

THE SENDING OUT OF LIGHT AND TRUTH

Preached on Lord's Day Morning, September 19th, 1841, at Allington, near Devizes

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles."
Psalm 43:3

There is a very strong and striking resemblance between natural life and spiritual life—a resemblance so strong and striking that God has chosen the one to be a figure of the other. What spiritual life is we cannot, whilst in this tabernacle, really understand. We may know the feeling of it—and he that knows not the feeling of it is devoid of it—but to know what it really is, so as to enter into its true nature, is beyond our comprehension in this time state. Thus we find the Holy Ghost speaking by the mouth of Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes: "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all" (Ecc. 9:5). That the child does grow in the womb we know, but how it grows we know not. So that the blessed Spirit works in the heart we know, but how He works we are ignorant. And we find the Lord Himself declaring the same solemn truth, when He said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The way, then, in which the Spirit acts is a secret hidden from us. It may be revealed hereafter, or it may be of such a nature as will be eternally incomprehensible to finite intelligences. But though we know not the way in which the

Spirit acts, His blessed effects are known to all who have the unspeakable mercy to experience them. For this one thing is certain, that wherever there has been the communication of spiritual life to the soul, there will be certain emotions, certain feelings, certain actings, which are the fruits and effects of the work of the Spirit in the heart; so that he who is destitute of these feelings, of these emotions and of these actings, manifests that he is destitute of the cause of them—namely, destitute of the Spirit of God as a Spirit of life and power in his soul.

The same thing is true of natural life as of spiritual life. We know not what natural life is. It is a mystery hidden from the human understanding. All that we see and understand is that there are certain results and fruits of natural life; and all that we know is, that where these effects are present, natural life is present, and where these effects are absent, natural life is absent. It is then only between these effects and fruits of natural and spiritual life that a comparison can take place, and such a comparison we find in the Scriptures of truth.

If we look, then, at the various acts of natural life, we shall see that they bear a resemblance to the acts of spiritual life. For instance: one act of natural life is *to breathe*: so one act of supernatural life is to breathe spiritually. We find this set forth in Ezek. 37:9, where the prophet speaks to the wind and says, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live:" showing a resemblance between natural breath and spiritual breath. And there is a resemblance in this particular—that we breathe naturally an element which comes into us; something foreign to us, and yet something indispensable to our existence. So the spiritual breath of the soul consists in the life of God breathed into a vessel of mercy out of the fulness of Jesus Christ. The lungs have no air in themselves; air must come into them, in order

that they may fulfil that office which they are appointed to fulfil: and so the creature has no spiritual breath in itself, but spiritual breath must come into the soul out of the fulness of the Son of God, that it may believe, hope, and love.

Again, another fruit and effect of natural life is to *move* and *walk*. Thus it is spiritually. As there is a movement of natural life, so is there a movement of spiritual life; and this movement of spiritual life is the acting of living faith in the soul, the going forth of fervent desires after God, the approaching His mercy-seat with access, the embracing His truth with affection, and the walking in the light of God's countenance and the life of God's favour.

Again, in the natural life there is, at times, the keen sensation of *hunger*. The absence of hunger shows the presence of disease. And thus in the spiritual life we have spiritual hunger; and the absence of spiritual hunger after the bread of God shows the presence of disease, that is, that the soul though alive is sickly. In the natural life there is also, at times, a *thirst*—one of the most painful sensations that the body can experience, and the gratification of which is indispensable to the continuance of life. So spiritually there is a thirsting after God, a thirsting after His manifested presence and after the testimonies of His covenant love, a thirst of such a nature that it must be gratified by some manifestation of the mercy and love of God, or the soul feels as if it must perish eternally.

But we find that though much of the presence and healthiness of life, naturally, consists in hungering and receiving food, and in thirsting and receiving drink, yet that these are not incessant nor perpetual. There are certain seasons for the natural body to be nourished by food and yet the nutriment which is received at these distinct seasons

serves to keep up all the strength of the body. A man is not always eating naturally, neither is a man always eating spiritually. There are certain seasons in which natural food is given; and so, spiritually, there are certain seasons (and these often at long intervals—far longer than those for natural food) when spiritual food is communicated. And as, when the prophet had eaten twice of the cake baked on the coals, and had drunk twice of the cruse of water at his head (1 Kings 19:5-8), he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights; so, when the Lord has supplied His own blessed nutriment to the soul, it goes in the strength of that food as many days and as many nights as the Lord sees fit to appoint.

But what I chiefly aim at is this: to show how the children of God, in the absence of fresh manifestations, are still maintained alive by the food they have already received, and are inwardly strengthened by it to cry unto the Lord, and groan out their wants to Him, and seek supplies and communications out of Christ's fulness to their souls. If we look at the experience of God's saints, we shall find that the greater part of them are more in a hungering than in a banqueting state; more in a state of desire than in a state of satisfaction; and more seeking after the manifestations of God's mercy and love to their souls than feeding upon these manifestations as revealing in them the love and blood of the Lamb. And yet the life which vents itself in these hungerings and thirstings is maintained by communications of the Spirit, and is the secret fruit of former nutriment, which the blessed Spirit employs to strengthen them to seek and cry.

We find the Psalmist in this state of soul, whilst he was breathing forth his heart in the psalm from which the text is taken. He was cast down with trouble. "Judge me, O God," he begins, "and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O

deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For Thou art the God of my strength." He was suffering under trouble of mind from the opposition which he had to encounter from ungodly and deceitful men. This, however, was but a small source of his trouble. There was a deeper and more poignant grief than that. "Why," he says, "dost Thou cast me off?" When the Lord supports the soul under persecution, opposition, and enmity, it is easily endurable; but when the Lord hides His face, when He does not vouchsafe His help, when, in addition to the soul being trodden under foot by the deceitful and unjust man, God Himself seems to cast it off as a vessel in which He has no pleasure, it is that which adds poignancy to the wound, it is that which rubs salt into the sore. Satan, too, seeing his opportunity, thrust sore at him that he might fall. "Why," says he, "go I mourning *because of the oppression of the enemy?*" So that when David penned this psalm, he seems to have been labouring under a three-fold trial: persecuted and opposed by his enemies—cast off in his feelings by God—and oppressed by Satan. And as labouring under this three-fold trial, he pours his soul in this cry: "O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles."

I. David, when he poured forth these words, must have had three distinct lessons of divine teaching written upon his soul; and every one that feels the same desires that David felt, and is enabled to pour forth the same breathings that David poured forth, must first have had the same three lessons written by the Holy Spirit in his heart. The *first* was, a deep sense of his darkness, blindness, ignorance, and folly. If he had not felt this, he would not have cried to the Lord to "send out His light and His truth." The *second* lesson which the Holy Ghost had taught him, before he was enabled to pour forth these desires, was, to know the Source and

Fountain whence light and truth were to come; for had he not known the source whence light and truth were to come, he never would have gone to the Lord, and asked Him to send out His light and His truth into his soul. And the *third* lesson of the blessed Spirit's teaching in his heart was to kindle these desires, and enable him to pour them out into the bosom of God.

Now a man may feel darkness in his soul, and yet not know where to get light. And this is generally the case with a man under the first teachings of the Holy Ghost. But another shall have gone a step further, and have been taught by divine illumination the Source and Fountain of spiritual life, and yet not have the power in his soul to breathe out his petitions and desires into the bosom of God. And therefore the third thing is necessary, viz., to receive a Spirit of grace and supplications into our souls, whereby we are enabled to pour our heart unto God, and to breathe forth the desires of our soul into His bosom.

1. Having, then, these three distinct and yet blended feelings working in his soul, David gives them vent in this earnest cry, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me." His soul wanted light. And what made him want light, but a deep inward feeling of his own blindness and darkness? O how a living soul often goes day-by-day mourning under a sense of darkness! How unable are we to realise any one branch of God's truth, when our soul is in this midnight state! How impossible it is for us to find our way to the mercy-seat, whilst we are thus groping for the wall like the blind, and groping as if we had no eyes! What a cloud of darkness, too, rests upon every part of God's Word, hiding every promise, spreading a thick mist over every invitation, and making the Scriptures to be to us as a sealed book!

Now when a soul is labouring and struggling under this Egyptian darkness, this midnight of the heart, it is often unable to breathe forth a cry for light, the mercy-seat being quite hidden from view. It is then where Job was of old, when he complained, "O that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat. Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him" (Job 23:3, 8, 9). But when these clouds a little break, and the blessed Spirit begins to operate in the soul as a Spirit of supplication, the quickened vessel of mercy breathes out these desires of his heart into the ear of God. "O send out Thy light." "*Thy* light;" none other will suffice. "*Thy* light;" none other can dispel the darkness. "*Thy* light;" none other can guide my feet into the way of peace. That, I believe, is the deep-rooted conviction of every living soul. He cannot walk in the light of the sparks of his own kindling; he cannot, in these dark seasons, walk in the light of past experience; he cannot walk in the light of other men's judgment; he cannot walk in the light of the doctrines of grace, as he has received them into his understanding; he cannot walk by the *ignis fatuus*, the will-o'-the-wisp that gleams from the bog of his own corruptions; nor by the meteor glare of some wild delusion. The light which he feels he must have, is light communicated, and breathed into his soul out of the fulness of Jesus Christ; and he has a deep-rooted conviction, amounting to a thorough certainty, that only so far as divine light, supernatural light, is breathed into his soul, and shed abroad in his heart out of the fulness of the Son of God, can he see a single step of the way, perceive any beauty or glory in Jesus, discern his own interest in the everlasting covenant, or move one foot forward in the narrow path that leads unto eternal life.

"O *send* out Thy light." He desired that light might be sent out. That is, that there might be a communication of it. The soul walking in darkness, and enabled under that darkness to pant and cry after light, is not satisfied with the conviction, however deep, that with God is light. The thirsty man is not satisfied with knowing that there is water in the well; nor the man who has lost his way in a mine, with knowing that there is light in the sun. One faint ray gleaming through a chink were worth to him a thousand suns, blazing, unseen by him, in the sky. And thus the benighted saint cannot rest in the bare knowledge that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," but his sigh and cry is that this light may be sent out of the fulness of the Godhead into his soul, so as to shed abroad an inward light in his heart whereby he may see the truth of God; whereby he may see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; whereby he may see his name written in the book of life, and clearly discern his interest in the "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure;" whereby he may see Jesus, and in seeing Jesus see his own eternal union with Jesus, and in seeing his own eternal union with Jesus may enjoy sweet communion with Him, so as to feel His presence in his soul, and have His glory revealed and manifested to his heart.

2. But David wanted something more than light. He says,— "O send out Thy light and Thy *truth*." The Word of God is pure truth, and the blessed Spirit enlightens the understanding of Christ's people to know, and quickens their consciences to feel that "the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Ps. 12:6). What wonderful things does God sometimes show us in His Word! How our eyes sometimes seem to be anointed with eye-salve "to behold wondrous things out of God's law!" (Ps. 119:18). Sometimes in reading a chapter of God's Word we see such beauty, such fulness,

such sweetness, such glory in it, that it seems, as it were, to fill our very hearts. And what our souls want (I am sure my soul wants it, and it is my frequent cry to the Lord in secret that I may feel it) is to have this blessed truth taken out of the Word of God, and applied to and sealed upon our hearts by the Spirit of God. I want no new revelation. Day by day I seem more satisfied of this, and more established in it—that all saving truth is in the Word of God. I seek no visions, I desire no dreams, I want no airy speculations; but when my heart is brought to lie at the footstool of mercy, this seems to be the panting and breathing of my soul—to know experimentally and spiritually the blessed truths that my eyes see in the Word of God, to have them opened up to my understanding, brought into my heart, grafted into my soul, applied to my conscience, and revealed with such supernatural and heavenly power that the truth as it is in Jesus may be in me a solemn and saving reality, that it may bring with it such a divine blessing as to fill me with grace, enlarge my heart into the enjoyment of the gospel, gird up my loins with spiritual strength, give and increase faith, communicate and encourage hope, shed abroad and draw forth love, and fill me with joy and peace in believing. I want truth to be my sword as well as my shield, my food to live by and my strength to die by, my spiritual nutriment here and my eternal enjoyment hereafter.

And I find this to be in me an increasing thing—I have never felt it more sensibly than for the last three months—to discard everything but the simple truth of God, only longing and crying unto the Lord to have His simple truth brought into my heart and sealed on my conscience by the Holy Ghost. Then I can join, and often have joined with the Psalmist in this prayer—if not in the very express words, in their spirit and meaning—"Send out Thy light and Thy truth," that is, that truth which I see in Thy Scriptures, that truth

which is saving, which is savoury, which is profitable, which is sweet, which is humbling, which melts the soul at the foot of the cross, and conforms it to the image of Jesus Christ.

3. But we want this truth "*sent out.*" That is, not merely to see certain truths in the Word of God, and be content with seeing them there; but to have these truths "sent out" of the Word of God, and brought into our soul with such divine power and heavenly sweetness as to be ratified, and as it were riveted there by the hand of God Himself. Our minds, friends (at least, mine is), are open to the vilest gusts of infidelity. I find these assaults from my own evil heart, or from the prince of darkness (for I cannot often tell from which of these two quarters they arise) continually lying hard at me; and sometimes these gusts of infidelity seem as though they would sweep away, not only all the truth of God out of my soul, but would sweep away the truth of God itself.

In such seasons, and when blown upon by such gusts, a man is brought to feel this—that truth in God's Word is not sufficient. He wants an inward evidence such as none but the Spirit of God can supply. He wants a divine authority persuading him with invincible power that the Bible is a revelation from God, an inspired declaration of the mind and will of God. And therefore he wants truth to be taken out of God's Word, and lodged in his soul. He finds that doctrines, however true they are, however good and Scriptural, as long as they are merely stored in his brain, afford no solid comfort, and bring into his soul no real satisfaction; but when they are lodged in his heart, and brought with divine efficacy into his conscience, they have a solid effect on him, bring into his mind stability, lift him up out of the things of time and sense, draw forth his spiritual affections, endear Christ, make His blood precious and His righteousness inestimably prized. But if the soul knew nothing of these conflicts, if it had not to pass through these exercises and temptations, it

would be satisfied, readily satisfied, as thousands are, with merely seeing truth in the Word of God; but having these storms and tempests to go through, they blow away everything except the sealed and applied truth of God; and thus the soul that is exposed to these gusts is brought to sigh and cry unto the Lord that He Himself would rivet His own truth with His own divine power in the conscience.

But what was "the truth" which David sought to know, and realize its inward power by its being sent out of the fulness of the Godhead? Doubtless, the very same truth that saints are crying to be sent out now; and this can be nothing less than "the truth as it is in Jesus;" the truth of His blood as atoning for sin, the truth of His righteousness as justifying us from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses; the truth of personal and everlasting deliverance from all curse and condemnation, that truth whereby the soul is made free, according to those words, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;" the truth whereby the affections are separated from the things of time and sense, and fixed on the realities of eternity; in a word, to know Jesus Himself, by His own sweet revelation, for He is "the way, THE TRUTH, and the life," and that He may be Himself enjoyed in our soul as the sum and substance of truth.

Every living soul, then, that is acquainted with its own darkness, its own unbelief, its own helplessness in spiritual things, and has been brought by a work of grace to sigh and cry after God, will, at times, as the Lord the Spirit works upon it, unite with the Psalmist and say, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth."

II. But David wanted this light and this truth to perform a specific purpose; to do a certain work; and therefore he

adds, "Let them lead me." As a feeling of darkness made him desire the entrance of light; as a sense of his own treacherous, deceitful, and hypocritical heart made him want a communication of truth; so a conviction of his inability to direct himself a single step of the way made him cry out unto the Lord that He would send out this light and this truth to *lead him*. "Let them *lead* me." That is, let light be on one side and truth on the other: let them hold up my wavering footsteps, let them support my tottering limbs; or let light go before me to show me the way in which I am to walk; and let truth support me in the way that I may walk in the path upon which light is cast. A living man cannot, in his right mind, bear the idea of standing still—that is to say, standing still so as to have no spiritual work going on within; and still less can he bear the idea of going backward. He wants to go forward. He is often dissatisfied with his state; he feels how little he knows; he is well certified of the shallowness of his attainments in the divine life, as well as of the ignorance and the blindness that are in him: and therefore, labouring under the feeling of his own shortcomings for the past, his helplessness for the present, and his ignorance for the future, he wants to go forward wholly and solely in the strength of the Lord, to be led, guided, directed, kept, not by the wisdom and power of the creature, but by the supernatural entrance of light and truth into his soul. The mercy-seat is continually covered with clouds: God hideth Himself, and he cannot behold Him: the truth seems obscured so that he cannot realise it. He often cannot find his way to Christ; he cannot perceive the path of life, nor whether his feet are in that path. He sees so few marks of grace in his soul, and feels so powerfully the workings of sin and corruption; he finds so few things for him, and so many things against him, that he often staggers, and is perplexed in his mind, and seems almost to come to a feeling in his heart that he is destitute of the grace of God altogether, that

the secret of the Lord is not with him, but that he is a hypocrite in Zion, who has never had even the beginning of wisdom communicated to his soul.

When thus harassed and perplexed, he will at times and seasons, as his heart is made soft, cry out with fervency and importunity, as a beggar that will not take a denial, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me." As though he would say, "Lord, I feel my own utter helplessness. I know I must go astray, if Thou dost not condescend to guide me. I have been betrayed a thousand times when I have trusted my own heart; I have been entangled in my base lusts; I have been puffed up by presumption; I have been carried away by hypocrisy and pride; I have been drawn aside into the world; I have never taken a single step aright when left to myself; and therefore feeling, how unable I am to guide myself a single step of the way, I come unto Thee, and ask Thee to 'send out Thy light and Thy truth,' that they may 'lead me,' for I am utterly unable to lead myself."

Now, to be brought here, is to be brought into the feeling of a child that is unable to walk except its parent holds it up; into the state of a traveller in an unknown country, who is unable to find his way except he has a guide; into the condition of a defenceless wife, who is unable to protect herself from assaults and violence, and looks to her husband to interpose in her behalf. And are not these the very characters that the church of Christ sustains—a little child—a pilgrim—and a wife? and to be brought into these states of experience, is to be an heir of the promises which are yea and amen in Christ.

III. But David, in desiring to be led, wished to arrive at a certain place; his eye was fixed on a certain spot. The desires of his soul were to the "holy hill" and to God's "tabernacles."

He was not resting in past experiences, mark you. He was not taking the present feelings of his soul as evidences, and resting on them as such. He was not where many are who say, "Because I pray, because I desire, because I hunger and thirst after God, therefore I am a child of God." But the hungering and thirsting and desiring and panting of his soul were towards a certain object, after a certain spot; and till he came there, he could not rest satisfied; and yet was unable to find his way thither except so far as light and truth led him and brought him.

He could not, then, dispense with light and truth for a single step of his road. He did not say, as a man might to a guide whom he had asked to show him the way to a town, "I thank you for your kindness, but the town is in sight; I will trouble you no further;" but he wanted light and truth—those blessed handmaids—to guide him every step of the way, not to leave him for a single moment, but to bring him thoroughly into that spot to which his eyes turned, and towards which every desire of his soul centred.

1. And what was that spot? "Let them bring me unto *Thy holy hill.*" What is this "holy hill" to which the soul of David longed to be brought? We read of it in the second psalm, where the Lord says, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." The "holy hill," then, of which David here speaks is the "holy hill of Zion," upon which God the Father hath set His dear Son, that He might be King and Lord there, that He might there sit "as a Prince upon His throne, and the counsel of peace be between them both," where Jesus sits enthroned in glory, having grace in His hand to communicate to His poor and needy family.

Light and truth, then, David desired to be sent into his heart, that by them he might be brought unto this holy hill, and

there enjoy sweet communion with the Lord Jesus. Depend upon it, friends, that whenever the Holy Spirit has quickened a man's soul into spiritual life, He will make him pant after an inward knowledge of Jesus. The blessed Spirit will never suffer a living soul to rest short of the Son of God as made experimentally known in the conscience; and made known there as a living Jesus, as a suffering Lord, as a bleeding Lamb, as "a High Priest, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," and as such, breathing into the soul which He brings to His footstool a measure of that holiness which dwells inexhaustibly in Him. No reckless Antinomian ever wanted to come to the holy hill. The hill on which he stands is the barren hill of presumption. He never longed in his soul, nor cried to a heart-searching God to bring him to the holy hill of Zion. He has no new nature whereby he thirsts after a holy God; he has no spiritual principle whereby he pants to know a pure and spotless Jesus. Sin is too sweet to his carnal mind for him to long to have it mortified and crucified in Him; he rolls it too much as a sweet morsel under his tongue, he is too madly in love with his darling lusts, to bring them to Jesus that He may slay them there. He brings no broken heart nor contrite spirit for a sacrifice unto the Lord; for if he can only get something to vamp him up in delusion and presumption, that he may have a name to live, and still retain his darling lusts, may still have his eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, he is well satisfied.

But the element of a soul that is born of God is to know a Holy Three-One Jehovah, a Holy Father, a Holy Son, and a Holy Spirit; and so to be brought near unto this holy Jesus as to receive a measure of His Spirit, to drink into His image, and to be conformed in some degree to His likeness. Whatever base sins I find in my heart (and I sometimes think that a more unclean, polluted wretch scarcely ever walked on

God's earth), I know that, when God the Spirit works on the soul, there are breathings after a Holy Jesus. I cannot take my sins and my corruptions and my base lusts unto God; I must leave them at the foot of the mount, as Abraham left the ass and the young men when he went up to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Our vile corruptions, our base desires, and our carnal mind must be left at the foot of the mount, if we would go up to the top of the hill, there to have communion with Jesus. And sure am I that, wherever sin is indulged, wherever the base appetites of our carnal nature are greedily plunged into, be it in thought or imagination—not to speak of word or action—it bars and shuts out all access to a holy God; it effectually excludes all communion with a broken-hearted and suffering Jesus. Therefore he who has not been taught this lesson—to trample at times on his base appetites and filthy lusts—knows nothing of what it is to live under the Spirit's blessed operation. But the desire of a living soul is to come to the holy hill, there to enjoy sweet communion with the holy Jesus; there to have his base lusts crucified by the Lord of life and glory: and glad would he be (as I at times have felt) never to be tempted or troubled by those sensual workings again. Aye, he would, if he could, live as holy as God is holy, and as pure as God is pure. But when he comes down from the mount, he returns, as on another occasion Abraham did, "to his place," and finds, again and again, the workings of that base nature, which make him sigh and groan.

2. Connected with this "holy hill of Zion," there were God's "*tabernacles.*" "Bring me to Thy holy hill, and to Thy *tabernacles.*" The temple erected by Solomon in Jerusalem, and the tabernacle set up by Moses in the wilderness, were but types of the true temple, the Lord of life and glory. The Lord Himself said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"—speaking of His own body. All the beauty

and glory of the temple were, therefore, figurative; they typified and shadowed forth the glory of Immanuel, for "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." God the Son has taken to Himself a body, according to those words in the fortieth Psalm, as quoted by Paul (Heb. 10:5): "A body hast Thou prepared Me"—a holy body, a sinless, spotless body; according to those words: "Therefore that *holy thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," and not only a holy body, but united to it a holy, spotless soul. "He shall see of the travail of His *soul*, and be satisfied." "*My soul* is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). This holy body, as united with a holy soul, the two forming His spotless human nature, the Son of God took into union with Himself, and thus became the God-man, Immanuel, God with us. It is this glorious mystery of godliness that a living soul pants to know. We cannot approach pure Godhead, we cannot understand it, it is a mystery too high and too deep for us; for who, "by searching, can find out God?" "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" (Job 11:7, 8). But when God would make Himself known to the children of men, He made Himself known by His only-begotten Son, the second Person in the glorious Godhead, taking into union with Himself the flesh and blood of the children; and thus we can, so far as the Lord gives us faith, approach to an invisible God through the visible God-man; as John says: "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." And, therefore, when Philip said to Him (John 14:8), "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" And why, but

because as He says in another place (John 10:30), "I and My Father are one."

The desire, then, of every living soul (I am sure it is my desire when the Lord is pleased to work it in my heart) is to be led by the Spirit of God into an acquaintance with the God-man, to behold the glory of God in Jesus Christ; to see the Godhead shining through the manhood, and yet to see the manhood veiling and yet deriving glory from the Godhead; and thus to come to Jesus as a High Priest that is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him; to feel nearness of access to the Father by approaching Him through the Son of His love; and thus to enjoy sweet communion with Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, God making Himself known by taking our flesh and blood into union with Himself.

In this blessed God-man then do all the affections of the renewed soul centre, to Him do the eyes of the living family look for the manifestation of the pardon of their sins, to this glorious Law-fulfiller does every travailing sinner turn, that he may catch, by the Holy Ghost opening his eyes, a glimpse of this God-man, and in seeing Him may see himself justified in Him. And thus in the longing desires of his soul, and the breathing forth of his heart, it is that he comes to the holy hill, and to God's tabernacles. Not to worship an unknown God—not to worship the God of creation, nor the God of providence, nor the God of his own carnal imagination, but to worship God in the tabernacle, that is, to worship God as giving the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now the Psalmist felt as every quickened soul feels—that he could not come to this holy hill, that he could not be brought into any acquaintance with these tabernacles, except light

and truth were sent out of God's sanctuary into his heart, to lead him and to bring him there. And thus, if we look at the experience of God's saints, we shall find that these two things are, day by day, more or less working in them, first, a feeling of their own ignorance, darkness, blindness, and sinfulness, causing them to moan, and sigh, and cry unto God; and secondly, coupled with this, the panting cry that light might come into their soul to disperse this darkness, that truth might be shed abroad in their hearts to make them free indeed, and that they, by seeing this light and feeling this truth, might be led every step, kept every moment, guided every inch; and thus surrounded by light and encompassed by truth might be led in this mysterious path unto God's holy hill, there to find the solemn realities of a Saviour's love and blood, there to enjoy sweet communion with the Three-One God, there to know that God dwelleth with man of a truth, there to feel that God has a tabernacle, and in having a tabernacle has taken up His abode with man, and by taking up His abode with man condescends to take up His abode in their hearts, and to manifest Himself unto them as He does not manifest Himself unto the world.

Every living soul is more or less here. It is an experience which accords with the teaching of the Holy Spirit in every soul into which He has breathed life. Some branches of Christian experience all the family of God are not as yet led into: there are depths into which God does not see fit to plunge all His redeemed; there are heights up to which He does not see fit as yet to lead all His ransomed. But the experience which I have been attempting to describe this morning, and of which I may venture to say that the Psalms, that manual of experience, are full, He communicates to each in his measure of all His ransomed family. There are many things in experience which only occur at distant intervals, under peculiar trials and temptations, but this branch which I

have been endeavouring to unfold this morning is a matter more or less of daily experience in the heart of every one whom the Spirit has quickened into a spiritual and supernatural life. The very panting of the soul after the enjoyment of these things implies a relish for and a foretaste of them. Such shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. But as certainly as the hungry soul shall be satisfied with good things, so he that lives and dies without knowing what it is to have light and truth sent into his soul, whereby he is led and brought unto the holy hill, there to know a holy God; and dies without being brought into some acquaintance with the tabernacles of God, so as to feel that God dwells with men of a truth; he that lives and dies without the vital knowledge of these things in his soul, will die in his sins, and where God is he will never come.