always go together: (1) Love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and (2) the glad tidings that our God has come to us. And these are one and the same, for, as we have seen before, when the Eternal One comes to dwell with man, it is not the Father, nor the Son, but the *Holy Spirit* whose office is to enter into man's spirit and

to establish the most intimate relation between him and God. The Father and the Son will also come to dwell with him; the Son is even said to stand at the door and knock waiting to be admitted; but both, Father and Son do this through the Holy Spirit. These three are One: the Holy Spirit is in the creation, but only through His essential union with the Father and the Son. He is also in the redemptive work, for He is bound to the pleasure of the Father and the Incarnation of the Son. In like manner both the Father and the Son dwell in the saints, but only through the Holy Spirit.

If witnessing of the Holy Spirit were only momentary, if He came to tarry only for a night, the blessed work of Love could not be wrought. And if He had to leave the saints in one part of the world to visit others in other parts, it would be altogether out of the question. But He is God, unlimited: in my closet He abides with me just as really as with thousands in all parts of the earth at the same time; and not only with the saints below, but in a higher sense in all the redeemed already arrived in the heavenly Jerusalem. As the sun shines brightly into your chamber, while it radiates light and heat upon millions in distant lands, so is the operation of the Holy Spirit not local and limited, but divinely omnipresent in you and me, tho neither knows the other's face nor yet has heard his name.

For the Holy Spirit does not dwell in our hearts as we dwell in our house, independent of it, walking through it, shortly to leave it; but He so inheres in and cleaves to us that, tho we were thrown into the hottest crucible, He and we could not be separated. The fiercest fire could not dissolve the union. Even the body is called the temple of the Holy Spirit; and tho at death He may leave it at least in part, to bring it again in greater glory in the resurrection, yet as far as our inward man is concerned, He never departs from us. In that sense He abides with us forever.

Distressed and overwhelmed by the sense of guilt and shame, we may cry with David: "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me!" ([Psalm li. 11](#)) but His indwelling in our souls can not be destroyed. An ancient temple was remarkable for the fact that, altho visitors came and went, and successive generations brought their sacrifices to the altar, yet the same idol remained for ages standing behind that altar immovable and steadfast. St. Paul wrote about the temple of the Holy Spirit, not to the people of Jerusalem, but to the Corinthians; wherefore it is evident that he borrowed his image from the idol-temple in their city, and not from that of Jerusalem. He meant to say that, as the image of Diana dwelt in the temple of Corinth permanently and without being removed, so does the Holy Spirit dwell permanently and stedfastly in the souls of the called of God.

David says of Love: "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments" ([Psalm cxxxiii. 2](#)),—a figure not very attractive for us who are unfamiliar with perfumed oils. But when you remember that the oil used for the anointing of the high priest was fragrant and volatile, so that when the



precious bottle was opened it filled the whole house with its fragrance, you will appreciate the beauty of the figure; for when the golden oil is poured out upon the head and runs down the flowing robe of the high priest, its all-pervading fragrance is found the next morning in the trailing hem of the garment. The high priest, in his robes of office, is the image of the Church of the living God, and his head the image of Christ. The anointing oil represents the Holy Spirit, who, being poured out upon the head of Christ, flows down from Him upon all who belong to His glorious, mystical body; reaching down so far that even the least esteemed, who are but as the hem of His garment, are pervaded by the selfsame precious ointment.



This beautiful figure illustrates the unity which, as the fruit of Love, is wrought by the selfsame Holy Spirit who in all ages, among all nations, in all tongues and languages, enters into the hearts of God's elect, abiding with them, planting Himself in them, never to leave them; who dwelling and working in all not according to His own choice, but according to the disposition of the members in the body of Christ, under Him as their glorious Head, has established the most blessed fellowship between that Head and the members; has entered every heart and penetrated to its deepest stratum; has united the whole assembly of the elect into one glorious, concordant whole, in perfect Love, now and forever.

And this mighty fact, that the selfsame Holy Spirit dwells and works in all, is not only the prophecy of Love, but the, demonstration of the fact that Love exists, and that every disturbing element is but the dust that still covers the diamond, and the dross that prevents the glittering of the gold. God the Holy Spirit lives, is, and feels Himself One in all God's children; and altho each experiences this in his own way, and expresses it in his own tongue, it is One and the Same who comforts and works in them all.

Hence the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, loves His own work which He works in others. The Holy Spirit in one, can not deny Himself in another. From this it follows that the indwelling of the same Holy Spirit in all not only guarantees a real and substantial unity for the future and for the present, whether visible or invisible, but the very fact itself causes the Love of God to be shed abroad in the hearts of the saints, since the Holy Spirit *must* always love *Himself*:

If He merely hovered over the *surface* of the soul's life, this would not mean much; but there can be no stratum in the soul so low that He does not penetrate it. The fountain that He has opened in us pours forth from the spot where the first pulsations, the deepest motives and workings of the new man, originate. On the surface we may therefore cherish another love; but when, deceived and disappointed by that love, with contrite hearts we feel that the creature can not be trusted, then we find on the bottom of our own soul the same old, faithful, blessed, and divine Love by which the Holy Spirit comforts us and teaches us to comfort others. Even tho at times of indifference all may seem lost, we need not fear, for as



soon as the foundations of the soul are uncovered the presence of that eternal Love manifests itself. Underneath, in the hidden, mystic life, lies the foundation of all love in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

God is Love, and through the Holy Spirit Love dwells in all God's children; and these children united under their glorious Head in one body are one—one by the same new birth, by the same life, and the same Love; and, if it were possible at once to remove all earthly rubbish and pollution, we would *see* the sparkle of that Love in all and among all, beautiful and glorious.

XXI.

The Love of the Holy Spirit in Us.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.”—*Matt. xxvii. 37.*

527

The Scripture teaches not only that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and with Him Love, but also that He *sheds abroad that Love in our hearts.*

This *shedding abroad* does not refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit's Person, for a *person* can not be shed abroad. He comes, takes possession, and dwells in us; but that which is shed abroad must consist of numberless particles. The verb “to pour out” (to shed abroad) is used primarily of water, grain, or fruit; *i.e.*, of liquids or solids composed of parts or particles of one kind, passing from one vessel into another. In Scripture the verb is used metaphorically. Hannah said: “I have poured out my soul before the Lord” (1 Sam. i. 15); the Psalmist: “Pour out your heart before Him” (Psalm lxii. 8); Isaiah: “They poured out a prayer before Him.” (Isa. xxvi. 16) “To pour out,” always signifies that the heart is filled to overflowing with so many complaints, cares, griefs, or distresses that it can no longer contain them, but pours them out before God or men in groans and prayers.

With reference to God, we read that He poured out the fierceness of His anger upon His enemies; and again, “that He shall pour out the Spirit of prayer and supplication.” In the *first* passage, the metaphor is borrowed from the hail-storm which overtakes the traveler and prostrates him. So shall the blows of divine wrath descend like hail upon the heads of its enemies and prostrate them. And in the *second* it is signified that with overwhelming power His people shall be constrained to prayer.

In this latter sense, the Scripture frequently applies it to the advent of the Holy Spirit. Both prophets and apostles declare that the Lord shall pour out His Spirit upon all. Finally, we read that the Holy Spirit was poured out. But even here the primary meaning of the word must be retained, for by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit we understand the flowing down into our hearts, or into the Church, of a multitude of powers of the same kind that fill the emptiness of the soul.

528

It may be objected—and this deserves careful consideration—that in this thought we contradict our former statement, that it is the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the Trinity, who takes possession of the heart and, dwells therein; for we now say that it is, not the *Person* who *comes in*, but a *working*, an *element*, a *power* which is *poured out*. But, instead of being contradictory, these two are the same; only, by their mutual connection, they give us a more correct insight—and that is just what we need. When I carry a lighted lamp into a dark room, I *enter* as the light-bearer, while at the same moment the light is *poured out* in the room. These two should not be confounded. I am not poured out, but the light. I enter the