

Articles and Sermons :: Excerpts/ Highlights from The Stewardship of the Mystery Chapter One

Excerpts/ Highlights from The Stewardship of the Mystery Chapter One, on: 2006/5/30 23:24

I have been tremendously impressed by the words of revelation to be found in this book by Sparks- The Stewardship of the Mystery. Here are some excerpts/highlights from the first chapter, which are sections that I have found especially enlightening:

“...The thing that has been very much pressing upon my own heart... is Paul’s ever-growing conception of Christ. There is no doubt that Paul’s conception of Christ was growing all the time, and by the time Paul reached the end of his earthly life, full, and rich, and deep as it had been, Paul’s vision of Christ was such as to lead him to cry even at that point, “...that I may know Him....” Yes, at the beginning it had pleased God to reveal His Son in him, but at the end it was still as though he had known nothing of Christ. He had come to discover that his Christ was immeasurable beyond his thought and conception, and he was launched into eternity with a cry on his lips: “...that I may know Him...”

I believe (and not as a matter of sentiment) that will be our eternal bliss, the nature of our eternity, namely, discovering Christ. Paul, as we have said, had a great knowledge of Christ. At best here we find ourselves shriveling into insignificance every time we approach Him... Paul’s conception was a large one, but even so he is still saying at the end, “...that I may know Him....” I do not think we shall know Christ in fulness immediately when we pass into His presence. I believe we are to go on—governed by this word, “the ages to come”—discovering, discovering, exploring Christ. That ever-growing conception of Christ was the thing which maintained Paul in life, and maintained Paul’s ministry in life. There was never any stagnation with him. He never came to any point or place where there was the suggestion that now he knew. What he seems to say is this: I do not know anything yet, but I see dimly, yet truly, with the eye of the spirit, a Christ so great, so vast as to keep me reaching out, moving on. I press on; I leave the things which are behind; I count all things as refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, that I may know Him. In this growing conception of Christ, Paul moved a long way from the position of the Jewish teacher, or of the Jew himself at his best...

“...Now the great effect of Paul’s discovery concerning the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road was not only to reveal to him the fact of His Sonship (he undoubtedly discovered there that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, as his words in Galatians one, verses fifteen and sixteen show), but to lift Christ right out of time and to place Him with the Father in the “before times eternal.” The “time” Christ, that is, His coming into this world in time, becomes something like a parenthesis; it is not the main thing. It is the main thing if we look at the whole in the light of the fall and need for recovery, but not the main thing from the Divine standpoint originally. I want you to grasp this, because it is at this point that we come into that greatest of all revelations that has been given to us concerning the Lord Jesus. This effect of his experience on the Damascus road, this lifting of Christ right out of time and placing Him in eternity, came in Paul’s conception to be related to eternal purpose, and in eternal purpose there was no fall and no redemption. That is, so to speak, a bend down in the line of God through the ages. God’s line was to have gone straight without a bend, without a break, but when it came to a certain point, because of certain contingencies which were never in the purpose, that line had to go down, and then up and on again. The two ends of that line are on the same eternal level. You may, if you like, conceive of a bridge across that bend, and of Christ thus filling the bend, so that what was from eternity is not interrupted at all in Him; it goes on in Him. The coming to earth and all the work of the Cross is something other, the result of a necessity by reason of these contingencies; but in Christ from eternity to eternity the purpose is unbroken, uninterrupted, without a bend. There is no hiatus in Christ...”

“...There are ages upon ages yet to come. There are marks through eternity which are not “time” marks in our sense of the word, but represent points of emergence and development, of progress, increase, enlargement. Had you and I been born on the Day of Pentecost, and were we then to have lived through until the return of the Lord (that is a dispensation according to this world’s reckoning and order) we should never have discovered all the meaning of Christ. We should have discovered something and have reached a certain point in the knowledge of Christ, but we should then want another age under different conditions, to discover things which it would never be possible to discover under the conditions of this life; and when we had made good that next possibility, probably beyond that there would be new possibilities. There will be no stagnation in eternity—“...of the increase of His government... there shall be no end...” (Isa. 9:7)...

“...Thus, leaving the whole of this broken-down state in the creation, you can see the creating of ages in Christ, by Christ, through Christ, according to God’s eternal purpose that all things should be summed up in Him; not just the “all things” of our little life, of our little day, of our individual salvation, but the “all things” of a vast universe as a revelation

of Christ, all being brought by revelation to the spiritual apprehension of man, and man being brought into it. What a Christ!...

Re: Excerpts/ Highlights from The Stewardship of the Mystery Chapter One - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/5/31 0:14

Quote:
-----I have been tremendously impressed by the words of revelation to be found in this book by Sparks- The Stewardship of the Mystery
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An outstanding book brother. Finally finished reading it earlier this year, though it has been in my possession for a couple now. Wasn't ready for it at the time.

Quote:
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