



Articles and Sermons :: "In Adam.....In Christ"

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The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken
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Chapter 3 - "In Adam... In Christ"

Reading: Acts 26:23.

"How that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles."

I understand that passage to mean that Christ in resurrection was to be the first One to proclaim light; that is, the proclaiming of light was first with Christ on the ground of His resurrection, that light came by the resurrection of Christ, and He, being the first One raised, was first to proclaim that light.

Leaving that for a moment we turn to Romans 5:12,17-19: "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" "For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life."

The Meaning and Values of Christ Risen

The whole realm and range of Christ for experience in life and service is dependent entirely upon His risen life in us. That whole realm and range of Christ covers a very great deal of ground, and includes a great many things. Some of these things it is our purpose to look at, but let us be very clear as to our starting point. Nothing is possible in an experimental way, only in so far as the risen life of Christ dwells within, and is operative within. I make a distinction in that last clause; for it is possible for the life of the Lord to be in us, and yet for that life to be under arrest: to be checked, thwarted, hindered, held down, so far as all the Divine possibilities, potentialities, and purposes of its being there are concerned.

That is why many who are true children of God, undoubtedly born again, having received the gift of life, do not make progress, do not grow, develop, become mature, never leave the infant stage and state. It is because the life which they have received has not been given the opportunity, the liberty, or the means necessary to it, to develop in them, and develop them, according to all the Divine intention. So that we are not now only concerned with our being the children of God and having Divine life, but even more with the expression of that life, with the values, the meaning, of the risen life of the Lord, or of the risen Lord Himself as dwelling within.

For that life to have its full expression, to proceed in its development unto the attainment and realization of all God's thought in us, and through us, in life and in service, a fundamental necessity is the recognition of what is basic to such a development. We might say that resurrection union with Christ is basic, but that, after all, is only to make a statement which is inclusive of other things, and we want to understand what that really means, what risen union with Christ is.

We are going to return, therefore, to very familiar ground, very elementary ground to some. It will not do us any harm if it is so, while to some it will be helpful. I want to try to present to you by the Lord's enablement what it means to have been led out of Adam into Christ. Recall the familiar statement of the Apostle: "As in Adam all die (all were dead), so in Christ all are made alive," or to abbreviate the words: "In Adam... in Christ." As an inclusive, and perhaps a conclusive thing, we know pretty well what that means: we can state it in the simple terms of salvation. But I am quite sure that its meaning has to be grasped by us all, and all the Lord's people, in a very much fuller and deeper way, with a clearer apprehension

There are three phases of our spiritual history. These are: (1) In Adam by nature. (2) In Christ representatively. (3) In Ch

rist vitally.

In Adam.
The Darkened Mind.

As to the first of these, we know to a considerable extent what is meant by the use of the phrase "in Adam by nature." We are, of course, speaking now of Adam after the fall, "fallen Adam." He is a type. The thing which has happened in his history spiritually has affected his entire being. It has affected him in mind, in heart, and in will; in spirit, in soul, and in body. His mind has become darkened. A darkened mind is one which cannot see beyond a certain point, cannot grasp things beyond a certain range, and which fumbles even within its own range, within its own compass, never reaching the ultimate ends. The darkened mind is called in the Word "ignorance" - "Their ignorant mind..." That is to say, a whole realm of knowledge is cut off from it. That realm, which is a very great, a vast realm, the realm in which the realities are, is closed to the ignorant or darkened mind. It has no capacity in that realm; it has no access to that realm. It is altogether incapacitated, so far as that realm is concerned.

But the darkened mind, and the ignorant mind, is not an inactive mind. Although it is represented as in death, it is not a death which is that of extinction. It is a very active mind, this mind of the fallen Adam. You have only to read the literature of the world, the whole range of philosophy, to see how active that mind is, how far it can go. All the literature of mysticism is but its seeking to pierce through that veil into that other realm, its endeavour to grasp, to understand, to possess. It is a tremendously active mind, and it is often a mind which is very sure of itself, sure that it has the way and knows. It argues, it affirms, it declares, it projects, and frequently when you come up against the natural mind you come up against something very fierce. When we talk about the mind, and about reason, we are only talking about a phase of the mind; and we know how far human reasoning goes, the whole range of what we call rationalism, the action, the activity of human reason; how everything is reduced to its level, is governed by it.

And this mind is a very powerful thing. It has created a world of its own. The mind of fallen Adam has created a world, we might almost say a universe, and within it is darkened, it is ignorant, it is within bounds beyond which it cannot go, and just beyond are the things which are the true, the ultimate things. The natural mind cannot reach to that sphere. It is thus with the mind of the flesh, the mind of the natural man, the mind of Adam.

The Deceitful Heart.

The same has to be said of the heart, of all the realm of desire. And here the desire, the heart, is something deeper than the passions, or even desires which lie on the surface. I mean this, that there are those of the perhaps more refined kind of Adam who are not dominated and mastered by passions and evil designs, and who, on the face of it, would seem to be governed by the most noble desires. But the heart of Adam is deeper than this, and who knows the heart of Adam? Not until there is a thwarting, a cutting across, a challenging, an obstructing, a resisting, is the discovery made that after all there is something personal in that desire, a motive power back of the desire which is not the motive power of God, but of the flesh. The object of desire may seem to be quite good, but the thing which is governing desire is self, is personal.

We must try to make that clear. Let us take up what has been said on the matter of desire and apply it directly to the believer. In the work of the Lord it is possible - and I am afraid so often actual - for us, because we are persuaded with all our heart that we are set upon the Lord's interests, the Lord's glory, to give ourselves to work for the Lord in a certain direction, by a certain means, instrumentality, in what we believe to be our calling from the Lord. If anybody were to challenge the sincerity of our desire we should feel very hardly dealt with, thoroughly misunderstood. But one day someone comes along who is better fitted for that piece of work than we are, and comes into the sphere of our piece of work, and others who are responsible take account of them, and of their apparently better equipment, and begin to put them into our place. And we begin to feel that we are being put out of our place, and someone else is being put in. What is the reaction to that? What happens? In nine cases out of ten there is jealousy and sore feeling. There is - not perhaps outwardly but inwardly - either a getting into a huff and drawing out as an aggrieved person, or else a contending for our place, our position, our work. Is not that the history of things? What is the alternative to that? The alternative is to get away with the Lord, to say: Now, Lord, if You never put me into that I am quite glad to be out of it. If You put me into that, then I leave the whole issue with You; I am not going to put my hands on this matter, I am not going to touch it. If I am called by You for that work, if I am Your chosen vessel for that, well then, Lord, it is with You to see that Your vessels fulfil their ministry and nothing hinders them. I am not going to feel sorry about it; I am going to leave the whole thing with You.

That is exactly what Moses did. You remember how at the time when his position, along with that of Aaron, was challenged, and it was said: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy..." (Num. 16:3), Moses went to the

Lord and, in effect, he said to the Lord: Now, Lord, it does not matter to me personally, it is of no personal account to me; I do not hold this thing myself, I am not going to keep my hands on and resist them! If You called me into this, well, I am with You in it! If You do not want me in it, I am only too glad to go out! You put in the best people possible, and if You can get someone better than I, well, put them in; I am only anxious to see the work done, the end realized by the best means possible! If You have chosen me for that, then You answer this accusation; You see to it, as the One with the mandate, that no one sets Your appointments aside! I leave it with You! That is the alternative. There is no jealous feeling, no burning. That is what I mean by the Adam heart and the other; and the motive down deeper, as to whether it is a personal motive or not. Remember that Adam is always marked by a personal element. Adam is always "I." There is something deeper than what lies on the surface of desire. It is the motivating force of desire.

The Enslaved Will.

What is true in the case of mind and heart is also true in the case of will. The Adam will is a fallen will, and it is a will in bondage. It is a captive will. It is captive to Satan through the flesh: in bondage to the flesh, though ultimately this bondage is to Satan. It is still a very active will. It may be a very strong will even in the weakest. When it is met and mastered it shows itself. There is always a battle to change it, and it is motivated by this deeper state.

Thus we have spirit, soul, body, all now representing a kind of being which is alienated from God, darkened, in bondage to Satan ultimately, though this is not recognized by the majority, and governed by deep-seated, deep-rooted elements of self.

You can divide Adam into three, but not into watertight compartments. You can only divide the three by dotted lines, not by continuous lines - Satan, sin, and the flesh. That is Adam! These are three phases of him, and they are all inter-related: distinct, yet one. Can you divide between Satan and sin? Let us be careful on that point. There is something more powerful, more intelligent, more cunning than sin alone. Sin is not an abstract. Sin can never be a thing by itself. We talk about sin, and sins, as though they were things which we could deal with in an isolated way, and get the better of - Now, this thing is a sin, and that thing is a sin, and that other is a sin, and we are going to deal with these things piecemeal, as sins, and get the better of them one by one! Begin, and you will discover that you are meeting something other than the sin; you are meeting an artfulness, a cunning, a wit, an ingenuity, an intelligence, a personal spiritual power, which is more than a habit, more than besetment, more than what you may call a sin. Sin is allied to personal intelligences, and they are allied to it, and while they express themselves along certain definite lines which we call sin, and sins, you can never put these two realms into watertight compartments. The Lord Jesus in His Cross not only dealt with sin, or sins, He got back of sin, and the sins, and dealt with the forces of intelligence which were maintaining and energizing those sins.

The flesh! What is the flesh? It is the fallen nature of man, through which Satan by sin puts himself into action. He must have a means, a channel, an instrument for his self-expression and the "flesh" is that which is in Adam allied to Satan and is always the instrument of Satan and of sin. It is always on the side of Satan. There is no difficulty for the flesh to yield itself to Satan, and be his instrument, his tool, his vessel, his channel. That is Adam! We by nature are in Adam; in Adam's way of thinking, desiring, with all its motive force; one with Adam's willing, nature, being; in all allied to Satan, separated from God.

In Christ.

The Enlightened Mind.

On the other hand, Christ is the last Adam. Here we begin on the same ground, mind (yes, still the same composition), heart, will; spirit, soul, body. But what a difference! The mind! In this One it is not darkened, but full of light; not alienated, but in perfect fellowship with God; not limited, but moving in the full range and realm of the ultimate realities, the fulness of God's mind; thinking as God thinks, not as man thinks; understanding as God understands, apprehending. The mind of Christ is a different kind of mind, vastly different. These two minds are two worlds, two universes, and they are always contrary the one to the other. The mind of the flesh is opposed to the mind of the spirit. That is but another way of saying, the mind of Adam as against the mind of Christ! These are always contrary the one to the other, never in agreement, and vastly different. When you have the one you have to repudiate the other. If you have the other you are in conflict with the former.

The Open Heart and the Surrendered Will.

The same is true in the matter of the heart, as to the motive of desire. Christ is motivated by that which is utterly selfless. There is no self principle in Christ. He had accepted that basis of life here on the earth, and was tested out on that basis -

and was perfected through testing on that basis - as to whether at any point, at any time, under any strain, He would act, move, choose, determine according to Himself; whether as an independent and separate Being He would ever speak, act, move, choose out from Himself, or in any way express Himself. You get to the heart of everything in the case of the Lord Jesus when you recognize that the one question which constituted the testing ground of His life was, Will this Man act alone, speak alone, choose alone, decide alone, move alone? And His answer was always, Not out from Myself! "The Son can do nothing out from Himself." "The words that I speak unto you I speak not out from myself." Every kind of appeal was made to Him to persuade Him on the impulse of the moment, or in response to an entreaty that seemed to promise success, or by an argument that appeared to be the truest wisdom, to move, act, speak, do something as out from Himself. Whether it were understood so to be by those who were the occasion of these temptations or not, this clearly was the design of the Devil, the instigator who was using them.

At times the suggestion would be influenced by necessity of circumstances, at times by the promise of effectiveness in His service, or again by representation of the utter un-wisdom of the line that He was taking, as when His own brethren, who did not believe in Him, chided Him for delay, saying, Go up to Jerusalem and show yourself! To them He said, I go not yet up to this feast! And then, so quickly after, when His brethren were gone up He went up also. But He would not go up at the persuasion of popular reason; He would not do this merely because it was the thing which everybody else was doing, or because it was urged upon Him that, since everybody was going to the feast, He ought to go too. That ninety-nine people do a thing is no argument for the hundredth to do it. We are not to be led by the appeals that decide the actions of the many - It is the popular thing! Everybody else is doing it! it is the recognised thing to do! No! Does my Father want me to do this thing? That is the question that must ever rule our steps. In the case of the Lord Jesus there was all the time an underworking to get Him to adopt the contrary course, to act without inquiry of His Father, without direct leading from His Father; to act in His individual capacity as though he were His own Master, as though He had not to make appeal elsewhere. In Him there was none of that which was personal, independent. We are not speaking merely of such things as are sinfully personal, positively personal, but simply of independent action, action taken for the best ends, for a good motive, with quite a proper intention. Yes, all this may be done, but apart from the positive word from the Father. That creates an independent thought, however good may be the motive.

Christ's heart is governed by the anointing, is motivated by the anointing, and He waits always for the movement of the anointing. That is Christ! Mind, heart, will, reined and harnessed to the thought, desire, the will of the Father.

The Cross - The Way Out and In

How do we get out of Adam into Christ? That presents our third point, which was our middle point. In Adam by nature, that is the first phase of our spiritual experience. In Christ representatively, that is the second phase.

I do not quite know how to say what has to be said at this point without being misunderstood. I can see that if I said it in a certain way it could very well be used against me. The point is that there was an hour in the history of Christ when He virtually, representatively, became the first Adam. Now be careful how far you press that. You see the peril? But Christ did step into the place of fallen man. He was not fallen man, and there was nothing of fallen man in Him, but He stepped into the place of fallen man. He stepped right into the place of Adam, the first Adam, took on Him the sin, and the results of sin, and the moment that was done all the power of hell pounced upon Him to devour Him, as their right was to do. Christ took on Himself all that related to the position of fallen Adam. He never in His Own Being became fallen Adam, but at a given moment He took on Him all that we refer to as fallen Adam, and in that hour Adam collectively, Adam corporately, all the members of Adam, ourselves included, came representatively under God's judgment, in its fulness, its finality. That was the judgment upon fallen Adam, and all that was bound up with Adam - sin, Satan, and the flesh.

In that representative way we were taken to death; Adam was put aside, slain, buried, never in God's thought and acceptance to appear again. Christ in that capacity, as representative, died for us, and we died in Him. Not only were our sins put away, but we ourselves, with all our good motives which, after all, cannot bear that eye of flame getting down underneath and knowing all about the jealousy behind our very best motives, if haply those motives were to be challenged, knowing all the measure of self back of our devotion to the Lord, the personal elements in us which we do not recognize, and which we could not believe to be there. In Christ it has all been put away, it has all gone. It has no standing in the presence of God from Calvary onward. The reasoning, the mental outlook, the mentality of Adam in its entirety is gone; mind, heart, will, all put away by the Cross of the Lord Jesus.

And then God raised Him from the dead, but He raised Him apart from old Adam and all that belonged to old Adam, and Christ becomes the first in resurrection. In Him you have the new man, wholly different from old Adam, a man in Christ risen. We come into this last Adam by the way of that representative union, the representative union accepted by faith, an

d registered in us by an act, a work of the Holy Ghost. Do remember it is not just a theory. So many people have seen the truth of what is called identification with Christ in death, and burial, the doctrine of union with Christ, of being crucified with Christ, and they have, so to speak, set it up before them as an objective thing, believed in it, accepted it, and proceeded to go on simply by the recognition of something. Something is put up, and coming that way they read the notice, as it were, and they say, Yes, I see that! I accept that! I believe that! and on they go. They seem to think that the fact of their having read the notice has created the change. Nothing of the kind. That is what we are meaning by the danger of doctrine without the life, the systematizing and accepting of truth, the truth of Christ, the truth of the Church, without a subjective inworking. Now that representative union with Christ has to be registered in us by the Holy Ghost with the effect that the backbone of Adam is broken, the sinew of Jacob's thigh is touched and withered, and he will go on a crutch for the rest of his days as one who knows that the self strength has let go. Something like that has to be done to make our representative union with Christ more than a theory, more than doctrine. We have to be smitten at the centre of our Adam strength with the Cross. That does not mean that thereafter those things never come up, that we shall never see them again, never have any dealings with them again. It means that when they come up we shall say, No, I can have nothing to do with that! I dare not! I know God has touched that. That is forbidden ground! Many of you know the truth of this in your heart. When our jealousies come up, for instance, jealousies which are the proof that there is some "I" still there, we say, Woe is me if I go on to that ground! It will be disastrous for me if I allow that to come up; it will put me right back on the other side of Calvary! Everything is bound up with my keeping off that ground if I am to go on with God!

If that were a living inward reality in the case of all the Lord's children, what tremendous differences it would make, and what a lot of relief there would be given to the people who have to do all the spiritual nursing, who have repeatedly to tell the people what they should do, and what they should not do. You would never need to point out that a thing was wrong, if the Spirit of Him Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself up were known as dwelling within and saying, Look here, that was put away in Christ; you must not have anything to do with that! It makes all the difference. It is the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, in relation to Christ speaking in us, and saying, Now, you must not have anything to do with that! When one has passed into vital union with Christ through representative union, the representative union has still to be a practical thing and not merely a theoretical thing, a doctrinal thing. When you come into vital union with Christ you are on new ground; you are on resurrection ground; you are on the ground of spiritual vantage, where you are able to deal with Adam. Let me put this in a very simple form. Supposing I have two men here, one on my left hand, and one on my right hand. This man on my left hand is Adam; this Man on my right hand is Christ. Here is Adam on my left, and by nature I am related to him, I am blood-kin with him; he and I are in vital union. It is not simply that we have a friendship, an acquaintance, but we are one in our very life by nature. Now, he goes wrong; he disappoints God; he listens to Satan; he enters into complicity with Satan; he works hand in hand with Satan in disobedience to God, contrary to God, contrary to what he knows to be God's will. I am involved because of my relationship. God comes and makes plain His mind to Adam in my hearing, and I know quite well what God thinks about him, and the attitude He takes toward him, and what the result of his disobedience, his unbelief, is. God says, I have done with you! I had purposes for you, but you have made it impossible for Me ever to realize, them! I had a relationship with you; that relationship is now broken entirely; it can never be repaired. You must understand that from this time you are separated from Me in living fellowship, in purpose, in capacity, and you are outside; I have nothing more to do with you; I have done with you! Now I hear that, and I realize I am vitally related to Adam, and that this is the pass to which I am brought; that I am involved in that state, in mind, and heart, and will; in spirit, soul, and body. And I cry to God and say, This is terrible! I am lost. I am undone. This very thing has got into my being, I am a part of it; I am in that state, not only in that position! What is true of him has become true of me! I am inked with it! What am I to do?

To this cry the answer of God is, I am going to provide a way by which you can be delivered both from the position and from the state! I bring One into your position, Who is neither in the state nor in the position Himself, and He will voluntarily take the position and the state on Him, with the full consequences to their utmost limit. He will satisfy My desire right up to the hilt! But you must recognize that by faith you have come into a relationship with Him; you have to repudiate this one to whom you are related, and you have to embrace this One by faith, cling to Him! There is the issue. Will I still remain in allegiance to Adam, or will I turn from Adam and lay hold of Christ, my Representative? If I do, then I am seen as passing in that Representative out of the Adam place, position, and state. I am seen to pass as by death out of that world, that realm of things altogether, and then God steps in when I have gone down to death in that union, and with Christ raises me to walk in newness of life. Now He says, You are vitally related to this risen One; but you have not seen the last of Adam, you will often see him! You will find him prowling around a good deal! He is going to try to get you back again. He will worry you; he will try to influence you to his ways of thinking; he will try to get you actuated by personal motives; he will seek to set self-will in motion. He will be right there all the time, seeking to get back on to his ground. Now, for all the future your position is to be this: Adam, I have done with you! I will not have your ways of thinking, I repudiate your mind; I will not have your ways of feeling, I repudiate your heart; I am done with your ways of willing, I repudiate your will, your volition, because I choose deliberately and definitely the mind of this other One!

An Attitude to be Maintained

Thus we have the two, and a choice has to be made. I am now by the goodness and grace of God in the advantaged position of being able to choose. At one time I could not do so, but now God has given me His Spirit. That is the power of a new choice, a new determination, and by that enabling of His Spirit I can say, Yes, I choose Christ's mind and repudiate the mind of the flesh, the mind of Adam. I choose Christ's desires about things, and I repudiate the desire of the flesh, the desire of Satan! I choose Christ's will in this matter, and I repudiate Adam. I shall find myself constantly called upon to do that, and the fruit of obedience will be that more and more the choice will be spontaneous, and with deepening conviction from every fresh experience I shall come to realize how infinitely perilous it is to delay on these matters. I shall have to keep very short accounts with these things, and not have any wavering about them. Sometimes perhaps by a slip, by a mistake, by a tumble I shall be driven nearer to Christ and learn to be far more swift to repudiate that and choose this, to say to that man, No! and to this Man, Yes! I am over on this side now, and I must keep over on this side, and must never have any kind of communication with Adam again. When he seeks to allure me I say, No, I have finished with you! I am with God in this matter! God finished with you, and I am with God! Adam will argue; he will reason; he will persuade; he will hold up prizes; he will bring temptations; he will make suggestions, reasonings, arguments. Oh, what will he not do to get me back on to his ground! But I stand and say, No, I am not coming back, I am not having anything to do with you!

That is the life into which we are energized by the Holy Spirit. You see that God never takes our will away, nor our mind, nor our heart. Some people expect God to come and do all their choosing for them, and all their desiring for them, and all their deciding for them, while they are simply to be poor things picked up by God and put into things which He desires and wills. God never does that. He is developing a humanity. Were we spirits I do not know how we might act; we might act spontaneously. But we are not. God has created a kind of being with a rational mind. The three-fold element of spirit, soul and body is still to be found, yet not now in Adam, but in Christ. God is developing the Christ mind; how He thinks, judges, understands, and when we see the Lord's mind we see how very different it is from our own natural mind; and our own natural mind is beside the mark altogether, and we must repudiate it. This is spiritual understanding, the mind of the Spirit.

The same thing applies to our feelings and our desires. They may lead us all astray. There is a new outfit in Christ for our hearts, but there is always the necessity for our standing with the Lord in what is of Himself. Passivity may be a most ruinous thing. In all the values of Christ risen there has to be a taking of that risen life for the equivalent need of mind, heart, will; of spirit, soul, and body.

There are values in Christ risen for our bodies now. His risen life can now energize these bodies; not, for the present, to change them into the likeness of His glorious body, but to quicken them for service. There is risen life for these mortal bodies now, but it has to be deliberately appropriated, chosen, drawn upon. It is useless for me when I am feeling ill and weak to sit down and say, Oh, Lord, come and pick me up, and put me on my feet, and make me well! The Lord never does so. I know this, that in such times of desperate weakness and physical discount, utter inability, any kind of coming in of the Lord has always been introduced by the Lord making me take hold of Him. The Lord has never come in and made me suddenly to feel myself being filled, permeated with life, and rising up. I have known the moment very often come when the Lord, not in an audible voice but in what is as good, a suggestion, a prompting, has said, Lay hold of life; lay hold of Me as your life! There were no spoken words, but the intimation was to this effect: The time has come to repudiate this state and lay hold of Christ for life! And that has been unto a renewal for a further period of service. The Lord does not take us up like an automaton; He causes us to co-operate with Himself on the basis of His risen life. All the values of Christ risen are found by our deliberate and definite taking hold of His risen life. That is but to say, Repudiate Adam, whether it be in body, soul or spirit, and stand in Christ for whatever the need may be. Is it for spirit? Is it for mind? Is it for heart? Is it for will? Is it for body? The one essential is to stand definitely in Christ for the situation.

We come back to the point from which we started. The whole realm and range of Christ for experience is dependent upon His risen life in us, and our laying hold of it, standing on it. The Lord show us more of what that means.