

"Enriched in Him"

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The disorders that marked the church at Corinth indicated that they were not in a healthy state from a spiritual point of view. They had the sort of knowledge that tends to "puff up," as the opening of 1 Corinthians 8, of the first epistle, shows; but their state was "carnal," and not "spiritual," as Paul plainly tells them, at the opening of 1 Corinthians 3. Notwithstanding this, the Apostle could say to them, "in everything ye have been enriched in Him" (1 Cor. 1: 5 New Trans.). The poor conception they had of the riches did not alter the fact that the riches had been bestowed.

It is indeed remarkable how these "riches" were indicated by our Lord to His disciples during His farewell discourse to them, and in His final prayer to the Father, recorded in John 14-17. They were stated in an elementary way, as bound up with the revelation He had made, the work He was about to accomplish, and the consequent gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us briefly notice some of these "riches," that we have in Him.

As we commence reading John 14, the first is revealed. It is,

"My Father" verse 7.

This great enrichment indeed fills the first eleven verses. The Father so revealed that we may know Him, and the Father's house to be our eternal dwelling-place in association with the Son Himself. The Lord Jesus was so really in the Father, and the Father so effectively in Him, while He was as a Man on this earth, that His words were the Father's words, and the Father, dwelling in Him, was the Doer of the works. It was not, however until His death and resurrection were accomplished facts, that He could say to His disciples, "My Father and your Father" (John 20: 17).

In John 14, He does proceed to speak to them of

"My name," verse 13.

And they and we, being left to represent Him during the time of His absence, may know its virtue and power, as we make our requests in prayer. Indeed any and every request, which is really in His name, as genuinely representing His interests, is sure to meet with a favourable response. A very real enrichment indeed!

But these enrichments in the way of privileges carry with them enrichments in the way of responsibilities. Hence we now read of,

"My commandments John 14: 15,

"My words," John 14: 23,

"My sayings," John 14: 24,

"My words," John 15: 7.

Now His commandments consist of definite injunctions which demand our obedience. They are given, not that by keeping them the flesh in us may be restrained, and a position before God may be attained; but because we are put into a position of favour before God, and they are given with the object of directing the new nature that we possess, to the setting aside of the flesh. We are indeed enriched by having these clear-cut, definite expressions of the will of our Lord for us.

In verses 23 and 24, the Greek words are similar, save that in the earlier verse the word is in the singular, in the latter it is in the plural. In the New Translation they appear as "word," and "words." Here then we have the expression of His mind in a more general way, apart from definite commands, and then the very words in which His mind is expressed. In chapter 15 the word is different, but having much the same force. All His sayings express His mind and will for us, and if they abide in us, our minds are brought into conformity with His mind, and happy obedience follows, with prayer that is acceptable and answered of God. And what an enrichment is this!

In the light of what we have already seen, it is not surprising to find that towards the end of John 14 the Lord speaks of,

"My peace" verse 27.

The peace He leaves with them is doubtless that mentioned in Romans 5: 1, the result of justification by faith in Himself, as having been delivered for our offences and raised again. But beyond this there was the peace that He ever enjoyed in His path of obedience, ever subject to His Father's will. Now if we, under the direction of the Comforter, who was to come and abide, are subject to His word and will, peace of that kind and order will possess our hearts. He has made provision that so it may be, as His gift. Another great enrichment bestowed upon us!

As in some measure at least His peace fills our hearts, we are prepared more largely to enter upon **the realization** and joy of,

"My love" John 15: 9.

His love has been fully expressed. We know it, thank God, but we are to "continue," or "abide" in it. It is therefore to permeate all our thoughts and be the governing factor in our lives, and this will only be possible as we keep His commandments, and thus we are in obedience to His mind. And, as the succeeding verses show, our love will flow **out to all** others in the family of God. Love is the Divine nature, and as we abide in it, there is of necessity an outflow to all others in whom that nature dwells. On our side love and obedience are inseparable. The saint who dwells in love is of necessity obedient Godward, and filled with love for the brethren. Where is an enrichment greater than this?

But if not greater, there is certainly more; for the Lord proceeds to speak of,

My joy John 15: 11,

that His disciples might have their cup of joy filled to the brim, by the fact that His joy may be in us; and His utterances up to this point had this in view. His joy had been to do His Father's commandments and thus abide in His love. Now they and we, are committed to a life of obedience to the commandments of His love, and thus abiding in His love, we shall possess a joy of the same order as His, though realized of course in a much smaller degree. That we should be able to share in a joy that is His is an enrichment of a very wonderful kind.

It is not surprising therefore to find a few verses lower down the words,

"My friends" John 15: 14.

We must notice however that here we find an enrichment that is conditional. He accounts us as His friends, if we are marked by obedience to what He commands. Now we have seen that obedience springs from, and is the expression of love. So our Lord is virtually saying that if we abide in His love, and so are marked by responsive love and the obedience that flows from it, He will bring us into the intimacy that friendship involves. We are not merely servants, but friends, as the next verse shows; but

it is love and obedience that will introduce us into the understanding and intimacy that friendship really involves. One has sometimes wondered if the Apostle John when he wrote about the "friends" in the last verse of his third epistle, had this saying of our Lord in his mind. If so he was thinking of certain saints who were specially marked by love and obedience to their Lord. Such intimacy with Him is an enrichment beyond words.

We have to travel on into John 17 to find the last of these wonderful things. There we read of, "My glory" John 17: 24.

We are to behold His glory, and we are to be in a glorified condition ourselves when we behold it, for a few verses earlier we read, "the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." He did not say, you notice, "I **will give**," but rather, "I **have given**." **The** donation is an accomplished fact. The glory conferred upon Him is given to us; but there is of course the essential and eternal glory which ever was His, and this we shall behold to our abiding joy.

This will be a crowning enrichment through eternal days!