

should recognise and use for themselves the saving significance of His death" (ii. p. 316). This leads to further explanations on the meaning of the words in the institution of the Last Supper, on which we need not delay. It may only be observed that the remarkable and solemn importance which it is admitted that Christ in these words attributed to His sacrificial death does not seem adequately accounted for by Wendt's very meagre interpretation of their meaning.

We are now in a position to sum up and estimate Wendt's view of the teaching of Jesus on the all-important subject of His own Messiahship. One thing very clear is that Jesus, in Wendt's view, is not more than man. Jesus, indeed, holds a unique place in history. He is the Son of God *κατ' ἐξοχήν*. But the Sonship which Wendt recognises in Him is an ethical Sonship, not different in kind from that of ordinary believers—only pre-eminent and perfect in degree. Even on his own showing, however, Wendt has difficulty in keeping the Personality of Jesus within this merely human limit. The attributes he assigns to Him are too great to be borne by one who is not more than man. The perfect Revelation of God, the Founder of the kingdom of God, the Sinless One, the Giver of eternal life, the Dying One, whose death has a saving significance for the world,—this, regard it as we will, is a distinctly supernatural and super-human Personality. Still more instructive is it to observe what Wendt has to cut out in order to keep the Person of Jesus within the limits which he recognises. He has to prune down the sayings of John regarding the Sonship and the pre-existence,

has to explain away the fact of the resurrection, has to evaporate into a truism the sayings about the Second Advent and the claim of Christ to judge the world, has to put a weak and arbitrary sense on the passages connecting the forgiveness of sins with His death. Yet the parts of the gospel testimony which he rejects agree better with the parts which he retains than his own theory does. The view of Christ's Person affects the treatment of all the other subjects. It is a meagre notion of Christ's relation to His kingdom to say that He founded it only by His teaching and example. This scarcely rises higher than the Socinian or Deistic conception, which we thought we had left behind. If the significance of Christ's death for the founding of His kingdom is subsequently recognised, it is only as a kind of afterthought. Even then it is not brought into any organic connexion with man's salvation. As respects the resurrection, it is extremely doubtful if Wendt accepts it in the literal sense. The whole of the eschatological part of the teaching of the Gospels becomes of little significance. If Wendt's expositions were correct, it would be difficult to find a basis for the Apostolic doctrine of Christ's Person and work; while, if that doctrine is accepted, it clearly needs a broader foundation than Wendt's theory allows. At the same time, every reader must acknowledge the exceedingly lucid and suggestive character of Wendt's exposition within its own limits, and cannot but feel grateful for the interesting lines of connexion shown to exist at every point between the teaching of John's Gospel and that of the Synoptics.

## Keswick at Home.

### An Exposition of Recent Teaching on Holiness.

#### INTRODUCTION.

BY THE REV. G. H. C. MACGREGOR, M.A., ABERDEEN.

ONE of the most interesting and hopeful signs of Church life at present is the extraordinary interest taken by Christian people in the subject of Holiness. For the time being the doctrine of Justification has dropped into the background, and the doctrine of Sanctification is being eagerly discussed. We read of holiness conventions here, and meet-

ings for the deepening of spiritual life there; and on all sides we hear believers crying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

How is this extraordinary interest in the question of sanctification to be explained? Ultimately, I believe by the working of the Spirit of God, who

has different lessons to teach the Church at different times. But a more obvious cause of the interest is found in the fact that, within the last few years, there has arisen in the Church a new teaching on the subject of holiness. It is not really new, for it is found in the Bible; it is not really new, for men like Marshall well understood it; but for years it has been so ignored by the Church, that to thousands and tens of thousands in the present generation it has come with all the freshness of a new discovery. And the widespread interest in the question is the result of the conflict—if I may use so strong a word—between the old theory of sanctification and the new. Let us put them side by side, that we may compare them.

How what I speak of as the old theory of sanctification arose, it is hard to tell. It was not formulated by theologians, but seems to have been formed by our Christian people for themselves. But it is something like this. Sanctification comes after and is based upon justification. No man can atone for his sins, but through the death of the Lord Jesus he obtains forgiveness. He is justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The justified man is then called to live a holy life. For living this holy life the motive power is to be found in gratitude and love to the Lord, who has forgiven him all his sins. This holy life is a life of progress, in which the believer dies to sin, and lives to righteousness. But the progress is slow, for sin still dwells within, and only by slow degrees can it be driven out. Evil habits may therefore retain their power after conversion, and a man need not be surprised if they overcome him. Temper, evil speaking, pride, selfishness, may manifest themselves, and can only be overcome after severe and long-continued discipline. So all through the life there is warfare; a warfare in which the soul has little rest or peace; a warfare in which it is sometimes victorious, but probably more often defeated and cast down. And this continues until death, when, with one stroke, the soul is set free from sin, and made perfect in holiness. This is what I call the old theory of sanctification, which, although it may not be the formulated doctrine of the schools, is, in my belief, the doctrine of the majority of the people.

But the new teachers, appealing to the Bible as their authority, come with a different message.

They teach that a man can no more overcome his sins than he can atone for them, and that holiness, in the sense of deliverance from sinning and power to do the will of God, is as truly the gift of Jesus Christ as forgiveness. They teach that the power for a holy life is not to be found in gratitude or love, or firmness of resolution, or in anything in the regenerate man, but in Jesus Christ Himself, and in His Spirit whom He causes to dwell in those who love Him. And because they teach this, they teach also that it is possible for believers, even in this world, to attain to heights of holiness and blessedness, not only indefinitely beyond those actually attained at present by the mass of Christian people, but even beyond what men have imagined to be attainable. They hold that, seeing that the work of overcoming temptation, of keeping indwelling sin in check, and destroying the dominion of habit, is the work not of man but of the omnipotent Christ, it can be done thoroughly, and done at once. Therefore they teach that the power of anger, covetousness, pride, selfishness over a human soul may be broken in a moment. They teach that evil habits are not to be driven out of the soul by a long process of self-discipline, but are to be swept away by the power of the Divine Spirit received by faith. They hold, in short, that Christ's miracles of bodily healing are paralleled by His miracles of soul-healing. He spoke and immediately the sick were healed. Not first the checking of the disease, then a long convalescence ending in recovery. He says to the man at the pool of Bethesda, who had lain there for thirty-eight years, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," and *immediately* the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked.

But when this teaching is presented to many Christian people, they object to it. The opposition to holiness teaching has come not so much from the world as from the Church. Some regard it as fanatical, high flying, mystical, unpractical; some revile it as dangerous; some denounce it as untrue. And even where there has been no open opposition, there has been utter incredulity, which ignores the truth and declines to act on it in daily life. And because of this refusal to believe that there is anything better attainable, there is, on the part of thousands of our Christian men and women, the acceptance of, and acquiescence in, a standard of Christian living that is shamefully and sinfully low.

This is a matter in regard to which each of us may test himself. I am a minister of Christ's Church, harassed by a thousand cares, and tempted to the sin of worry. Do I believe that Jesus Christ can give me perfect peace to-day, so that although nothing else changes, I shall go through my work to-morrow with unfurrowed brow? I am a workman, and to-morrow shall work with men who will throw dishonour on the name of Christ. Do I believe that Jesus Christ can give me power to do to-morrow what I have never dared to do before, to overcome my sinful cowardice, and confess Him before them? I am a woman in society, given to saying sharp things about my neighbours. Do I believe that Jesus Christ can so control my tongue that I shall get through all my visits without speaking an unkind word? When such questions are faced by us frankly, our answer has to be, No. At bottom we do not believe Jesus Christ can, for we never expect that He will. Therefore, although the promised Land of Holiness lies open before us, we cannot enter in because of our unbelief. So it comes to pass that our Lord has to argue with His people somewhat as he argued with the Pharisees in Capernaum. He has to say to us, You have trusted me for forgiveness, why should you not trust me for deliverance? If I can give the one blessing, can I not also give the other? "Whether is it easier to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?'"

In order to vindicate the reasonableness of the new teaching which bids us look to Jesus Christ for present and altogether decisive interference with the power of sin in the soul, three statements may be made:—

I. The whole teaching of Scripture warrants us in regarding the forgiveness of sins as a greater divine work than the work of deliverance from sin. It is spoken of as if it were a more difficult thing to achieve. But if God can do the greater, much more can He do the less.

A great part of Scripture might be quoted to prove this, but one passage will suffice. In Romans v. 10 we read these words: "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." This settles the question. It is easier for God to keep the forgiven soul from sin, to give it deliverance from evil habits and daily temptations, than for God to blot

out the sin of the past. This is what we feel when we come to consider the matter. For what does forgiveness mean? It means the separating a man from the consequences of his sin. The Law stands written, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Be sure your sin will find you out." "The wages of sin is death." But forgiveness implies that a man sows, but in the mercy of God does not reap what he sows; that a man sins, but in God's mercy is so hidden in Christ, that his sin does not find him out; that he earns death, and receives instead eternal life. But to bestow on men a forgiveness like that was so hard that it cost the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The precious blood of Christ was the price paid to cancel the past, to break the chain that bound the sinner to his sin and the consequences of it. Now, if God spared not His own Son, but gave Him up to death to secure forgiveness for us, and now is able to forgive, do you not think He will be able to give us deliverance? Is it not one of the "all things" promised. This deliverance is the lesser gift which we may expect to follow the greater. For deliverance is a matter of prevention rather than cure. Forgiveness deals with sin that is past, that has become a dark, deadly fact, and to blot it out requires blood; deliverance deals with sin that is not yet existent, and it calls for the presence of the living Lord by His Spirit in the heart to deal with the inmost springs of thought and will, and check the evil ere it comes into existence at all. The work of forgiveness is like the work of sweeping back the waters of a mighty river that has burst its banks, and is carrying devastation far and wide; the work of deliverance is like the work of watching those banks, and keeping them in such repair that the waters do not break forth at all.

Now we have trusted God for forgiveness. We believe He is able to forgive us. We believe He has forgiven us. Why should we doubt His power to keep us from falling? Why should we be afraid to trust Him to make deliverance from sin an actual experience to us? Why should we not *expect* Him to do it now. Scripture warrants the expectation. He who reconciled, much more can save.

II. Our second statement is that the objections usually made by Christian people to the new teaching about holiness, or the doctrine of "sanctification by faith" as it is sometimes called, are just of the same kind as the objections of unconverted

people to the gospel of forgiveness. The parallel is strikingly close.

You come to an unconverted man who is anxious about his soul, and you speak to him about forgiveness. You find that he thinks he must earn it by a long course of self-reformation. He thinks he must show the sincerity of his sorrow for the past by a long struggle against sin ere God will grant him forgiveness. You tell him that God is willing to forgive him *now*, that his efforts are needless and useless. You tell him that he cannot earn forgiveness, but must just accept it from God and rejoice in it. And you know how incredulously he looks at you. He cannot believe it. It seems too simple, too good to be true.

And you come to an earnest Christian, whose desire is after holiness. You find he is troubled with a wandering heart, a defiled imagination, a hasty temper, a backbiting tongue. You speak to him about overcoming these things, and you find that he thinks they are to be overcome by long discipline. If he watches, prays, reads good books, is careful of his company, he may hope by and by, by God's help, to get the victory. You tell him God is willing to give the victory *now*; you tell him that if he will only trust Christ fully, He will snap the chains of habit now. He will so fill the heart with His Spirit that the unclean thoughts will die; so fill the mouth with His praise that evil speaking will be impossible; so fill the life with His love that unkindness and unselfishness will no more be seen in it. And I know how incredulously Christian people look at me. They say, "It is impossible; I do not believe it." But that is exactly the case of the unconverted over again. It is doing to Christ in regard to holiness what we formerly did in regard to forgiveness. But the second mistake is less excusable than the first. For if God has done the greater thing for us, why should we doubt His power to do the less?

III. Our last statement is this, that as the objections which Christian people make to the gospel of deliverance are just the objections which unconverted people make to the gospel of forgiveness, so the obstacles that keep Christian people from entering into what is spoken of as fulness of blessing are just the obstacles which keep the unconverted from salvation. They are unwilling to surrender, and fear to trust. What kept some of us so long from salvation was an unwillingness to accept Christ as Master, and a fear to let everything go and venture wholly on Him. We delayed long ere we took that leap in the dark, which is of the essence of faith. We were afraid to peril our souls on the bare promise of God. But at last we did it. We flung ourselves on Christ, knowing that if He failed to save us we would sink into hell, and it was thus we found salvation. We stepped out on God's promise, and the foot that seemed to be plunged into the abyss struck the solid rock of God's faithfulness. Now this is just what is keeping so many back from the life of peace, joy, and victory which God offers. There is an unwillingness to surrender absolutely to the will of God; an unwillingness to venture wholly on Christ, and peril everything relating to our personal holiness on His faithfulness. Oh, that this were changed! For were there only on our part an act of unreserved dedication of ourselves to God, and an act of unreserved trust in Christ, acts, of course, not isolated, but introducing states corresponding to them, we should find these acts bring us into a life as different from the life many of us have been living as noonday from twilight. For we would know from actual experience that He who can forgive can also heal; and we who, when we were enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, would find ourselves, now that we are reconciled, being actually saved through His life.

---

## The Expository Times Guild of Bible Study.

THE Expository Times Guild of Bible Study seeks to encourage the systematic study, as distinguished from the mere reading of Scripture. A portion from the Old Testament and another from the New are selected every year, and the members

of the Guild simply make the promise that they will study one or both of those portions with the aid of some Commentary, between the months of November and June. The promise constitutes membership in the Guild. Those who are once