

The Lord's Supper and the Ordinance of Feet-Washing.--Nos. 1-4.

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"Then came the day of unleavened bread; when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."

The symbols of the Lord's house are simple and plainly understood, and the truths represented by them are of the deepest significance to us. In instituting the sacramental service to take the place of the Passover, Christ left for his church a memorial of his great sacrifice for man. "This do," he said, "in remembrance of me." This was the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. The one was to close forever; the other, which he had just established, was to take its place, and to continue through all time as the memorial of his death.

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

With the rest of the disciples, Judas partook of the bread and wine, symbolizing the body and blood of Christ. This was the last time that Judas was present with the twelve. But that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he left the sacramental table, Christ's last gift to his disciples, to complete his work of betrayal. O, why did not Judas at that solemn service recognize in its true light the awful work he had pledged himself to perform? Why did he not throw himself penitent at the feet of Jesus? He had not yet passed the boundary of

God's mercy and love. But when his decision was made to carry out his purpose, when he left the presence of his Lord and fellow disciples, that barrier was passed.

In this last act of Christ in partaking with his disciples of the bread and wine, he pledged himself to them as their Redeemer by a new covenant, in which it was written and sealed that upon all who will receive Christ by faith will be bestowed all the blessings that heaven can supply, both in this life and in the future immortal life.

This covenant deed was to be ratified with Christ's own blood, which it had been the office of the old sacrificial offerings to keep before their minds. This was understood by the apostle Paul, who said: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."

Christ designed that this supper should be often commemorated, in order to bring to our remembrance his sacrifice in giving his life for the remission of the sins of all who will believe on and receive him. And this ordinance is not to be exclusive, as many would make it. Each must participate in it publicly, and thus bear witness: I accept Christ as my personal Saviour. He gave his life for me, that I might be rescued from death.

"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."

The children of God are to bear in mind that God is brought sacredly near on every such occasion as the service of feet-washing. As they come up to this ordinance, they should bring to their remembrance the words of the Lord of life and glory: "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

The object of this service is to call to mind the humility of our Lord, and the lessons he has given in washing the feet of his disciples. There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for himself, to serve himself, to seek the highest place; and often evil-surmisings and bitterness of spirit spring up over mere trifles. This ordinance preceding the Lord's Supper is to clear away these misunderstandings, to bring man out of his selfishness, down from his stilts of self-exaltation, to the humility of spirit that will lead him to wash his brother's feet. It is not in God's plan that this should be deferred because some are considered unworthy to engage in it. The Lord washed the feet of Judas. He did not refuse him a place at the table, although he knew that he would leave that table to act his part in the betrayal of his Lord. It is not possible for human beings to tell who is worthy, and who is not. They can not read the secrets of the soul. It is not for them to say, I will not attend the ordinance if such a one is present to act a part. Nor has God left it to man to say who shall present themselves on these occasions.

The ordinance of feet-washing has been especially enjoined by Christ; and on these occasions the Holy Spirit is present to witness and put a seal to this ordinance. He is there to convict and soften the heart. He draws the believers together, and makes them one in heart. They are made to feel that Christ is indeed present to clear away the rubbish that has accumulated to separate the hearts of the children of God.

These ordinances are regarded too much as a form, and not as a sacred thing to call to mind the Lord Jesus. Christ ordained them, and delegated his power to his ministers, who have the treasure in earthen vessels. They are to superintend these special appointments of the One who established them to continue to the close of time. It is on these, his own appointments, that he meets with and energizes his people by his personal presence. Notwithstanding that there may be hearts and hands that are unsanctified who will administer the ordinance, still Jesus is in the midst of his people to work on human hearts. All who keep before them, in the act of feet-washing, the humiliation of Christ, all who will keep their hearts humble, and keep in view the true tabernacle and service, which the Lord pitched and not man, will never fail to derive benefit from every discourse given, and spiritual strength from every communion. These ordinances are established for a purpose. Christ's followers are to bear in mind the example of Christ in his humility. This ordinance is to encourage humility, but it should never be termed humiliating, in the sense of being degrading to humanity. It is to make tender our hearts toward one another.

Those who come to the sacramental service with their hearts open to the influences of the Spirit of God will be greatly blessed, even if those who officiate are not benefited thereby. Christ is there to make the heart susceptible to his Holy Spirit, and to discern the entire dependence of his people upon him for their salvation. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart."

These ordinances were established that all might have the privilege of acknowledging their wrongs, and confessing their sins at this time. And as the heart is softened and melted under the movings of the Holy Spirit, the heavenly anointing gives them spiritual eyesight to discern their errors. Jesus has pledged himself to be present in the fulness of his grace to change the current of the minds that are running in selfish channels. This service can not be repeated without one thought's linking itself with another. Thus a chain of thought calls up remembrances of blessings, of kindnesses, and of favors received from friends and brethren, that have passed out of mind. The Holy Spirit, with its quickening, vivifying power, presents the ingratitude and lack of love that have sprung from the hateful root of bitterness. Link after link of memory's chain is strengthened. The Spirit of God is at work upon human minds. The defects of character, the neglect of duties, the ingratitude to God, are brought to the remembrance, and the thoughts are brought into captivity to Christ.

How the heart of Christ is pierced by the forgetfulness, unwillingness, and neglect to do the things that God has enjoined upon us! The heart needs to be broken, that selfishness may be cut away from the soul, and put away from the practise. If we have learned the lessons that Christ desires to teach us in this preparatory service, the Witness will respond to the feelings implanted in the heart for a higher spiritual life.

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Christ does indeed manifest himself unto the believers who thus reveal their faith by coming together at the communion table with the simplicity of children to remember Jesus, his words, and his requirements, determined to exclude from the heart all selfishness and love of supremacy.

The broken bread and pure juice of the grape are to represent the broken body and spilled blood of the Son of God. Bread that is leavened must not come on the communion table; unleavened bread is the only correct representation of the Lord's Supper. Nothing fermented is to be used. Only the pure fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread are to be used.

We do not come to the ordinances of the Lord's house merely as a form. We do not make it our business, as we gather around the table of our Lord, to ponder over and deprecate our shortcomings. The ordinance of feet-washing included all this. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." We do not come with our minds diverted to our past experience in the religious life, whether that experience be elevating or depressing. We do not come to revive in our minds the ill-treatment we have received at the hands of our brethren. The ordinance of humility is to clear our moral horizon of the rubbish that has been permitted to accumulate. We have assembled now to meet with Jesus Christ, to commune with him. Every heart is to be open to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Our minds and hearts are to be fixed on Christ as the great Center on whom our hopes of eternal life depend. We are not to stand in the shadow, but in the saving light, of the cross. With hearts cleansed by Christ's most precious blood, and in full consciousness of his presence, although unseen, we may listen to his voice that thrills the soul with the words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." On these occasions, heaven is brought very near to the true members of the Lord's family, and they are brought into sweet communion one with another.

There can be no union between our soul and God except through Christ. Union and love between brother and brother must be cemented and rendered eternal by the love of Jesus. Then do we not assemble around the communion table to meet and converse with Jesus as we receive the bread and wine symbolizing his broken body and spilled blood? Thus we must feed on Christ, or we can have no communion with him.

Christ knows that if we should allow our minds to become engrossed with earthly things, we would forget him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered, and so lose the lifegiving power, the peace and joy, which the Lord wishes us to receive and retain. And he said: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."

These things we are never to forget. The love of Jesus, with its convincing power, is to be kept fresh in the memory. We must not forget him who is our strength and our sufficiency. He has instituted this service, that it may speak constantly to our senses of the love of God that has been expressed in our behalf. He gave us all that it was possible for him to give,--he gave his life for the life of the world.

And his appeal to our love is strikingly made in the words of the apostle Paul: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup

is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come."

Christ's second appearing, in the clouds of heaven, is ever to be kept before us. Almost his last words of consolation to his disciples were: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

And the communion is to be a constant reminder of this. Says Christ: Under a conviction of sin, remember that I died for you. When oppressed and persecuted and afflicted for my sake and the gospel's, remember that my love was so great that I gave my life for you. Will you evidence your love for me, if required, by dying for me? When you feel your duties stern and severe, and almost too heavy to bear, will you remember that it was for your sake that I endured the cross, despising the shame? When your heart shrinks from the trying ordeal, remember that your Redeemer liveth to make intercession for you. "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Christ declared: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." We can not, as individuals, maintain our bodily life unless we eat and drink for ourselves of temporal food. In order to maintain spiritual life and health, we must feed on Jesus Christ by studying his word, and doing the things he has commanded in that word. This will constitute a close union with Christ. The branch that bears fruit must be in the vine, a part of it, receiving nourishment from the parent stalk. This is living by faith upon the Son of God. Christ has declared: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks,

he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." Here was established the great memorial, the Lord's Supper. Can we take in the strains of Christian melody rising to heaven from the lips of the disciples? Christ, the Captain of our salvation, made of himself a sacrificial offering. The Prince of life became the Prince of martyrs.

"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."

The act of Christ in washing the feet of his disciples was a sacred one; his motive in so doing was to bring about, through their remembrance of what Christ had done for them, a state of feeling where no exaltation of one above another should find place. This ordinance was to bring brother to an understanding of the feelings of his brother.

The last act of Christ in behalf of his betrayer was to wash his feet. He, their Lord and Master, showed that he would do anything to save the most guilty sinner. He said, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." If he will believe on Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, he is the child of God.

Christ came not to save man in his sins, but from his sins. John's testimony of him was, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

Christ had washed the feet of Judas first. This disciple was having his last opportunity. When the ceremony was ended, the Master said, "Ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean." These words were spoken that Judas might understand that Christ had read his secret purposes, that he was not ignorant of his wicked schemes. This was his opportunity to confess and be converted. The disciples did not understand his words at the time, but they were imprinted on their

memory afterward, and they had something to consider in the patience, the mercy, and the forbearance of God toward the most grievously erring.

Christ gave his disciples to understand that the washing of their feet did not cleanse away their sin, but that the cleansing of their heart was tested in this humble service. If the heart was cleansed, this act was all that was essential to reveal the fact. He had washed the feet of Judas; but he said, "Ye are not all clean." Judas brought a traitor's heart to this scene, and Christ revealed to all that he knew him to be the betrayer of his Lord, and that the washing of his feet was not an ordinance to cleanse the soul from its moral defilement.

"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am [for I have given you an example of the position you should hold toward one another]. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Here is the object-lesson: "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." This ordinance is not to be treated in a mechanical way as a form. Its real object is to teach humility.

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me."

Jesus would give convincing proof that he understood perfectly the character of Judas, and that he had not withheld his ministry even from him whom he knew to be working to betray him into the hands of his enemies. And we have, in his example, the lesson that the ordinance of feet-washing is not to be deferred because there are some professed believers who are not cleansed from their sins. Christ knew the heart of Judas, yet he washed his feet. Infinite Love could do no more to bring Judas to repentance, and save him from taking this fatal step. If this service of his Master, in humbling himself to wash the feet of the worst sinner, did not break his heart, what more could be done? It was the last act of love that Jesus could evidence in behalf of Judas. Infinite Love could not compel Judas to repent, confess his sin, and be saved. Every opportunity was granted him. Nothing was left undone that could be done to save him from the snare of Satan.

Let all behold, in the boundless love of Christ, a long-suffering Saviour, who holds out every inducement for the sinner to receive him, repent, and be cleansed from the defilement of sin. We must understand that because we suppose one to be in error and sin, we are not to divorce ourselves from him, refuse to have any association with him, and make our suppositions prominent. The example of Christ will not sustain any one in these conclusions. Many a soul may be saved by further effort on the part of his brother;

but a careless separation from him, leaving him exposed to the temptations of Satan, and driving him upon the devil's battle-ground, is not the method of Christ. He sought to restore, not to destroy. He who washed the feet of his disciples was the Majesty of heaven. He had the hoarded love of eternity in his heart, but he was in their midst as one who served; and in washing their feet, he gave them evidence that he would do any service, however humble, in order to make them heirs together with him of all the eternal wealth of heaven's treasure.

When this simple ordinance is being performed, the followers of Christ should bear in mind that this is the time for all to search their hearts to see if they are willing to humble themselves in spirit, and follow the example of Christ. He gives them this ordinance as a test, a heart-searcher. The Holy Spirit will be present on every occasion to convince of sin, of any wrong action done to a brother. Let none grieve the Holy Spirit of God by disregarding the object of this ordinance, and the gracious opportunity it presents to confess every wrong, every act of injustice done to a brother. Had Judas accepted this last chance given him by Christ, the poor sinner would never have betrayed his Lord, and the words of Christ would never have been spoken, "Ye are not all clean."

The Lord is present on every occasion when this humble ceremony is performed. He is the unseen Witness. He reads every heart, with its concealed purposes, its wrong-doings, its sin. You can neglect, you can leave, these seasons of divine appointment; and of you Christ's words may be appropriately spoken, "Ye are not all clean."

Is any sin cherished? Let it be cut away from the soul by confession. The first look, the first act, of contrition and repentance that you direct toward Christ, does not escape his notice. The first step you take toward him will bring him more than a step toward you. All things, especially on this occasion, are ready for your reception. He will meet you in your weakness, repenting, broken-hearted soul, with his divine strength; he will meet your emptiness and spiritual poverty with his inexhaustible fulness.

In this ordinance, Christ discharged his disciples from the cares and burdens of the ancient Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies. These no longer possessed any virtue; for type was meeting antitype in himself, the authority and foundation of all Jewish ordinances that pointed to him as the great and only efficacious offering for the sins of the world. He gave this simple ordinance that it might be a special season when he himself would always be present, to lead all participating in it to feel the pulse of their own conscience, to awaken them to an understanding of the lessons symbolized, to revive their memory, to convict of sin, and to receive their penitential repentance. He would teach them that brother is not to exalt himself above brother, that the dangers of disunion and strife shall be seen and appreciated; for the health and holy activity of the soul are involved.

This ordinance does not speak so largely to man's intellectual capacity as to his heart. His moral and spiritual nature needs it. If his disciples had not needed this, it would not have been left for them as Christ's last established ordinance in connection with, and including, the last supper. It was Christ's desire to leave to his disciples an ordinance that

would do for them the very thing they needed,--that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah. Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be in receiving his word and doing his will.

Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. His instruction was confined to the wants of their own condition in practical life. The curiosity that led them to seek for something they had not, when they came to him with prying questions, he turned into occasions of most solemn, earnest, vital appeal. When they were so eager to pluck from the tree of knowledge, he presented them with the fruit of the tree of life. They found every avenue closed to them, which would not advance them in spiritual understanding of the narrow way, leading to eternal life. They found every fountain sealed, save the fountain of eternal life. While the Holy Spirit was given them to understand everything that was essential for their salvation in the living oracles, the word of God, their unnecessary, uneasy, speculating inquiries were not opened before them. The devoted, humble seekers after the Way, the Truth, and the Life will be directed in safe paths to the mansions he has gone to prepare for them. All the light of revelation is permitted to shine upon this path alone, to make it so distinct that not one human soul need wander from the highway of holiness.

The great Teacher's wisdom in limiting the measure of our researches in earthly directions, called the attention of all to his legislation from the very foundation of our world,--to a code of morals, pure, simple, and practical, unencumbered by the long years of types and sacrifices, which passed away when the only true Sacrifice, Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, was offered for the sins of the world. His lessons to his disciples are received by all who would become his disciples, to the end of time. These lessons discharge his followers from the bondage of the ceremonial law, and leave them the ordinance of baptism to be received by repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the only one who can take away sin.

The ceremony of feet-washing and the Lord's Supper, in its simplicity and spirituality, is to be observed with true solemnity, and with hearts full of thankfulness. Its participants are not to exhaust their powers of thought or their physical powers on outward forms and ceremonies. All the vigor of mind and the healthfulness of body are to be fresh to engage in the work of the gospel, to lead souls from sin into the upward path of holiness. In this ordinance is presented the necessity of economizing all the thoughts, all the energies, all the affections and faculties, to wear Christ's yoke, to come into partnership with him in seeking to save the souls that are perishing without God and without hope in the world.

This work the whole angelic host are engaged in as their highest service; and the human agent is to become a channel to meet humanity, and communicate to the world that which God has communicated to him, putting mind, heart, and soul into the work. God has made every provision that his requirements should meet a response in every soul, and that all

should be eager, interested workers, putting forth all their entrusted capital of money, of vigor, of capabilities, that they may be worked upon by the Holy Spirit, adorning the doctrine of Christ their Saviour.

None should glory in their capabilities, or pride themselves in their intellectual greatness. All that can stir the soul, give impulse to the human agent, and awaken the godly to intense activity, comes from God. To those who are in connection with the work of the heavenly angels to embody in human nature the perfection of heavenly grace in Christ,--those who are one with Christ and with God,--he will give impulse to energize their every spiritual power. He calls upon all to surmount their difficulties, instead of looking at and deploring them. God will give sanctified energy to all who profess Christ. He arranges all rites, he collects all influences, and works them to his own name's glory.

God treats the human agencies connected with himself with a heavenly respect. The whole of God's law is of this character. Taking off every oppressive weight that man would lay upon his fellow man, he prescribes only that which is absolutely necessary for his physical, mental, and moral well-being. He imbues man with the attributes of God, and builds up the human character after the divine similitude, a godly fabric of spiritual beauty and perfection.

In order to do this, in order that man might be in partnership with the great firm of heaven, Christ's lessons, from the beginning to the close of his life, taught humility before God. This would lead man to a love for his brother,--a spirit of love and forbearance toward all for whom Christ has died. Genuine humility is expressed in the words: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Humility is the lesson which Jesus has given in all his teachings all through his ministry, by both precept and example. He raised this precious attribute out of the dust in which it had been trodden, and clothed it with the garments of his own righteousness. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," he says; "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Satan erected his standard of revolt against God in heaven. He aspired to be like God, and determined to assert a power of independence of God. His after-history has revealed a persevering determination to establish his empire, governed by laws, and replenished with resources, independent of God. Every species of idolatry, sensuality, crime, rebellion, and irreligion, is the fruit borne from the proud and exalted claims of Satan. The Lord Jesus came to tear away the deceptive claims of Satan, and to reveal to the world that pride, self-sufficiency, and wrestling for the supremacy have no favor with heaven; for they are the attributes of Satan. Look at the humility of our Saviour in humbling himself to our humanity: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

In the East a common courtesy granted to travelers as they were welcomed to a house, was that a servant should remove their sandals and wash their feet. This hospitable action was neglected on one occasion, and the Lord reminded the Pharisee, whose invited guest he was, that he had shown discourtesy in this manifest neglect.

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."

When they assembled to partake of the Lord's Supper, the ordinance of feet-washing was to be established as a religious ceremony. There was the pitcher of water, the basin, and the towel; but there had been a contention as to which should be the greatest in the Master's kingdom. The request of the sons of Zebedee that they should be awarded the most honored position, created jealousy and a heated discussion as to who should be thus favored. They began to refer to their capabilities and qualifications, and to declare who would best serve for the advancement of the kingdom. They had heard the words of Christ to John when, in response to the request of James and John, "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory," Jesus said: "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."

But the disciples did not consider these words, and keep silent. The disciples should have learned the lessons of the Master,--that it is not reputation, natural talent, acquired skill, professional standing, nor any honor given them of men, that weighs at all in the

decisions of heaven; "but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Had they thought of the lessons given them in reference to humility, they would have had altogether different opinions of the ones who should be honored in the kingdom of God. The disciples had often contended as to which of them should occupy the highest place of honor in the kingdom of God. Christ had given them special lessons, the most striking and positive of which is recorded in Matthew 18: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Yet again and again these lessons had to be repeated. The Lord had assured them that his kingdom was not of this world, but it was difficult for his disciples to be set right on this point.