

GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

O the wonder of it! This was above all that he had been able to ask or dared to think. The Baptism in the Holy Ghost and the life that came with and flowed from it far exceeded everything he had expected. How could words, even Jesus' words, have conveyed all that had eternally lain in God's heart? All the sorrow that had gripped his soul at the news of the departure of his beloved Jesus, and all the expectation that later grew within as he had listened to the promises of the risen Lord, were superseded in the realisation that now flooded him. As indescribable as it was imperative, the Baptism in the Holy Ghost answered and consummated all.

He was now in Christ; and in Him not far away off in some distant heaven, but here on earth, among men. He was supremely conscious of the Lord, His power, His position, His presence. He saw HIM, heard HIM, felt HIM everywhere; Christ was all and in all. Life was imbued with Christ. How could he have been so blind and deaf? Why, surely all was God; he was in heaven on earth. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Caesarea, Lydda, Joppa, prison or temple, all were the same; he now realised that all these are none other than the heavenlies. There was no difference between heaven and earth; he had passed into the same Spirit that pervades both and all. He saw and clearly understood in a new way that which later another knew and voiced, 'In Him we live and move and have our being.'

Of course it had always been so; had not his blessed Lord meant as much and more when He said, 'I am in the Father and the Father in Me'? It was true, but he hadn't realised it then. He had been blind, dead — O how dead! But now, O the glory, he knew it also; it was in him; he knew that Jesus was in His Father, and he was in Jesus, and Jesus was in him; he knew it, he was alive and pulsating with it. The living God filled heaven and earth and his heart; for the first time and for eternal ages, he was living also. In one glorious, comprehending moment, he had passed into God; he lived in one dimension — Spirit — God.

Everything, everybody, was different now. Events moved around and toward him in harmony with the Spirit within him; he was perfectly attuned and poised to understand and interpret the groans of the whole creation. The Spirit that had given him access and brought him a-worshipping to the heart of God, brought him also to the heart of man, with utterance, boldness, action, power. He was a transformed man. Behold with what knowledge and assurance he speaks. As though Christ Himself were

saying it, he directs the multitudes, 'Repent ... the promise is unto you your children ... all the Lord our God shall call'. Again, as though Christ Himself were doing it, (c.f. Mark 9.27) he lifts up an impotent man to make him whole, and says 'Why marvel ye at this ... God ... hath glorified His Son Jesus ...'. Jesus is sitting on the throne; he knows it and says so. Sovereign, divine life is flowing through the veins of his inward man; he is one with the true spiritual order of the universe, and is moving in it with ease and naturalness. Faith is the law that governs everything, and by grace the keys were in his own hands. Nothing could remain locked up or be impossible to him; he was as a king in the kingdom over which his Lord was the King, and he knew it.

Supremely and abundantly God, only God, filled his vision. He knew God; that was all. When he heard the beggar cry for alms, he heard a call for God; when Ananias lied to him, he lied to God; he speaks His words, does His works, understands His scriptures, blesses His creatures, judges His enemies, heals with His power, lives with His life, uses His name, takes His place, represents Him. He becomes as God in the earth, because God is in the earth, the Holy Ghost is come. By that almighty baptism God possessed him; and not only him, but many more like him.

Peter's secret was GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS. He had progressed via believing to knowing. He was conscious of God supremely, always. Pure in heart, he saw God.

To be as thrillingly and continuously conscious of God as were the first 120 and the next 5000 and all that earliest company of the redeemed is the abiding heritage of the Church. Such knowledge and manifestation of HIM and His whereabouts can be ours this day. God-consciousness: that is to be more conscious of Him than of self. This is that most blissful fulfilment of all the heavenly blessings for which the heart craves. Our great God and Saviour has provided and intends to give this to all who will believe Him.

Let there be no hesitation about it. The heart cries out 'that I may know HIM ...'. Faith knows it can. Hear Peter, 'He hath shed forth this ...'. As free as the air you breathe and the sun that shines, God, greater than all, has poured forth HIMSELF. The Holy Ghost is here. He places the key in every open hand. Believe and enter in.

G. W. North