

## **The Knowledge of Christ, and of the Power of His Resurrection**

Preached at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, London, on Thursday Evening, July 13, 1843

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection."  
Philippians 3:10

When God created man in his own image, after his own likeness, and placed him in the garden of Eden, he gave him this one prohibition, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:16, 17.) God thus prohibited Adam from seeking the knowledge of good and evil: he was to be fully satisfied with knowing his Creator, and not to grasp at any other knowledge than that which was contained in God himself. When Satan, then, tempted the woman, it was by holding out some advantage as the fruit of disobedience. His words were, "God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5.) Elevation into Godship and into knowledge, as yet unattained to, was the bait that the arch-deceiver laid before her, the peculiar temptation that he presented to her mind. And the Holy Ghost has revealed how that temptation worked: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." (verse 6.)

Now there were three things that worked with, and constituted the chief force of this temptation. First, that "the

tree was good for food." Secondly, that "it was pleasant to the eyes." And thirdly, "that it was to be desired to make one wise." To this temptation she listened; and as it entered into her mind, it bred these three desires working powerfully together—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the lust of knowledge. Under their united power she fell, and by so doing disobeyed the solemn prohibition of God. And then, by drawing the man, in whom as their covenant-head all his posterity stood, into the committal of the same sin with herself, she involved the whole human race in one common gulph of misery and ruin. And alas! this "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" has been in the heart of man ever since, striking its deep root downward, and bringing forth its bitter fruit upward: for the thirst which our first parents had after knowledge, at any price and at any cost, is still continually alive in their posterity, craving the same gratification. I can speak experimentally on this point; for I think few persons have had from childhood a greater thirst after human knowledge than myself. Nay, even since the Lord has quickened my soul, though fully convinced of its emptiness and worthlessness, I have felt the strongest temptations to indulge eagerly in the pursuit of it; and one of the greatest exercises of my mind, and what has often brought guilt upon my conscience, has been an inordinate thirst after the various branches of human knowledge, it being so suitable to my natural disposition, as well as fostered by the whole course of my education. But it is a seduction which draws away the soul from spiritual things, fosters the native infidelity of the heart, and leads it to seek its happiness in external things, instead of that which is to be found in the knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

But this was the first and strongest temptation. And I doubt not that the Apostle Paul was similarly exercised; for if he

had not naturally had a great thirst after human knowledge, he would not have sat as he did at the feet of Gamaliel, who was a man so deeply skilled in all the various branches of learning then pursued. But when he had once powerfully felt the hand of God in his soul, he was brought to see that all his attainments in human knowledge were mere vanity and emptiness. He deeply felt the utter nothingness of human learning to speak pardon and peace; and, by the mighty work of the Holy Ghost on his heart, he was brought to part with every creature attainment, and all human wisdom, for the knowledge of that one grand Object, which is the only one really worth knowing, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

The Apostle was in this sweet and blessed frame of mind, counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, when, under divine inspiration, he wrote this chapter. But it may be as well, before we enter into the experimental meaning of the words of the text, to trace out the work of grace which God was carrying on in his soul, and which brought him into that spiritual state of mind, so as to "count all things but dung that he might win Christ." He had told us, that those only were the true circumcision who "worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and *have no confidence in the flesh.*" It was this last expression which led him to enter into his own experience, for he says, "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh." And then he tells us whence he might derive his fleshly confidence. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." He then goes on to enumerate certain particulars, which in those days the pharisaical Jews chiefly rested in as ensuring them the favour of God, such as, "Circumcised the

eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Well might he, then, on these grounds, as a blind, ignorant Pharisee, have had a feeling of confidence in the flesh; and till the day of his death would he have rested here, if God had not mercifully opened his eyes to see his own guilt and misery; and thus cut from under his feet the ground whereon he rested. He therefore goes on to say, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Thus God, by a secret and powerful work in his conscience, not only cast down all his fleshly confidence, stripped him entirely of his natural religion, showed him the emptiness of every hope in which he had so fondly trusted, and by sending his holy law into his conscience, slaughtered him outright (Rom. 7:9); but also, he manifested to his understanding, and revealed in his soul a precious Saviour, and thus drew forth all the affections of his heart, fixing them wholly and solely upon Jesus. He then saw by the eye of faith such loveliness and preciousness in Christ, that every other object of desire or affection faded away; and those aims and pursuits which once seemed his richest gain, he could now rejoice in and pursue no longer; they utterly sank in his esteem; vanity and emptiness were stamped upon them; and he counted them as absolute loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

Before, then, any one can experimentally enter into these words, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection," he must experimentally pass through something of the same process as the Apostle; every thing must be taken away from him in which he once fondly trusted, every false hope must be demolished, and all

creature good felt to be vanity and emptiness. These things must be wrought experimentally by a divine power in his soul; and their effect will be to bring him down into the dust and ashes of self-abasement. And when the sinner is brought thus to sink down before God into all the felt ruin of the creature, it is the work of the blessed Spirit to take of the things of Christ, and reveal them to his heart and conscience, and so fill him with love to the Lord of life and glory. Then every thing else, as well as every other object of hope or desire, will sink in his esteem as dross and dung in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

We will now look, then, with the Lord's blessing, at the two main features in the text.

I.—*The knowledge of Christ.*

II.—*The knowledge of the power of his resurrection.*

I.—*"That I might know him."* But did not the apostle know him? Who ever possessed a tongue to speak forth greater or more blessed things concerning the riches of Christ's glorious Person, atoning blood, justifying righteousness, and finished salvation, than the great apostle of the Gentiles? Were these things with him mere doctrines and theories, and had he not in his soul an experimental acquaintance with the Lord Jesus? Had he not received the secret communications of Christ's dying love into his heart? Yes, surely. It was the very manifestation of these heavenly realities which brought him to desire more of them, and more intensely and ardently to seek them. The opening up of the treasures of Christ's love and blood in his soul, brought him to pant more earnestly after the enjoyment of them. He saw such unsearchable riches in Christ, that he found he knew so little of what was

to be known, felt so little of what was to be felt, and lived so low, and so much beneath the enjoyments which were to be had in Christ, that in comparison he seemed to know nothing at all. He looked at his present experience, and saw how faint and feeble it comparatively was; and this made him vent forth his longing desires to know more of Jesus. In order, therefore, to have the same desires after the knowledge of Christ which the apostle had, there must be the same teachings by the blessed Spirit in our heart which were given to him. For unless the same experimental knowledge of Christ is imparted in a measure to us, Jesus will be to us but as "a root out of a dry ground;" there will be "no form nor comeliness" in him, nor any "beauty that we should desire him."

When, therefore, Paul said, "That I may know him," he was brought to that point where God brings all his people, to feel thoroughly convinced in their consciences that no man has any spiritual knowledge of Jesus except by the special revelation of the Spirit; as he himself declares, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." So when the Lord asked his disciples saying, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" and they answered, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias; or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Then Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But what did the Lord Jesus then say? Did he compliment Peter on the exercise of his reasoning powers? No; but answered, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16:13-17.) The same solemn testimony the Lord bore in those remarkable words, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. 11:27.)

Nature in the exercise of all her faculties, and with all her reasoning powers, never knew anything experimentally of Christ. The flesh may know him doctrinally, in the letter of the word, but it never knew him in spirit and in power, nor by experimental revelation, special teaching, and divine demonstration of the Holy Ghost in the heart.

Before, then, any person can say feelingly, "That I may know him," he must be brought to this point—that he never can know Christ by any creature ability, or by any exercise of the human intellect; that he never can receive such knowledge from man, whether it be from his own or from any other person's instruction. In order therefore that he may feel his utter inability to bring this knowledge into his heart, he must lie under the burden of this truth, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Thus these two things are absolutely necessary to be wrought with power into a man's experience, before he can enter into the spiritual meaning of the text; first, a deep sense in his heart and conscience of the utter inability of the creature spiritually and experimentally to know a precious Christ; and secondly, that it is the work and office of the Holy Ghost inwardly to reveal the Person, blood, righteousness, grace, and love of Jesus. And thus, the deeper the soul sinks in the knowledge of its ignorance, the higher it will rise in the knowledge of the Person and work of Christ; and the more the eye is anointed with eye-salve to perceive the ruin and misery of the creature, the more the soul will be brought to see that the glorious mysteries of salvation can only be realized by the special manifestations of the Holy Comforter, whose office it is to lead the child of God into all truth. The desire, then, of the apostle was to know Christ, and to have an experimental acquaintance with every thing belonging to and springing out of Christ.

1. He therefore desired to know *the glory of his Person* in the union of the Godhead with the manhood, in his complex character of Immanuel, "God with us." This is a mystery which nature has never fathomed, and which human reason never can comprehend. The more we look at it in the light of carnal reason, the more we are lost in utter amazement at this mystery; and after being, perhaps, tossed for a season to and fro with doubt and infidelity, and fully convinced that we are utterly unable to extricate our souls by sense and reason from the labyrinth in which they are lost, we are brought at last to this point, to receive the truth as a little child. For it becomes sealed in our conscience, that the kingdom of heaven is not to be entered into by climbing up into gospel mysteries by the ladder of human reason; but, as a little child receives the first rudiments of human knowledge, not by doubting, but simply on the authority of its teacher, so must the soul receive the great mysteries of truth from the mouth of God with unction and power. And thus the eye being anointed with eye-salve to see the union of God and man in one glorious Person, and the conscience being divinely wrought upon to feel what God speaks, the soul is no more left to reason about it, or to puzzle and perplex itself with the mystery, "How can it be?" but is made to sink down into the posture of a little child, and to receive with meekness a truth which is so sweet and suitable to its lost and ruined condition. There can be no earnest desire to know Christ, nor any holy panting after a spiritual revelation of him, while the heart is pursuing worldly objects; nor can there be any ardent seeking after a sight by faith of his glorious Person, while the mind is only speculatively informed, or, as in the case of too many, the judgment merely enlightened, without any divine savour or spiritual affection in the soul. But he who is spiritually taught is at times not only panting with holy longing and intense desires to know Jesus as Immanuel, but also that this blessed God-

Man would come down in his heavenly power, in all his sweetness and suitability, and take up his abode in his soul, conforming it to his own image and likeness.

2. But again. In desiring to "know him," the soul desires to know every thing connected with him, and which springs out of him. It desires, for instance, to know the virtue of *his atoning blood*, which is derived solely from the union of the manhood with the Godhead in one glorious Person; for if Christ had not been God as well as man, there would have been no virtue in the blood shed upon the cross to atone for sin. But when the soul is brought to enter into the glorious mystery of an incarnate God, and the heart is drawn out to this Lord of life and glory as the centre and the object of its love and worship, then it is taught to feel the preciousness, and set a due value on the effects of Christ's atoning blood, and know it to be, as the Apostle says, "the blood of God." "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.)

As long as a man lies dead in nature's darkness, he does not know, neither has he any desire to know anything of this fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. He has never groaned under, nor felt the burden of sin; he has not smarted under the bite of that adder whose sting is unto death, and which causes a living conscience to bleed at well nigh every pore. In order therefore that he may be taught to set a right value upon the nature and efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, a man must be made spiritually to feel the greatness of his iniquity. Men talk of the blood of Jesus Christ as though any one could understand the glory of that mystery; but the blood of Jesus Christ is only to be known experimentally by the application of it to the guilty conscience. It is not for the whole-hearted, for those who are settled on their lees, and are at ease in Zion, who never

groaned under the burden of sin, to know the balm of Jesus' blood. The blood of the Lamb is not applied to any but to the sin-sick, broken, and contrite heart. And whenever the spirit is broken, and taught to feel the burden of sin, sooner or later it is brought experimentally to taste the preciousness of the blood of sprinkling. And while the heart is thus opened by the Holy Ghost to feel its power, there will arise panting desires after a deeper acquaintance with its atoning efficacy and its cleansing power to purge the conscience from all its sin, guilt, and filth. Nor will these desires and this experience suffice for once only in a man's life. For whatever he may have known of its efficacy and power, whenever any discovery is made of new sin, or any fresh breaking out of old, he will be sure to need a fresh application of the balmy blood of Immanuel to his conscience, as that which alone can cleanse and wash it away.

3. But again. In desiring "to know" Jesus, the soul that is anointed by the Holy Ghost to see Christ's glorious Person and finished work, is also panting, as the Spirit is pleased to work upon it, to know, in personal experience and by divine manifestation, *Christ's justifying righteousness*. What is Christ's justifying righteousness to a Pharisee? to one dead in sin, or buried in the world? Until we are brought by the Holy Ghost to feel the guilt of sin in the conscience, and to know that we are utterly ruined and undone in ourselves, and stand naked and filthy before God, we cannot hunger nor thirst after the appropriation of that glorious robe of imputed righteousness which Christ wrought out and brought in, and which the Holy Ghost puts upon all those that believe in his name.

4. Again. The soul that desires to "know him" thirsts also after a blessed revelation of *his dying love*. When the eye is spiritually opened to see the glory of Christ's Person, it

follows him as a suffering Mediator to Calvary, there to view him as a crucified Jesus, as the Lamb of God bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. And as the child of God looks by faith to the bleeding Lamb, he desires to have a spiritual revelation and manifestation of the mystery of the cross to his heart, and by this dying love entering into his soul, he may "be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." (Eph. 3:18, 19.) The dying love of Christ spiritually felt and realized can alone wean the soul from the world, and make the things of time and sense to appear in their true light, as stamped with vanity and vexation of spirit. The dying love of Christ, also, revealed to the soul, is the only thing that can make us love Jesus, and cleave to him with full purpose of heart; and nothing but this can make us willing to leave the world, and part with the things of time and sense that so we may "ever be with the Lord."

5. But in desiring to know Jesus by the teaching and revelation of the Holy Ghost, the soul that is born of God longs after a manifestation of him *in all his covenant characters and relations*. Is he spiritually held up before the eyes of the understanding as *the great High Priest* over the house of God? As such is he spiritually longed after to be known, that the power of his priestly intercession may be felt and realized? Is he set forth in the Scriptures as the *Church's Bridegroom and Husband*? As such does the heaven-taught soul desire to realize his presence, and cry with the Bride (Song 1:2), "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine." Is he *the Church's Lord*? As such does she desire to bow at his feet, and say, "Other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." (Isa. 26:13.) Is he *the Church's ever-living and ever-loving head*? Out of his ever-

flowing and overflowing fulness does she long to receive, and grace for grace. Is he her *Advocate, Intercessor, Mediator, Brother born for Adversity, yea, Friend* who sticketh closer than any earthly brother? As the Lord Jesus in those different covenant characters and endearing relationships is presented to the eyes of the spiritual understanding, faith flows out towards, hope anchors in, and love clasps firm hold of him as thus revealed; and thus ardent desires and fervent longings are kindled in the soul to know him experimentally in all these relations, and inwardly realize their sweetness and power. Every character that Jesus sustains has some reference to the felt and urgent wants of his people; and thus as they are from time to time brought into those circumstances of need and distress to which he in these various characters is suited, their desires flow forth toward him, that he would thus graciously manifest himself unto them. And thus, whatever treasures of grace and truth dwell in him, "in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell," as each are spiritually and successively made known to the soul, it desires inwardly and experimentally to realize them. Nor does it want the gifts severed from the Giver, or the love from the Lover; but as the enamoured bride desires to possess the husband as the centre of her affections, so does the soul taught of God desire inwardly to possess Jesus as the centre of her spirit's worship and heart's affections.

II.—But the apostle in the text not only desired to know Christ, but also to know "*the power of his resurrection.*" What does he mean by the "power of Christ's resurrection?" In order to understand what is meant by the *power*, we must look a little at the *nature* of Christ's resurrection. The reason why the Scriptures speak so much of Christ's resurrection is, because it was, so to speak, the stamp which God put upon his work upon the cross. The visible proof that God gave that

Jesus was the Son of God, was, that he raised him up from the dead. As the apostle says (Romans 1:4), "Declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the grand point which the apostles enforced in their preaching; and it makes the most prominent feature in every sermon recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the seal of his being the promised Messiah, the Christ of God. It was the Father's visible and undeniable testimony that he had finished the work which had been given him to do; and that being raised up by the power of God, the authority and approbation of God himself was undeniably stamped upon all that he meritoriously did and suffered.

But again. The resurrection of Christ is not merely the authoritative stamp which God set upon his work, but sets forth also the regeneration of the soul, according to those words, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." The Scriptures of the New Testament very much connect together the resurrection of Jesus with the regeneration of his people. The Church had an eternal union with the Son of God as her Covenant Head. She was therefore mystically crucified, buried, and raised up with Christ. The same power which raised up Christ from the dead works in her heart (Eph. 1:19, 20); so, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, she is to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4); and being "risen with Christ she seeks the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." (Col. 3:1.) Had the Church not risen with Christ she could not have been regenerated in due time by him. But the members virtually rising with their glorious Head, each in due season receives life out of him, as it says, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. 26:19.) Thus Christ's resurrection is the cause of the soul's

regeneration; and regeneration is the inward proof of Christ's resurrection, and of an interest in it. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:38.)

1. As the resurrection, then, of Christ was the grand, visible stamp of God's approbation of his finished work, the decisive witness which the Father gave that he was his only-begotten Son, the promised Messiah, the Christ of God; to know the "power of his resurrection," is to know the power of God's approbation of the finished work of Jesus, and to have the stamp which God puts upon his dying love and atoning blood experimentally sealed upon the conscience. So that, in knowing the power of Christ's resurrection, the soul not only knows that the work of redemption is finished, that the Son of God has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that he has "finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24); but in knowing the approbation of God to be put upon the finished work of Christ, it is experimentally brought to feel that its sin is entirely put away, and its iniquity for ever abolished.

2. But Christ's resurrection, I observed, is also connected with the regeneration of his people. If Christ had not risen from the dead, all his people would have eternally perished; as the Apostle says, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. 15:17, 18.) But when Jesus rose from the dead all his elect spiritually and mystically arose with him, and thus his risen life at the right hand of the Father becomes their quickening life, for "the last Adam is a quickening Spirit;" and "those who have been

planted in the likeness of his death are also planted in the likeness of his resurrection." To know, then, the power of Christ's resurrection is to know the power of his risen and endless life in the soul, and to feel the quickening energy and efficacy of his Spirit creating vital faith in the heart.

Thus, when sunk in carnality, darkness, and death, the soul longs to feel a sweet and blessed revival, it desires to know the power of Christ's resurrection. By virtue alone of his risen life can it arise out of that miserable state of barrenness and carnality into which it is so often sunk; and did not he for ever live who is our life, long ago would it have sunk to rise no more. His "visitation alone preserves our spirit;" and when the soul pleads "Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee?" it breathes forth in that petition its desire to know the power of Christ's resurrection.

3. But Christ in rising from the dead, rose triumphant over sin. He sank into the grave overwhelmed, as it were, with sin; for according to covenant engagement, God the Father, in making his soul a sacrifice for sin, caused to meet upon him the iniquities of all his redeemed; and in bearing their iniquities he poured out his soul unto death. But when Jesus rose from the dead all the sins of his church were left in the sepulchre. The reproach of Israel was rolled away with the stone that was rolled from the tomb where the Lord lay; and he rose as a justified person, as the apostle says, "justified in the Spirit" (1 Tim. 3:16); and therefore the Lord said in prophecy, "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me?" To know, then, the power of Christ's resurrection is to be delivered from the guilt, filth, and power of sin in the conscience. Thus the knowledge of the pardon of sin is intimately and experimentally connected with the power of Christ's resurrection. God the Father has connected together the justification of the Head and the members, for "Christ

was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." In desiring, then, to know the power of Christ's resurrection, the soul desires to feel and know that "by him it is justified from all things from which it could not be justified by the law of Moses." As therefore when Jesus rose from the tomb, the sentence of justification was openly and visibly pronounced upon him, so when his resurrection is felt in the soul, a sentence of justification is passed in the conscience; and to know this is to know "the power of his resurrection."

4. But when Jesus rose from the dead, it was not to tarry here below. His words to his sorrowing disciples were, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." (John 16:7.) And again, "I go to prepare a place for you." Thus he rose from the dead that he might ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God; and that his risen life might be their spiritual life. According to those words, "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4.) And therefore the Apostle says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) To know, then, the power of Christ's resurrection, is to know experimentally the power of that life which Christ now lives at the right hand of God for us; that he may be "our life," working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, and leading our souls up to himself that we may receive out of his fulness grace, mercy, and truth. To know, then, the power of Christ's resurrection in this sense, is to know the communications of that grace which raises us up out of that deadness and carnality which so often seizes hold of us; and, by virtue of the inflowing of the life of Christ, to be experimentally lifted up and brought out of that pit of worldliness, carelessness, and sensuality

into which we so often sink, and beneath the mud and mire of which we feel as if suffocated. By the power of his resurrection we are kept from being altogether swallowed up and buried in the pool of our corruptions; by the power of his resurrection we are enabled to cry and sigh for deliverance; and by the power of his resurrection alone do we ever obtain it. Jonah, the type of Christ, came out of the whale's belly by the power of Christ's resurrection; and never would he have issued from that dark and doleful dungeon, had not his great Anti-type already, in the mind of him "who calleth those things which be not as though they were," risen from the dead.

5. Again. Does Death, the King of Terrors, ever alarm and terrify us? And is our mind sometimes perplexed how we shall be able to face this solemn messenger, who comes to summon us into the presence of God? To know the power of Christ's resurrection is to know a deliverance from this King of Terrors; for Jesus has passed through his territories, and disarmed him of his sting: he has perfumed the grave for all his saints by lying in it. Nay more; he has "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel." As the Apostle says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2:14, 15.) Thus "as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall all (that is, of the election of grace) be made alive." When, then, by a blessed reception of Christ's resurrection into the soul, the fear of death is taken away, this is to know the power of Christ's resurrection.

6. Again. Do we backslide? Does the soul depart from its first love? Is the heart overcharged with the cares of this life? Have carnality, carelessness, lukewarmness, and worldliness laid hold of the mind? To know the power of Christ's resurrection is to know a spiritual deliverance out of this God-dishonouring state. Every touch of God's spirit in the conscience, every look of mercy or of reproof, every going forth of the heart in secret prayer, every promise made sweet to the soul, every breathing of spiritual affection, every emotion of filial fear, every act of living faith, every sensation of godly sorrow—in a word, every recovery out of darkness and death, springs out of Jesus' risen life, and is therefore a knowledge of the power of his resurrection. When we do not look to him, nor live upon him, how we faint and sink in the way. How the hands hang down, how the knees totter, how the feet limp, how the lips stammer, how the heart becomes weak as water; and how all our religion seems to have left us, and we can scarcely find a grain of godliness remaining. Thus the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness, and the power of a risen Jesus is as much felt in raising up the soul now as it will one day be experienced in raising up the body.

If any of you, then, are brought to that spot where the Apostle was when he breathed forth these desires, it is because you have been led experimentally and vitally into these two things—to know yourselves, and to know the Lord; to know sin, and salvation; the malady, and the remedy; your wretched, lost, and ruined state by nature, and what Christ has done for every one who cometh unto God by him. Those, then, whom the Holy Ghost thus teaches, and whom he brings to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, do not learn these vital truths merely in the letter of the word, but they have an inward experience of their reality and power. But there is this peculiarity in the scholars of Christ's

school, that they never can make themselves masters of their lesson. Unlike other pupils, they never "finish schooling;" and, after all the instruction bestowed upon them, die with their lesson but a quarter learnt. As Paul says, "We see through a glass darkly." Every ray of light serves but to manifest more our own darkness, and every fresh teaching convinces us more of our own ignorance. What we have only makes us long for more; and thus all the saints can join heart and hand with the apostle, in desiring to know Jesus and his power of resurrection. And this will run through every state and stage of experience. Is the soul doubting and fearing? There will be an experimental longing to feel an interest in the blood of Jesus; and these earnest desires will vent themselves in prayer and supplication for the manifestation of mercy, peace, and pardon. Does the conscience feel guilt, and lie as it were bleeding under the wounds made by sin? The longing desire of the soul will be to know Jesus, in the spiritual manifestations of himself, to take this guilt away. Does it feel darkness covering it like a pitchy cloud? Its longing desire and panting cry will be to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, that by the shining in of the beams of the glorious Sun of Righteousness, it may see light in his light. Do temptations assault the mind? The soul desires to know him who was in all points tempted like as we are, and to feel the power of his resurrection by which he rose triumphant over them all. And just in proportion as he and the power of his resurrection are experimentally known, will the soul have a testimony, sealed with his own divine power.

A few sound Scriptural sentiments, or a mere tissue of doctrines in the head will never satisfy one taught of God. He must have an experimental enjoyment of their savour and power in his conscience; he cannot live comfortably, nor die happily without it; he must have the Spirit's own witness in

his heart, and the Lord's own presence in his soul. Thus, while some are wise in the letter, and are perfectly satisfied with a mere doctrinal knowledge of the truth, he feels deeply and daily his wretched ignorance when not sensibly blest with divine teaching, and wants to be taught of God; while some are gathering together, with a wonderful deal of pains, heaps of bricks and slime to build up their Babel of confusion, he is seeking after the blessed revelations of Christ in his heart as the hope of glory; whilst others are resting their salvation upon the bare letter of the Bible, he hangs all his hope upon the finished work of Christ as experimentally made known in his heart; and while others are doing their works to be seen of men, and living upon the breath of the creature, he, in the stillness of his chamber, and in the depths of a broken heart, is looking wholly and solely unto the Lord.

How a living man can go on continually in a profession of religion for days, months, and years, contented with a sound creed and a few dreamy hopes, without any dissatisfaction with himself, or without repeated sighs, groans, and pantings after the Lord Jesus that he would make known in his soul the secrets of his dying love, and manifest himself unto him as he does not manifest himself unto the world, is a mystery which I cannot understand. It is a secret which I do not know, nor do I wish to know. Sooner than be such a professor as that, I would make no profession at all; rather than be such a self-deceived, hardened wretch, with a name to live whilst dead, I would be a mere moral man, and make no pretensions to spiritual religion whatever. I am very sure Paul would have not owned such, for he was quite decided "to know not the speech of them which were puffed up, but the power." And what a contrast does he afford in his experience, as mentioned in the text, with such notional professors. Though he had been in the third heavens, and

had seen and heard there things which it was neither lawful nor possible for a man to utter, yet he does not come forth like a mighty giant towering aloft, and looking down with pride and contempt upon the dwarfs at his feet; but he drops down into nothingness, and says, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given;" "who am not worthy to be called an Apostle;" "the chief of sinners;" "though I be nothing;" "that I may know him," as if as yet he knew nothing as it was to be known. And why was this, but because his eyes had been spiritually opened to see the unsearchable riches of the Lord of life and glory; and one view of them had filled him with a deep sense of his own ignorance. But what a contrast does his experience form with the state of those who are wise in the letter of truth, but despise and ridicule all experience and the work of God in the heart. And what a contrast does his childlike teachability and his humble lying at the foot of the cross, present to the dead confidence and hardened presumption of many modern professors!

I wonder how many in this congregation are in the same spot with the Apostle Paul! How many as they lie on their midnight couch are panting after a knowledge of Jesus by his own special manifestations of himself! How many find the world, and the spirit of it, embittered to them, so that they can find neither rest nor happiness in it, and therefore seek it all at the foot of the cross? How many, driven out of every false refuge and lying hope, are anchoring their eternal all on the love and blood of the Lamb! Now all God's people are brought to this point in their experience sooner or later. They are all brought to know their own sinfulness, ignorance, and helplessness. And when their eyes are thus anointed with eye-salve to discover their own wretchedness, the same unction from the Holy One reveals to them what Christ has done to save them from it. They learn by this sacred teaching

their own iniquity, and his atoning blood; their misery, and the bliss and blessedness which is secured up in him. And when these two extremes meet in the quickened soul, it is brought in one and the same moment, while it debases itself, to exalt the Lord of life and glory. And while it thus sinks down in the depth of creature wretchedness, it learns to glory in the Lord Jesus alone, as its "all in all," and "as God over all, blessed for evermore." Amen.