

Christ the Truth

John 14: 6

I have already endeavoured to show the meaning of the Way; that Christ, and Christ only is the Way. But there is another thing, Christ is not only the Way to the Father, but He is also the Truth. Where is truth to be found? In Him alone. He Himself is the Truth. Thus the man who has taken the way, possesses the truth. He who has bowed to Christ does not want some new resource. Truly God is wise, and as good as He is wise.

Let me now try to unfold what truth is. Man in his natural state may ask, but eludes the answer. How is this? Because he is gone away from God, serves Satan in whom is no truth, and likes Christ less, the more he knows about Him. When He came into the world, people seemed to value Him at first; for they did not then know that He was the Truth, and were not yet proved by Him.

They were all looking for, and expecting the promised Messiah. The time spoken of by Daniel was fulfilled, and men were in a state of expectation. The famous prophecy of the weeks pointed to those days, and the Jews all knew, or might have known, that the time was quite near when the Messiah, the Prince, was to appear, though none understood that He was to be cut off. The very heathen were moved by the rumours of a coming Deliverer; they heard that the time was at hand that a mighty king should reign, and most remarkable changes happen for the world. Wise men came from the East to see the born King of the Jews. More than one hundred and fifty years before Christ, the Old Testament had been translated into the Greek tongue, which was at that time the usual means of communication, as French has been in modern times. This translation of the Bible was a sort of preparatory testimony. Thus the Jews were not the only people who were looking for the Messiah.

But He is much more. He is the Word, He is God, He is the light, which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. And men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Hence the early attraction soon faded, and gave way to fear and hatred; and as they desired not to know God or themselves, they sought to get rid of what convicted them by killing Him. They might kill, but they could not get rid of the Son of God; and as we have seen Him the Way, so He is the Truth. What is meant by it? Let us compare the law with Him.

The law is holy, just, and good; but still it is nowhere called the truth. The law is the standard of divine requirement from man; it declares what God demands from him who takes the ground of his own obedience as his standing before Him. The truth is the revelation of God, the manifestation of everything else, in Christ. It is therefore not requirement, but revelation. In fact, God Himself contrasts them; as it is written, "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Was it not God's law? Yes; but it was given by Moses, who was the channel of communication. But Christ was and is the Way; and this not only for God to come down to man, but for man to go to God — nay, to the Father. Besides, He is the Truth. He makes every one and every thing known as they really are; and when we weigh what the truth is, we can see that Christ only could be the full presentation of it. God is thus revealed; and Christ, being the revealer of God, is Himself said to be the Truth. As Son, He brings out what the Father is. But He, the Holy One of God, shows me what sin is, what I am. In short, He manifests every one and every thing exactly as each is.

God is never said to be the Truth, but Christ, being the image of the invisible God. Man is not capable of fathoming God; no man hath seen God at any time. Who is competent to know God? No man, nor even angel. The creature does not know God; but God can make Himself known to the creature. How? In Christ by the Holy Ghost. This is the reason why the Holy Spirit is also called the

Truth in 1 John 5. Christ, the Truth, is the object presented in whom I can learn everything as it is; the Spirit of God is the inward power that makes the truth enter into my soul that I may have and enjoy it. Hence the necessity for the Holy Ghost to be the Truth as well as Christ. The spirit of man in itself is no more capable of knowing God than a beast of understanding the mind of man. The beast has its own creature instincts; but no beast, no creature of that order, can pass its own limits. No lower creature is capable of understanding man, and no man, as such, can rise to what is above his nature.

Yet, without the truth, how wretched one must ever be! I have sinned. How do I stand, and in what relation, to God? Are we doomed to be in utter uncertainty of the only thing that is of supreme importance? There are things that a man can come to, left to himself — dread and horror, hardness or indifference. But these fears are only the premonition of what, far more terrible and unending, will befall him if he lives and dies as he is. What is to become of his soul? My answer is: Christ is the truth; and Christ was here expressly on an errand of love, to glorify God, to save sinners by faith, to meet this dark and awful void, and give life and peace, with certainty, to the believer.

Do not take the ground of an unbeliever, and say that it is impossible to have certainty in this life. Perhaps it might be impossible for a Jew, no doubt it was for the heathen; but if God tells me anything, and I believe, is it certain or not? If God tells me His mind, does this give no certainty? Christ is God's revelation of Himself to me. Do you say, I am a sinner? It is true, as far as it goes; but even so you do not know what a sinner you are, else you could not take it so quietly. You go to God about your sins then. Will He leave you in a state of uncertainty? No; Christ has come, the sent One of God, to do His will in the offering of His body; and by Him came grace and truth, not merely truth. And what grace it was! The Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, becoming a man; and not only so, but born of a woman! Adam even was not, never having been born, but made. He was not a son of man therefore, though son of God in a certain sense (Luke 3). He came into the world mature and formed to be its head; he had attained his full proportion when he came from God's hand. Jesus was not merely a man, but the Seed of the woman, as no one ever was save He. He became a servant — all that man is — except sin. It is not only that He did not sin, but He never in His life knew what sin was; He could always say that His meat was to do God's will. "Lo, I come to do thy will." But He was made sin on the cross; He suffered the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

Do I learn what sin is by prayer, or by looking into my own heart? No; but I see it in His cross. What did my sin cost Him? It brought upon Him, the Holy One, the horrors of divine judgment; and now He is become captain of salvation, having obtained eternal redemption. The same Jesus who gives me the truth of a sinner in myself gives me the truth of a Saviour in Him. Where shall I find what a holy man is? Can it be Adam? The man who could not keep his hands off the fruit of the tree that God had told him not to eat — he a holy man! Why did he not listen to God? He disobeyed, and became unholy. Not that he was made so; for God made him innocent, and innocence supposes absence of evil, with liability to fall into it. But when Jesus was made flesh He was not only sinless, but holy — holy not in ways only, but in nature. "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." There also do we read, "A body hast thou prepared me"; and this is never said of anyone else. Why was this body so specially prepared? Because there could not be the least relic that defiles in the Holy One. The smallest taint of evil would spoil the sacrifice; the lamb for the burnt-offering was to be without blemish and without spot. When Jesus was born, although He was the Seed of the woman, there was no taint of sin in His nature; He is called that holy thing, for He was born by the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus He could take upon Him not merely all our sins, but sin itself. This is the truth.

If I want to see sin, I can see it by contrast with the Lord Jesus. He came and showed out all its darkness. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke

for their sin." Christ is the Truth; so all is brought out in its own character.

But there is just the same result about God; Christ as the Truth clearly shows what God is. It is never said that Christ is the likeness of God, though with the greatest emphasis said to be His image. It would not be true to say of any man that he is like a man, although you might say so of an angel. Just in the same way Jesus is not said to be like God, because He is God. Here was One who was perfectly able to show what God is. It is the Absolute deigning to become relative. As long as God is only God, He is unapproachable by man; man cannot understand Him. But I must *know* God, or I cannot have eternal life; and this cannot be apart from Him whom He has sent, even Jesus Christ the Lord. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and He has brought me exactly what I want. God is the One who loves me, who comes down in the person of Jesus, Son of God and Son of man, to meet the need of a poor sinner. If, again, I want to know what the devil is, it is the same Jesus that brings it out. He, a murderer from the beginning, and a liar, is the one being who stands always opposed to the Lord Jesus. Jesus therefore brought out what the devil was as it had never been manifested before; but the Son of God came that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Now, have you got the Truth? You have heard the truth in Him; what is the effect on your soul? "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." The law makes me feel my shortcomings, but the truth makes them even better known. But if I am willing to know how bad I am, I want to be delivered. Will the law do this? When the law was given, it put man at a distance. Moses was to set bounds to the mountain; and if a beast so much as touched it, it was to be slain. This, no doubt, was a wholesome righteous warning; but the truth is, that the Lord Jesus came down from heaven to seek and to save the lost. And how are you to be saved? By submitting to the Truth; by coming as a sinner to the Saviour of sinners. I cannot be saved except by the Truth. It is the Lord Jesus Himself who brings it all out to the soul, and in confessing Him Lord, I believe God, and set to my soul that He is true. By the grace of God my soul bows to the truth, and I can say in my heart, this is just the truth for me. I abjure my unbelief; I bow to what God says of His Son. It is God proclaiming what is true; and I believe He is as good as He says. I believe that He is forgiving my sins and making me His child on the spot. *I* have no desert; but Christ is my plea. I am willing to be nothing, that Christ and His cross may be everything for and to me.

But we must remember that the Holy Spirit is the Truth just as truly as Christ is. May He bring the truth home to your souls! Were you to live ever so long, and learn ever so much, it is only knowing better the Truth you receive at the start. Confess Jesus Lord, the only Saviour, the Son of God. Confess all that grace has given you to know, and look well to it that your ways be a living confession of that Blessed One who is the Truth.

W. K.