

## **The Anointing which Teacheth of All Things**

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"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."  
1 John 2:27

When Moses was with the Lord face to face for forty days upon the holy Mount, he received from his lips particular and minute instructions as to the construction of the tabernacle, with its various vessels of service, such as the ark of the covenant, the table of shew-bread, the altar of incense, the brazen laver, and the golden candlestick. But these vessels of service could not be employed in the ministry of the sanctuary, according to the various purposes for which they were intended, until they had been specially consecrated to a divine and holy use. The mode of this consecration was as much a part of heavenly instruction and divine revelation as the tabernacle itself and all its vessels of service. Moses was, therefore, directed to make "an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary;" and with this "holy anointing oil" to consecrate "the tabernacle, the ark of the testimony, the table and all its vessels, the candlestick, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering, and the laver, and thus to sanctify them, that they might be most holy." The various ingredients of this "holy anointing oil," with their exact weight and measure, were carefully prescribed; for in this, as in every other instance, the minutest directions were given by the Lord, from which there was allowed no departure and no variation. But let me read the directions which the Lord gave him, which you will find

Exodus 30:23-25: "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary;" in all fifteen hundred shekels, which, computing the shekel at 219 grains, somewhat less than half an ounce troy, will amount to about 57 lbs. troy weight. But in order to make this into an anointing oil, he was to add "of oil olive a hin," about five quarts. Now it does not seem likely that Moses was bidden to put all these spices and oil together in what I may call a rough way, without some manufacture or manipulation of these various ingredients; for we must bear in mind that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," who at that period were a highly civilized nation, and celebrated for embalming the dead and other arts which required a great deal of scientific and practical skill. But there is another reason from which we may gather that these ingredients were not roughly put together. The myrrh and cinnamon, calamus and cassia, in such large quantities, merely added to so small a quantity of oil, would soon have swallowed up and absorbed the whole. Most probably, therefore, as Moses was bidden to make the "holy anointing oil after the art of the apothecary," these spices were put with water into what is called an "alembic," itself an oriental invention, and in it distilled and a spirit formed from them. To this spirit, then, thus distilled from the spices was added the oil; the spirit having the effect, as we know it has to this day, of preserving it from rancidity, and also of communicating to it a sweet fragrance.

Of course all this, in common with the whole of the tabernacle service, was entirely typical, and as seen in the light of the Spirit highly and eminently instructive. This holy anointing oil, then, was emblematic of the unction of the

blessed spirit, whereby the people of God are sanctified unto his use and consecrated to his service, that they may be a holy people, and their worship and offerings "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

But after the Lord had given Moses these instructions as to the composition of the holy anointing oil, he added three *prohibitions*, all of which, no doubt, have a very special and significant import, and which therefore we shall do well to consider.

1. The first was this: "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured." It was not to be *profaned* to any common use. In that climate, as I shall presently show, ointment was very much used for bodily purposes; and but for this prohibition, some might have taken this holy oil with profane hands and anointed with it the flesh of their body. Now the Lord specially prohibited this profanation of the holy anointing oil as most displeasing to his eyes. But what spiritual instruction do we gather from this prohibition? Is it not that the unction of the Holy Spirit must never be profaned to any common or ungodly use? But is not this too often lamentably the case? How many profess to be called by the Holy Ghost to the work of the ministry, and as such are solemnly ordained or set apart to the service of God who evidently know nothing whatever of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, but rather seek for an entrance into one of the priests' offices that they may eat a piece of bread. The unction of the blessed Spirit, like the holy anointing oil, must not be thus profaned by being poured upon man's flesh; and woe to those who so profane it. It is to be restricted to spiritual persons and to spiritual purposes.

2. The second prohibition was: "Neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it." It was therefore not

to be *counterfeited* or imitated. It was to remain distinct and separate from every other ointment, and any imitation of it was prohibited by an awful penalty—the penalty of death; for such a transgressor was "to be cut off from his people." But is there not much significancy in this prohibition as well as in the former? Are not the graces and fruits of the blessed Spirit daily counterfeited? Ungodly, hypocritical men, men drunk with the spirit of delusion and error, are daily trying to imitate and counterfeit the unction of the Holy Spirit. How they come forth with their doctrines and their views, their teachings and their preachings, their sermons and tracts, their visions and revelations, as if they were under the teaching and influence of the Spirit of God. But God abhors the imposture. Nothing is admissible in the service of the sanctuary but his own teaching and his own testimony; and all carnal imitations of that holy anointing oil wherewith he alone consecrates both offerer and offering will be rejected by him with abhorrence. This prohibition has a wide, I may indeed say a most tremendous scope, for it cuts off nine-tenths of the preaching of the day. Where gifts are sanctified by the holy anointing oil, and consecrated to the glory of God and the good of his people, on them the blessing of God rests; but all attempts to counterfeit the unction of the Spirit will be rejected. How often, too, are carnal means sought after, in the preaching of the day, to touch the natural feelings and move the passions. And thus sometimes by pathetic, and sometimes by eloquent appeals to the natural feelings, they so work upon the mind as to raise up a false faith, a counterfeit hope, and a hypocritical love. But how awful will be the end of such an imitation and of such imitators! "The deceived and the deceiver are his" (Job 12:16); but both will be cut off from the people, and have neither part nor lot in the kingdom of God.

3. The third prohibition is equally significant. The holy

anointing oil was not to be put *"upon any stranger,"* under the penalty that he who so profaned it was to be cut off from the people. But what do we gather from this prohibition? Is it not that the unction and influences of the Holy Spirit, which are shadowed forth by the anointing oil, are restricted to the family of God; that those who are strangers to the covenants of promise, without God and without hope in the world, have no right to, no part in the sanctifying, consecrating influences of the blessed Spirit, and that those who would make them common and universal must expect to meet the resentment of a justly offended God?

I have brought forward these remarks in connection with "the holy anointing oil" by way of introduction to our text, in which we read of an "anointing," or, as it is termed in a preceding verse, the word being exactly the same in the original, an "unction": "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2:20); for this sacred anointing or unction, whereby the family of God are, as it were, consecrated to the service of God, was typified by the holy anointing oil, which I have just now been endeavouring to explain. Let us now, then, with God's help and blessing, approach our text; and in so doing, I shall endeavour to set before you,

I.—*First*, what this *"anointing"* is, in its *general nature and leading characteristics*.

II.—*Secondly*, the *special qualities* which John here assigns to it, which we shall find to be four: 1, that *"it is truth and no lie;"* 2, that it *"teacheth of all things;"* 3, that, to a certain extent, it *supersedes all other teaching;* and, 4, that *"it abideth"* in its recipient.

III.—*Thirdly*, what is the blessed *effect and fruit* of being a

partaker of this holy anointing: it enables us, by its divine teaching, *to abide in Christ: "even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."*

I.—The greatest blessing which God ever bestowed upon the church was the gift of his own dear Son. This is that "unspeakable gift," for which the apostle renders thanks unto God (2 Cor. 9:15), and the value of which never can in this life be fully known. But next to the "unspeakable gift," of his dear Son, we may say that the gift of the Holy Ghost is the second in value; for without the teaching and testimony, work and witness of the Holy Ghost in the soul, the unspeakable gift itself of the Son of God to the church would be to us without value or validity. In other words, in order that we may have a manifest interest in the atoning blood and justifying obedience of God's dear Son, we must have the influences and operations of the Spirit of God upon our heart to make the finished work of Christ effectually and savingly known. This heavenly teaching is the "unction" or "anointing" of which John speaks; and which he tells us we have "from the Holy One," even the Holy Son of God, and by which we "know all things" which are indispensable for our salvation and sanctification.

But I have to show you, with God's help and blessing, the *general nature and leading characteristics* of this anointing; and, in so doing, I must open up the literal figure to draw from it that spirit of instruction which it is intended to afford.

In oriental climes, oil is much more used and indeed much more required than in our humid climate. The air there is usually very dry, and the sun has during a considerable part of the year exceeding great power; the effect of which is to dry up the skin and hair. To counteract this harshness and other attendant consequences, the people were and are still

in the habit of rubbing oil into the pores of the skin, and profusely anointing the hair that they may not be arid and dry, but be softened and suppled, and preserved in health and beauty. But there is another reason also for the bodily employment of oil in the East. In that climate a vast quantity of light dust and sand is ever floating in the atmosphere, and this light dust and sand, getting everywhere into the clothes or resting on the exposed parts of the body, insinuate themselves into the pores of the skin, and thus keep up a continual irritation. Now this unpleasant consequence they counteract by rubbing the body well with oil. There is also a third reason which I hardly like to name, but still, as it is a valid one, I will just mention it. Those climates are full of minute insect life, winged and unwinged, which are a source of constant annoyance; and against these unpleasant visitants oil, rubbed into the body, is found to be the best remedy. For these reasons mainly, and there are others, connected with their luxurious habits and loves of perfumes, into which I need not enter, the use of oil and ointment of various kinds is practised in the East to an extent of which we happily are ignorant. This, then, being the habitual custom of those climates, and thus known to everybody, the Holy Spirit, writing in an oriental clime, has made use of this figure to convey by it spiritual instruction, some of which I hope this morning to lay before you; for there are many points in the figure which throw a blessed light upon the teaching and testimony of the Spirit of God in the heart. Let us look at a few.

1. The first obvious quality of oil which I will name is to *soften*. We know that it is used among ourselves in various manufactures to soften substances, such as hides and skins, which are naturally hard, and which without it would be utterly untractable. But oil is well and thoroughly rubbed into their pores, and renders them soft and supple. So in

medicine, it is made use of to soften hard tumours, to discuss them, as it is called, and thus remove and dissipate them; there being something in its very nature mollifying. That it was so used in ancient times we learn from the expression of the prophet, where, speaking of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, he says, "they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." (Isai. 1:6.) Oil, then, or ointment, is, in this sense, a blessed emblem and scriptural figure of the softening operations of the Holy Ghost upon the heart. We by nature, as some of us know by painful experience, have a very hard heart—a heart which the Scripture compares to the nether millstone, which is the hardest of all stones, and necessarily so, lest the sand of the stone should be mixed with the meal which it grinds. The Lord has graciously promised that he will "take away the stony heart out of our flesh, and will give us a heart of flesh." (Ezek. 36:26.) Our stony heart then needs to be softened; and what can effectually do this blessed deed but the teachings and operations of the blessed Spirit, who takes away the heart of stone and gives the heart of flesh, according to the promise, "I will put my Spirit within you," and again, "A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you?" Thus this sacred unction, this holy anointing, softens the heart. "The Almighty," says Job, "maketh my heart soft;" which he does by his gracious operations, softening and humbling, melting and dissolving the soul at the footstool of mercy. This, then, we may accept as a most certain truth, that all contrition of heart and brokenness of spirit, all godly sorrow for sin, real repentance, true humility, self loathing and self abhorrence are produced by this most blessed unction from the Holy One, and that without it of these fruits and graces there are none.

2. But oil is also very *penetrating*. If you let a drop of it fall upon a board or a table, how deeply it enters into its pores,



so that you can scarcely get it out again. There it will be for weeks and months, leaving a marked and durable, clear and visible influence. So it is with the operation of the blessed Spirit upon the heart. It penetrates; it does not lie upon the surface of the mind like a drop of water upon a pane of glass, without entering into the very pores. One drop of this holy anointing oil penetrates down into the deepest recesses of a man's heart, and especially enters into the pores of his conscience, into which it thoroughly sinks, making it at the same time soft and tender, as I have just been describing. If ever the word of God's grace reached your heart, it came there with a penetrating influence. It did not merely inform your mind or instruct your judgment, but it entered into your very soul. "The entrance of thy words giveth light." (Psalm 119:130.) It is, therefore, compared in Scripture to a "two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12.) But oil penetrates *softly*; it does not force its entrance in the same violent way that the sword does, by piercing and cutting; but rather by its soft and gentle influence, it penetrates deeply into the understanding to enlighten it, into the heart to melt it, into the conscience to make it tender, and into the affections to make them spiritual and heavenly. Thus it is peculiar to the gospel. The sword of the Spirit which cuts and pierces is the law; but the oil which penetrates and yet softens is the power of the gospel. O for more of the penetrating influences of the Spirit of God upon our heart, so as to reach the very inmost depths of our soul and "sanctify us wholly, so that our whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Thess. 5:23.)

3. But oil has another effect. It is *healing*; it forms the basis therefore of many healing applications. In the East, especially

in ancient days, the art of medicine consisted chiefly in external applications. The people being for the most part ignorant how to make internal medicines, little was taken in that form. But frictions of various kinds were chiefly employed, the basis of which was oil. Thus oil signifies spiritually what is *healing*. And what so healing as the unction of the Holy Ghost? what brings health and cure to a bleeding conscience, to a bruised heart, and a broken spirit like what the Scripture calls the "oil of joy?" Thus, in the same gracious prophecy in which the Lord declares that he is sent "to bind up the broken hearted," he proclaims also that he comes to give "the oil of joy for mourning." The good Samaritan, when he had taken up in his arms the man who had fallen among thieves, after he had examined and probed his wounds, poured in wine and oil—the one gently to stimulate, and the other to soften the flesh to heal. So the blessed Spirit, when he has well examined the wounds made by the law in a guilty conscience, pours in the oil of joy in sweet and blessed union with the wine of the gospel, and brings it health and cure.

4. But oil in those countries was also much used as an article of *food*. In those warm climates, butter cannot be made or kept; what is called "butter" in the Scriptures being not as we see it, but rather thickened milk. "She brought forth butter in a lordly dish." (Judges 5:25.) This was a kind of thickened milk, boiled over a fire to give it consistency, and put into a "lordly," or large and noble dish, to satisfy the hunger of the weary and hungry warrior. But a pat of our butter, however lordly might have been the dish, would have been but a poor refreshment for the thirsty and wayworn Sisera fleeing from pursuing Barak. Butter, then, in the shape in which we use it being scarcely known in the East, they use oil instead; and this being, at least when fresh, sweet and salubrious, forms a large part of their food, and is eaten by them with as much

relish as we eat butter; some substance of that nature being indispensable for our health, in the maintenance of our necessary bodily warmth. But what feeds the soul better than the unction of the blessed Spirit? As he takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the heart; as he sets before the eyes and puts as it were, into the very mouth the flesh and blood of the Lamb, how he feeds the soul! And not only so, but he warms as well as feeds; for as the warmth of our bodies could not be kept up except by partaking of fatty or oily food, so our souls cannot be warmed except by the love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. The Lord has promised that he will make in Mount Zion unto all people "a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow." (Isai. 25:6.) By this feast of fat things, the soul is warmed as well as fed; and thus the unction of the blessed Spirit satisfies the soul as with marrow and fatness (Psalm 63:5); by it the people of God are made fat and flourishing (Psalm 92:14); and are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house. (Psalm 36:8.)

5. But oil has still another use. Among the other offerings which the Lord bade the children of Israel bring for the service of the tabernacle, "was *oil for the light*." You will remember that amongst the vessels of service was a golden candlestick, or, as it should have been translated, "a lamp," for candles in those days were utterly unknown. Now this lamp gave light to the holy place, and therefore needed to be continually fed, for it was never suffered to go out. For this purpose, then, the purest oil—what Moses calls "pure oil olive beaten," that is, in a mortar, not ground in a mill, was used as giving the brightest and clearest light. (Exodus 27:20.) But is not this a striking type and figure of the light of the Holy Ghost? For what light is there comparable to the pure and holy light that he gives? And does he not give light to the church of God, as represented by the golden candlestick in

the sanctuary with its six branches and one central lamp, for it had seven to indicate its perfection? (Exodus 25:37.) All the light that we have is from the presence of the Holy Spirit in the sanctuary. How blessed it is personally and experimentally to realise this! What a light, for instance, he casts sometimes upon the Person and work of Jesus! What a light upon the sacred page, irradiating it as if with a beam from heaven! What a light, too, upon the truth as it is in Jesus, making it to shine, like the face of Moses, with a heavenly lustre; and what a light also upon the teaching and dealing of God upon your own heart, when you are favoured to see light in God's light.

6. But I must just mention one more general characteristic of oil before I pass on to its more peculiar features as opened up in our text. It was used on festal days *to adorn and beautify the person*. Thus we find that the maidens who were taken into the house of King Ahasuerus were previously anointed for six months with "oil of myrrh and six months with sweet odours." (Esther 2:12.) So the wise man says, "Let thy garments be always white, and let thy head lack no ointment;" and thus Amos, speaking of those who on their feast days "lie upon beds of ivory and stretch themselves upon their couches," says, that "they drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments." (Amos 6:6.) Ointment, therefore, being used on these festal occasions, became a figure of joy and gladness. This may explain the meaning of "oil of joy" and "the oil of gladness;" and of "oil to make man's face to shine." (Psa:104:15.) Spiritually, therefore, oil or ointment represents heavenly feasting, holy joy; what the Apostle calls "joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. 14:17.) So the Thessalonians "received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." (1 Thess. 1:6.) This is real joy, for it is of God, and a joy which no man taketh from its happy recipient.

II.—But having thus far dwelt upon what I have termed the *general characteristics* or leading features of oil or ointment, I shall now proceed to our next point, which was to show the *peculiar qualities* of "the anointing" in our text. You will recollect that I named four, which I shall now endeavour, as the Lord may enable, to lay before you. They are all deeply significant; and if the Lord has blessed you with any measure of this holy unction, you will be able to recognize them as more or less realised and experimentally felt in your own bosom. Look, then, well and see whether you can trace there the anointing; for if you possess it, it will have produced some measure of these four important qualities, laid down by the pen of John.

i. First, "it is *truth and is no lie*;" in other words, there is a solemn and *blessed reality* in it. You may be tried about many things in your experience, and in fact we are tried about almost everything connected with it, both in providence and in grace, for "the Lord trieth the righteous;" and it is the trial of our faith, which is "much more precious than gold that perisheth." But in spite of all our trials upon the point, all the exercises of our mind upon the subject, or all the suggestions of unbelief and infidelity against it, those who have ever experienced the anointing of the Holy Spirit know that "it is *truth*,"—that there is a divine and substantial reality in it. And how do they know this? Mainly by two evidences—the witness of the Giver and of the gift. Let me explain this double witness. Does not John say, "Ye have an unction *from the Holy One*;" and in our text, "The anointing which ye have *received of him*?" Who is this "Holy One" but the Holy One of Israel, the Holy Son of God? This anointing, then, being received of or from him, testifies to the Person of the Giver. The main work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus; to take the things which are his, and to show them to the

soul; to glorify him by some manifestation of his presence and power. Thus the anointing manifests, and by manifesting testifies of that glorious Son of God who received the Spirit without measure; who was anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King; and who being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, sheds it forth in the hearts of his people.

But this anointing is also known to be "truth and no lie," from the very nature of the gift and the witness which it bears of it. Thus it enlightens the eyes of the understanding spiritually to discern the things of the Spirit of God; raises up faith in the heart, whereby the Son of God is believed in unto eternal life; communicates a sweet hope to the soul, enabling it to cast anchor within the veil; and sheds abroad that love whereby Jesus and all that savours of him are embraced with every gracious and tender affection. As then divine and heavenly realities are revealed to the heart and sealed upon the breast by the anointing which manifests, discovers, and applies them, the anointing itself is seen and felt to be a most blessed reality, or, as John speaks, "truth and no lie." It may seem, perhaps, to some enthusiastic, and to others unsafe to trust to our feelings, and make them an evidence; and so it would be were they mere natural feelings. But they are not natural but supernatural, not carnal but spiritual, not earthly but heavenly, and therefore carry with them an evidence of their own. Is not this scriptural? Does not the apostle declare that "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God?" (Rom. 8:16); and does not John say, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself?" (1 John 5:10.) Indeed it is only in this way and in the light of this evidence that we really know "that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true." (1 John 5:20.) Whatever, then, Satan may suggest, or unbelief

whisper, or the darkness of our mind insinuate, or however ungodly men may ridicule or rail, we are brought, so far as we are favoured with this unction in sweet operation, to this point—that "it is truth and is no lie."

1. But as a convincing evidence, look for a few moments at what you hope the Lord has done for your soul, for these words will apply with greater or less clearness to every part of the work of grace. Look, then, at the first *convictions* which were wrought in your heart by a divine power. Was there not truth in them and no lie? It is no lie that you felt the weight and guilt of sin upon a burdened conscience; that you cried for mercy, and that with many sighs and tears; that you were conscious of the heart-searching presence of a holy God; and found no rest except in pouring out your heart before him. This was the effect of the anointing which you received of him; and therefore of it, even of the first drop, you can say, "It is truth and no lie;" for were not your feelings a reality, if ever you felt a reality in all your life?

2. Now pass on to any gracious *discovery* of the way of salvation to your soul; any manifestation of Christ to your heart; any application of the word of grace with power; any inward whisper of the Spirit to your spirit, rising up a hope in the mercy of God. Was not *that* a truth and no lie? You may be tempted at times to believe it was not real; that it was but a deception or a delusion. But when you are favoured with the same anointing again, and the same blessed feelings return, then you can say of the past as well as of the present, "It was truth and no lie."

3. Or look at any *promise* ever applied to your soul in a season of darkness and depression, to relieve your mind, to comfort your spirit, and bring you out of trouble. You may be sometimes tried as to the reality of its being from God; but

when the Lord again shines upon your heart, and brings once more the unction of his grace, then you can say, "It was truth and no lie."

4. But take another case. You may be sometimes tried about every *doctrine* that you have believed or professed to believe. Satan may stir up such unbelief in your carnal mind and such storms of infidelity that you doubt of everything, and seem tossed up and down on a sea of uncertainty, like Paul on the Adriatic, so that neither sun nor stars for many days appear, and no small tempest lies upon you. But when the blessed Spirit is pleased once more to anoint your soul with this heavenly unction, then you can say boldly, "It is truth and no lie." Man never invented these precious and heavenly truths. Good men would not invent them and bad men could not. Angels would not foist upon us lies as the word of God; devils could not, for it defeats all their devices, and proclaims their sin and ruin. From whom, then, came these blessed truths? From God. I feel their reality and certainty; I know they are true, for they came into my heart in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. What, then, he has been pleased to teach me out of his holy word by his Spirit and grace, I can set to my seal that "it is truth and is no lie."

This, then, is one peculiar and most blessed quality of the anointing of the holy Spirit, that it brings into your soul that certainty of God's word being his own most blessed truth, that you can stand firmly upon it in trial and temptation, sickness and death itself. "If we receive the witness of men," says John, "the witness of God is greater." This witness is the witness of the Spirit, as we read, "It is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth." (1 John 5:6, 9.) Thus, what God has revealed in the word, and what the blessed Spirit has revealed out of it to your heart, is inwardly known



and felt to be truth and no lie. Stand here, Christian: here keep your ground against sin and Satan, an unbelieving, infidel heart, a mocking, scoffing, scornful world. Here plant your foot and stand firm, that the anointing which you have received from the Holy One "is truth and is no lie."

5. The "holy anointing oil" which Moses made, you will recollect, as being compounded of the choicest spices, possessed a *fragrance* which must have made itself manifest when applied to the vessels of the sanctuary. This, indeed, is the very character of perfumed ointment, for, as Solomon says, "it betrayeth itself." (Prov. 27:16.) So when Mary took "the pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." Thus the anointing of the blessed Spirit makes itself manifest by its heavenly fragrance in the *hearts, lips, and lives* of God's people; for not only do "ointment and perfume rejoice the heart" (Prov. 27:9), but as the name of Jesus is "as ointment poured fourth," so "the savour of his good ointments" makes itself manifest in their words and works as truth and no lie.

ii. But I pass on to show another *special quality* which John attributes to this anointing: "*it teacheth of all things;*" that is, all things needful for our salvation and sanctification. He does not mean that it teaches us natural, scientific truth; that by this teaching we become linguists, historians, mathematicians, or philosophers. Such is not the mind and meaning of holy John here. What he means is, that this anointing teaches us of all things for our good and God's glory; of all things which to know is life eternal; of all things which will carry us safely and honourably through this vale of tears; of all things which to taste, handle, experience and enjoy, will be for our support under trouble, our deliverance from temptation, and our sure and safe passport into

heavenly bliss. And we need not want to know much more. All other knowledge fails us at the grave's mouth. It is well for time; but what will it do for us for eternity? Few men have a greater admiration than myself for mental ability, literary attainments, and the results of science and knowledge in the various departments of life. But I have long seen and felt how they all fail when death knocks hard at the door and will force an entrance. I have personally known men of learning, science, and mental ability; but I have seen that all their attainments left them without a knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. If, therefore, I have envied them their abilities and their attainments, I have not envied them their state or their end; and, in my right mind, would sooner have one drop of this holy anointing in my heart than all the knowledge which they possess, or all the powers of mind which they wield. But as this anointing teaches us "of all things," which mental ability cannot grasp and human learning cannot impart, we may now spend a few moments in looking at some of the things which it makes experimentally known.

1. It teaches us the *true knowledge of God*. Without this special anointing we have no right views, right apprehensions, or right feelings of that great and glorious Being with whom we have to do. His omniscience, his omnipotence, his purity, his holiness, his inflexible justice, and all his other glorious and eternal attributes are hidden from our eyes whilst we are still in nature's darkness and death. We may indeed have some natural conceptions in our mind, and some occasional convictions in our conscience of the holiness of God, and some indefinite apprehension of his universal presence and almighty power; but we do not really believe or feel or act upon them. It is at best but a general, floating idea, which has no effect or influence upon our heart or life. I do not think I am going too far when I say that we

need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to show us the very existence of God. Does not the apostle tell us that we are by nature "without God in the world," literally "atheist?" (Eph. 2:12); and does he not also declare that "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God;" and that "he that cometh to God must believe that he is." (Heb. 11:3, 6.) And is not this faith the gift of God and a fruit of the Spirit? (Eph. 2:8; Gal. 5:22.) Does not our Lord also declare that "to know the only true God" is a part of that "eternal life" which he has to give? (John 17:2, 3.) And does not our experience confirm this? How plain, then, is it both from Scripture and experience that we need the teaching of the blessed Spirit to convince us of the very being of a God, and that we are sinners before him.

2. But this anointing teaches us specially to *know Jesus Christ* whom he has sent. This is the second branch of eternal life; and, as being the gift of Jesus, it is thereby implied that it is brought into the heart by the power of his grace. We are also expressly told that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12:3.) Our own experience confirms these declarations, for we deeply and daily feel that we have no knowledge of his eternal Sonship and glorious Deity; no spiritual view of his pure and sacred humanity; no living apprehension of his complex Person, as Immanuel God with us; no gracious discoveries of his atoning blood as cleansing from all sin; of his obedience as justifying us from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses; of his dying love shed abroad in the heart; of his sufferings upon the Cross as bearing our sins in his own body on the tree; of his resurrection from the dead, so as to know its power; of his personal and present intercession at God's right hand, so as to have a manifest interest therein, except so far as they are revealed to us by the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. Yes; these

grand and glorious truths, in a true knowledge of which all salvation lies, are all hidden from our view, for there is a veil of unbelief and ignorance over our heart until the blessed Spirit destroys this yoke by his anointing. (Isa. 10:27.) But his holy unction teaches us of all these things, instructs us into their beauty and blessedness, their reality and truth, their sanctifying influence and power. How beautifully and blessedly did the Lord set this before his disciples in those gracious, those heavenly chapters in John's Gospel, whereby he sought to comfort their mourning hearts. How he promised them that he would send them another Comforter, who should glorify him, take of the things that belonged to him, and manifest them to their hearts. How those chapters, breathing forth in themselves a heavenly fragrance, are filled even to overflowing with most gracious declarations and promises in reference to the work of the blessed Spirit in making Christ known to the soul. These gracious declarations and divine promises were not spoken for their comfort only; but as the Lord, in his intercessory prayer, prayed not for his disciples only, but "for them also which should believe on him through their word," so to believers in every age do the same promises belong. It will be our richest mercy to have that holy anointing, whereby they become fulfilled in our heart.

3. Nor, again, do we know anything of our lost and ruined state by nature, or what *our hearts* really are in their thorough *nakedness* and hideous *vileness* before a holy God, except as this holy anointing instructs us into this deep and most painful mystery; for there is a "mystery of iniquity" as well as a "mystery of godliness." Without the light and life of this heavenly teaching we do not see or feel the depth of guilt and crime, misery and wretchedness, into which we are sunk in the Adam fall. We do not know the deceitfulness and hypocrisy of our desperately wicked nature; what it is capable of thinking, of saying, or of doing. Observe my word,

"capable;" I do not say that we either speak or do what we feel working within; but we see that there is a capability of wickedness in the human heart, yes, and in our heart, which exceeds all that ever has been thought, said, or done. Nor, again, do we see or feel our thorough and complete helplessness to save or deliver ourselves, and our inability to believe, to hope, or to love unto eternal life. In a word, we have no right views of God, and we have no right views of self: we neither see sin nor salvation, the malady nor the remedy; what we are in Adam the first, or what we are in Adam the second, except by the anointing which teacheth of all things.

4. But, again, by this teaching we are led into *"the truth as it is in Jesus."* There is not a branch of divine truth, not a part or particle, that we spiritually and savingly know but by virtue of this anointing. But "the truth as it is in Jesus" is a most comprehensive expression, for it includes the whole of God's revealed truth. It comprehends, therefore, every doctrine of our most holy faith, every promise and every precept. As then this anointing "teacheth of all things," it leads us into an experimental knowledge of the truth as it shines forth in the Person and work of our gracious Lord. And as by this anointing we are led into all truth, so by it we are preserved from all error. By this anointing also the precepts are made as dear to us as the promises; the whole truth of God is opened up and made known; and though I do not mean to say that any of us experience all that is contained in the truth, for how little do we really know, yet this I will say, that we know nothing as we ought to know of any one branch of divine truth, whether in doctrine, experience, or practice, in type or figure, promise or precept, except by virtue of this anointing. I will also add that what it teaches us that we know to some purpose; for the sanctifying, liberating power and influence of the blessed Spirit ever attend this

anointing, making the soul wise unto salvation. How, then, we need to be ever begging of the Lord to give us this unction from the Holy One, whereby we know all things! I, as a minister, who have to stand up in the name of the Lord to teach you, and you as a people, who desire to know the truth for yourselves in its saving efficacy and sanctifying influence,—what need we both have to beg of the Lord to favour us with this anointing; for not only does it sanctify us to the service of God, as the holy anointing oil sanctified Aaron and his sons, but it also makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light: not only does it give us a spiritual understanding of the mysteries of the gospel, but it sets up the kingdom of God in the heart, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Much we may learn by the wisdom of men; but all will fail us in a dying hour that we have not learnt by the teaching of God. But what we know by the Spirit's teaching and testimony will last through time, and I may say, through eternity.

iii. But I pass on to another *special quality* of this divine anointing, which is somewhat connected with that which I have just explained. This anointing, then, to a certain extent—I qualify the expression—*supersedes all other teaching*: "Ye need not that any man teach you." There is some allusion in this to the promise made in connection with the new covenant, that "they shall not teach every man his brother and every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest." (Jer. 31:34.) This teaching, then, supersedes all other teaching to this extent, that is not necessary or indispensable to a right knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Man may teach us many things; and, in fact, without instructors and tutors we cannot possibly learn the chief branches of education. Persons sometimes try to teach themselves modern languages; but a man might as well teach himself

music as to write and speak French and German without an instructor. I have know grown-up men, brought up without any real education, who, having become ministers, thought they would teach themselves Hebrew or Greek, so as to be able to read critically the Old and New Testaments. But what did they obtain with all their self instruction? Why, a vast amount of conceit, but no real knowledge. Languages, especially the ancient languages, cannot be so learnt. We must learn them in boyhood, when the mind is pliable, and the memory active and strong, and have them ground into us by many years' hard instruction, before we can be said to know them critically or usefully. That is the way in which I learned what little I know of the ancient languages, having had them ground into me for 15 or 16 years, first at a public school and then at College. But though I myself may possess a little of this knowledge, which I would not now be without, for I often find it very useful, yet I hope I estimate it at its right value, and see what a mercy it is for the poor, illiterate, uneducated family of God, that they have not to learn the language of Canaan by such laborious means as Greek and Latin are drilled into us in boyhood; that they need sit at no minister's feet to learn the pronunciation, the grammar, the syntax, and prosody of the heavenly tongue, so as to speak and write it correctly; but that the blessed Lord himself brings them to his feet, and there teaches them rightly to understand and rightly to speak the language of Zion. To a certain extent, then, for I qualify the word, this anointing, in great measure, supersedes other teaching; but does it supersede all? If so, why are you here this morning? What have you come to hear me for? Am not I, in a certain sense, your spiritual teacher and instructor? Don't you come to hear me open up the word of God—to teach you what I hope the Lord has taught me? We may learn much from one another, as the apostle says, "That all may learn and all be comforted." (1 Cor. 14:31.) I can say for myself that I can sit

at the feet of any one who I believe is taught of the Lord, and am glad to receive instruction from his lips, however poor or unlearned he may be. Nay, I have often got very great good from the poor saints of God, and have gathered profitable lessons from their conversation. Thus this teaching does not supersede such teaching as the teaching of the ministry, nor the teaching we get from conversation upon the precious things of God with those who fear his great name. But it supersedes human teaching in this way—that of itself, without any other instruction, it can and does lead the saints of God into a personal and experimental enjoyment of the power of God's truth. Thus in the absence of a gospel ministry, and the deprivation of every other means of grace, this anointing is all sufficient in itself to teach the saints of God the things which are for their eternal peace.

iv. One more *special quality* of this anointing remains to be considered—its *abiding* character: "The anointing which ye have received of him *abideth* in you." This is the very nature of oil—that you cannot get it out. Have you not sometimes dropped a drop of oil upon the boards, and all your rubbing and all your scrubbing cannot get it out again or efface the mark; so it is in a spiritual sense. If the Lord has dropped a drop of his holy oil upon your heart, and it has penetrated into the very pores of your conscience, nothing will ever get it out. And what a mercy it is that nothing ever will get it out. What floods of sin will sometimes roll over the holy spot into which the oil has dropped; but all the floods of sin can never wash it out. What waves of temptation and billows of God's displeasure may roll into and over the soul; but these waves and billows will never wash out the consecrated spot. What opposition from ungodly men—what fiery darts from hell—what doubts and fears, misgivings and apprehensions; but all these combined can never efface the holy anointing oil. Whatever a man may be in himself; however vile and filthy



he may feel himself to be; whatever the weight of sin that lies upon his conscience, nothing—nothing, no, nothing can wash out this anointing if God has been pleased to favour him with it. This is our meetness for heaven, for what the Lord does he does for ever; and his gifts and calling are without repentance. This is the saint's richest mercy that what the Holy Spirit has communicated can never be effaced or blotted out. If sin could do it, would not sin have done it long ago? If temptation could do it, would not temptation long since have succeeded in drying up, like a wind from the desert, every trace of it? If Satan could do it, would he not long ago have triumphed with hellish glee over defacing the workmanship of God? But this is the blessedness and this the security of the saints of God, that the anointing which they receive from the Holy One abideth in them uneffaced and ineffaceable.

III.—Now, to come to our last point, on which, as I have already somewhat trespassed upon your attention, I must be brief—the *spirit and effect* of this anointing: "Even as it hath taught you, ye shall *abide in him*." The Apostle speaks here of two things—what this anointing has done, and what it will continue to do.

What has it already done? What are its past fruits and effects? Two, chiefly. To give union, and to maintain union with the Son of God. "Our fellowship," John tells us, "is truly with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3.) But whence came this fellowship? From the anointing; for "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit"—so that the anointing gives union with Christ. As then it gives union with Christ, so it also produces communion; and as this union and communion abide by virtue of the abiding of the anointing, it enables the soul to abide in him—never to leave him, as he never will leave it, and never forsake him, as he will never

forsake it. But thus to abide in him is the fruit of his abiding in us. "Abide in me and I in you." "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." But how do we abide in him? By his Spirit and grace; and how does he abide in us? By his presence and his word, both of which are by virtue of the anointing of the Spirit. O what a divine reality there is in these things! May we not say of them, as of the blessed Lord himself, that they are "all our salvation and all our desire?"

But, now to keep you no longer, let me ask you in all simplicity and sincerity, what you know of this anointing? Can you feel, as it were, as if holy John were himself personally addressing you and saying to you, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things;" "the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you?" Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart? One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you for ever to the service of God. There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle, when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated; for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregation, as well as all the vessels, with all their various appurtenances. When he went through the sacred work, he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle. There was no repetition of the consecration wanted; it abode. So if you ever had a drop of God's love shed abroad in your heart; a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in Jesus; a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal, to feed, and give light, life, and power to your soul; you have the unction from the Holy One; you know all things which are for your salvation; and by that same holy oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance. Examine these heavenly mysteries: look to them well, and see whether you

can bless God for having bestowed one drop of this holy anointing oil upon your soul.