

newing power, all true and everlasting consolations. The Church through all ages is filled with His fulness. The unsearchable riches of Christ, inexhaustible in their fulness, and all-glorious in their substance, are ours, that we may continually set our affections on the things which are above.

Behold Jesus in heaven, and be of good comfort. He presents unto the Father all the petitions and thanksgivings, all the labours and sufferings, all the words and works of His people, and they are accepted and well-pleasing in His sight. And while we mourn over the sins of our holy things, the coldness of our prayer, the lukewarmness of our praise, the selfishness which mingles with our service the imperfections in motive and in execution which characterise our works, let us remember that Jesus, as a High Priest, presents all with the incense of His intercession, and that thus our offerings ascend to the Father a sweet-smelling savour. Through Christ we present ourselves, our bodies, in which we live this earthly life, a living sacrifice unto God, which is our reasonable service.

Lift up the eyes of your heart continually to heaven. As an eminent teacher of the Church¹ used to say:—

“ Jesus in heaven,
The heart in heaven :
Jesus in the heart,
Heaven in the heart.”

¹ Bengel.

CHAPTER II.

The Omnipotence of Jesus on Earth.

“ All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.”

MATT. xxviii. 18.

FROM our earliest childhood we are taught that God is Almighty.

The thought of omnipotence *without holiness* would be appalling to the angels. To them the holiness of God appears as their safeguard, and the foundation of their peace.

The very combination of attributes, which is a source of confidence to the angels, is a source of fear to fallen and guilty man. The omnipotence of a holy and just God is a thought of terror to us. Omnipotence without holiness would be unbearable to angels; omnipotence and holiness *without mercy* would be crushing to sinful and polluted men.

But the thought that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto Jesus Christ, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, is full of peace and consolation. Here we behold the divine love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, and we are not afraid. Jesus died, the just for the unjust; and He, who was offered for our transgression, is now exalted as our Lord and

Advocate. And here we behold—greatest of all marvels—the sympathy of a brother, and the remembrance of tears and sorrows amidst the glories of heaven. The hands which grasp the reins of government of the whole Universe are omnipotent; but we love to think of them, once tiny and feeble hands of the infant Jesus, once used to labour and toil in humble Nazareth; used to heal the sick, and touch with gentle affection little children; once nailed for our sakes to the cross. Worthy the Lamb, thus all that is within us exclaims, to receive power and dominion for ever! O souls that have no Master, hearts that have not found their Lord, sheep without the loving Shepherd, there is a throne in heaven, and on that throne is exalted the man Christ Jesus, and unto all who come to Him He gives blessing and life eternal, grace and glory.

Jesus is invested with all power in heaven and in earth. Scripture reveals to us the grandeur and the simplicity of God's plans. There are many circles, but only one centre—Christ. There are many manifestations of the Godhead, but only one Mediator—the Son. By Him all things were created, and He is appointed the heir of all things. By Him sinners are redeemed, and the kingdom of evil is conquered; and therefore is all power given unto Him as the incarnate Son of God.

He is from all eternity the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. As He is the beginning of the creation of God, and as He

is the end and the purpose of all things; so during all the ages He is the centre, in whom all things consist, and by whose power they are upheld. He, who was thus centre and head of creation, in whom God revealed Himself by visible manifestations in the old dispensation, became in the fulness of time, man, and having purged, by Himself, our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Only the Son of God could reveal the Father, only He could save us from our sins; and it is according to the eternal counsel of God, and according to all the rights and proprieties of the heavenly Sanctuary, that to Him in human nature, and as reward of His death on the cross, should be given all power and dominion. He emptied Himself, He was made flesh; now He is crowned with glory, and He, the Lord, is that Spirit.¹ He was obedient unto the death of the cross; *out of the grave, from the dead* God raised Him, and set Him at His own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come. From the lowest region of weakness, darkness, and defeat, He was raised to the highest place of power, light, and triumph. He, who gave up everything, who became absolutely poor, who was crucified, dead, and buried, hath received now, and because of His sacrifice, all things, and is head over all to His beloved and ransomed Church.

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 17.

Thus we behold the *humanity* of Jesus exalted and glorified. The incarnate Son of God, by His life and obedience, culminating in His expiatory sufferings and death on the cross, is now enthroned at the right hand of God, and invested with all power in heaven and in earth. The highest angel beholds and adores now the infinite and incomprehensible God in the Lord Jesus, the image of the Invisible, the manifestation of the Father, the Mediator of the new covenant, and Minister of the heavenly Sanctuary. They behold now the glory of God in the Lamb that was slain. And in Him the counsel of God is made manifest unto them also ; for they behold Him as the Head of the Church, and themselves as ministering spirits unto the heirs of salvation. The world to come, which the Father hath not put in subjection unto the angels, but unto Jesus, the Son of man, and unto the Church which is His body, is the great consummation towards which all things tend. For one great purpose all things work together in obedience to one Will, in loving submission to one Head. In Him all creation is summed up, even as in Him and by Him all things were made and all things consist. In Him men and angels are united. Having made peace through the blood of His cross, the Father hath reconciled all things to Himself, whether they be things in earth or in heaven. Because He is from eternity the Son of God, —because He is the Mediator of creation, and the upholder of all things—because He is appointed heir of all things, it was possible for Him to redeem us

from our sins, and to deliver us from the power of Satan and death.

Thus, according to the Father's infinite wisdom and power, the Lamb that was slain is the centre of all things, the adoration of angels, the salvation of sinners, the regeneration of the world, and the perfect and eternal manifestation of His glory.

The power and glory of Jesus in heaven is the source of our peace, strength, and joy. Man's prerogative is to look upwards to heaven. He alone from this earth lifts up his eyes, and beholds the heavens above him. Even our earthly experience teaches us that all blessings come from above. The air we breathe, the sunlight in which we live, the dew and rain which fructify the earth, are all remembrances and symbols of the truth that heavenly influences and powers are indispensable and needful to us, the children of earth. God created heaven and earth ; and though sin separates them at present, the time is coming when God's will is done in earth as it is in heaven, and when men on earth shall see and know the transfigured saints and their King Jesus, and when the angels shall be seen descending and ascending on their errands of mercy. Meanwhile, the eye of faith beholds heaven very near. The great High Priest is seen by believing hearts, and the breastplate on which our names are engraven. He intercedes for us, and He sends to us all blessings we need, and strength for every duty and trial.

We think too little of the heavenly Sanctuary with

its ceaseless and perfect worship, and of the bond of divine love which connects heaven and earth. Our Saviour always beheld the heavens open ; He always beheld and declared the one great kingdom ; He spake of the Father and Himself and the holy angels, and the salvation of sinners and the future glory ; of the one great kingdom of divine manifestations of love and power. When His eye rests on little children, He sees them surrounded by angels, who behold the countenance of the Father in heaven. When He receives repentant sinners, He beholds the angels rejoicing in the courts above. When He announces His return to earth, He declares that He will come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.¹ When He promises to confess His faithful disciples on that day, He places the angels beside Himself and the Father—"Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels."² It is the angels who shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just ; they shall gather together the elect of God from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. So closely and inseparably is earth's history connected with heaven ; so all-comprehensive is the circle of which Christ is the centre.

And this is one consequence of man's fall, that he is isolated from the heavenly world ; and that his eye rests on the lower horizon, and too often is fixed on

¹ Matt. xxv. 31.

² Luke ix. 26.

the ground, denying his heavenly origin, and forgetful of his heavenly destiny. Sin has separated man not merely from God, but also from heaven ; it has introduced not merely strife and discord between man and man, but it has made a rent and a chasm in that one great kingdom, in which all God's creatures were to dwell in harmony, fulfilling in their various gradations of life and power the will of God, and aiding one another in love and unity. But the object of redemption is to sum up together in one all things in heaven and earth, to restore the lost harmony in a new and more wonderful union through the blood of Christ, in that new joy, which angels feel over pardoned sinners, in that new righteousness and life which the incarnate Son of God gives to His brethren.

Meanwhile, we are taught by Jesus to realise by faith the unseen and heavenly world. We are no longer circumscribed in our thoughts by the limits of earth and the visible. We have come to Mount Zion, and to heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. We, who live at present in the outer court, are in spirit continually looking to the Holy of Holies ; we pray to our Father in heaven. In the Sanctuary above, we believe, is the full and all-glorious revelation of the face of God in Christ Jesus. From heaven, through the mediation of angels and powers, the commandments of God are executed, and His purposes fulfilled. God the Father has united in Christ all angels and saints to form one

body, in which the various members serve one another, and through their obedience and service are made partakers of the blessing, which *Love through love* brings unto all. Thus angels carry out the will of God in nature; they are agents in the history of the world, and find their highest mission in ministering unto the heirs of salvation. And hereby are they made partakers of our joy, and beholding the Church, they obtain new revelations of the divine glory. In the Church the stronger are to help the weak, enriching them in knowledge, upholding and comforting them out of the abundance of grace which God hath given them; so that by the ministry of Love, they that are exalted condescend to the low, and both they that give and they that receive are satisfied, and thanksgiving abounds unto God. The Church, again, is to give unto the world light and love and priestly intercession, to manifest the Father's generosity, and the meekness and self-sacrifice of Christ, and thus to bring the lost and the perishing into the fold of Christ, until at last all things on earth, and even the creature, shall rejoice in the reign of humanity, and be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Thus, from earth to the heavenly Sanctuary, all His works in all places of His dominion shall bless the Lord: Christ, the God-man, being the Mediator, through whom the glory of God is manifested unto angels, and the Church, and the nations, and the whole creation.

When we believe this, the world appears indeed beautiful. Heaven is near us, and in the midst of things seen and temporal we behold the things which are unseen and eternal, the real, substantial life and power, growth and action, manifestation and progress of love. We also, like Jacob, behold the hosts of angels meeting us on our journey, and like Elisha, know that fiery chariots are around us.

We believe that above the inanimate powers of nature are the living, intelligent, loving angels who move and rule them.¹ These are the wheels, not unconscious, but full of wisdom, and adoration; instinct with light and power, full of eyes and full of love. And these unseen, but not invisible, angels, which are around us continually, and by whose ministry and agency all nature breathes and moves, are all the messengers of Jesus. They love us, because the Son of God took upon Himself our nature. And for His sake they take charge of us, and keep us in all our ways, and shall finally carry our souls into paradise. And thus it is God's will and Christ's teaching, that when we pray, and when we think of our Father in heaven and of our Redeemer, we should remember the myriads of holy and strong angels who have never sinned, and yet are meek and lowly—who are pure and spotless, and yet shrink not from the most polluted, but rejoice over the salvation of one poor sinner—who excel in strength, and yet delight in watching over helpless infants—who have the

¹ Psa. civ. 4, 5; John v. 4; Rev. vii. 3.

wisdom and experience of centuries, and yet veil their faces before the Presence. Then we are to remember that we may approach the Father and the Lord Jesus with deeper reverence and more solemn awe, that we may feel more truly the high end of our calling, to be as the bride of the Lamb, even nearer the throne, but associated with the angels in worship and service, and that the more courageously and cheerfully we should continue our service on earth, however obscure and difficult it may appear.

The thought of the angels teaches us something of the majesty of that Lord whom they continually worship and serve.¹ It encourages us in a fallen world, where our enemies are many, and evil seems to be strong and victorious, to think that the mighty hosts of angels are on our side, and, like fiery chariots, round about God's faithful people. It increases our watchfulness to know that we are made a spectacle to angels, and that their holy eyes are bent upon us. And it often soothes our drooping and troubled spirits to remember that, at God's command, the angels are guarding us, and ministering unto us in the midst of danger and trouble; even as an angel unbarred the gates of Peter's prison, and stood and comforted Cornelius.

But the power of Jesus in heaven is revealed to us, that we may know that to Him is also given all

¹ R. Hooker, when on his death-bed, roused from silent thought, said "he was meditating the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order."

power in *earth*. At present, only believers know this; at Christ's second coming all the world shall acknowledge it. Men fancy that Jesus has only spiritual power and influence, that He is Head and Lord of ministers and evangelists and devout disciples, and do not know that He is Lord of all, that the Father hath delivered unto Him all things, that by Him princes reign, and kings rule, and philosophers think and discover—that He is the life and light, and strength and beauty of all that is living and true, and strong and beautiful—that by Him all things consist. They do not know that Christ is the Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come; that the whole world and its history have but one centre and one purpose; that in Him are fulfilled all the counsels and ways of God. At present He, whom God hath highly exalted, who is the Lord of glory, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, who is Head over all things to the Church, and under whose feet the Father hath put all things, rules and governs in silent and calm omnipotence, unknown and unrecognised by the world. All earthly events and historical movements, all triumphs of skill and knowledge, all discoveries of science and developments of human life, are under His government and the power of His sceptre; all things are subservient to the great purpose of His death, and preparatory to His second advent.

The world does not know Jesus as the Christ, the Lord; but it is the faith and consolation of the Church. He, who is now hidden, shall appear, and

His glorious power and divine authority as Son of man shall be manifest to all the world.

But in this dispensation we dwell chiefly on the *spiritual* power of Christ on earth, manifested in the conversion of sinners and sanctification of believers.

1. Jesus has power on earth to forgive sin. When Jesus said to the man sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," the Pharisees thought within themselves, Who can forgive sins, but God alone? They did not know the Son of man, Jesus the Christ, and His power. The sinner feels that although he has wronged his fellow-men, yet his sin is chiefly a transgression of God's commandment, and therefore he says, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." Who can turn away the anger of the Lord? who can satisfy divine justice? Who can cancel guilt, and wash away the defilement of sin? Who can silence the accusing adversary, and lift us above the dark clouds of Sinai, the mount of condemnation, and show us the bright blue of heaven, the mercy of God. Jesus only. He who has entered into the Holy of Holies by His own blood, is now before the Father, the Advocate and Righteousness of sinners who trust in Him. And He has power to forgive sin on earth, and the conscience is at peace, the heart that was heavy laden is at rest. Penances, tears, and vigils, pilgrimages and fastings, self-denial and costly offerings, are of no avail; as little will knowledge of Scripture doctrine give peace to the soul. The living

Saviour alone, beheld and believed in by the power of the Spirit, Jesus, forgives sin. This was the experience of Martin Luther. "I was in despair, and in the very depths of hell, and no power could have rescued me, if *Jesus Christ had not come* and opened unto me the Scriptures." Feeling the burden of his sin, he prayed and fasted; he tried to observe all commandments, and to climb the steep hill of holiness. His burden became only heavier, until he discovered in Scripture that man had no righteousness for God, but that God had provided a righteousness for man; that the love of God meant God's love to us, and not our love to God; that Jesus died for sinners, and that trusting in Him, the sinner had pardon, perfect, immediate, and eternal. Then he said with joy what so many say with their lips only, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." And knowing the power of Jesus on earth to forgive sin, he feared not the power of pope and emperor, but declared it, to the consolation of thousands who were convinced of sin, that in Jesus is forgiveness and plenteous redemption.

The omnipotence of Jesus to forgive sins is the joy of the Saviour and the marvel of angels. The pardon of a sinner is a greater wonder than the creation of a world; for the one is the result of a divine fiat, the other is the fruit of the incarnation and death of the Son of God. The pardon of one sinner is a manifestation of greater power than the judgment and the destruction of God's enemies. It is a greater power which can heal the bruised reed,

and give it health, than the power which prostrates the proudest oak. And Jesus exerts this power with tenderness; as gently as the light comes down from heaven, and as the dew falls on the flowers of earth. We look upon Him, and we are healed.

The woman who was a sinner drew nigh to Jesus. She spoke no word, and Jesus also was silent. But as the Saviour understood her tears, so the very presence of Jesus spoke peace to her heart. For in that Jesus did not shrink from her touch, and allowed her to kiss His feet, she knew that she was accepted.

Power to forgive sins—is the omnipotence of love; only because Jesus is the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us, He can say, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for My name’s sake, and will remember thy sins no more.”

2. Jesus has power to renew the heart. Jesus only. It is only His dying love that melts the heart. It is only Christ lifted up who draws men unto God. While the wintry and keen blasts of the law make us wrap the cloak of self-righteousness and opposition to God more closely and firmly around us, the Sun of Righteousness, the mercy of God, moves us to lay aside our pride, our sin, our hatred and forgetfulness of God. Who can renew the heart? Who can make us love God? Who can change us, after our many years of sinful and ungodly lives? Jesus only! He baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and we are changed, renewed, born again. The experience of Augustine

is a striking illustration. All his knowledge and genius, all his philosophy and ambition, could not give him the victory over sin and the fierce power of evil within him. Astonished at the pure and beautiful life of simple and unlearned Christians, he felt vexed at his own weakness and inability to conquer sin, until Jesus appeared to him. For, walking in trouble of heart and conscience in his garden, and hearing the voice of a boy, who, playing a common game with his companion, cried, “Tolle lege,” he opened the Scripture, and read the words—“The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light.” Then Jesus took possession of his heart. Sin was conquered. The bondage of Satan was broken. He, who had been sold under sin, was free and strong. He became a burning and shining light, a teacher, bishop, and father in the Church of Christ.

3. Jesus has power on earth to quicken the dead. It is His divine prerogative to give life. Who but God can kill and make alive again? The fountain of life for fallen and guilty sinners is with God;¹ even His Son, who was in the beginning with God, and unto whom the Father hath given to have life in Himself, and to quicken whom He will. Jesus is not merely a teacher or prophet: He is not a restorer of law. It is not instruction merely or principally that we need. If a law could have been given, by which life could come into dead and God-estranged hearts,

¹ Psa. xxxvi. 9, comp. Psa. cxxx. 4; John i. 4; v. 21.

the advent of Jesus would not have been needed. But the Lord Himself came, that we might have life.¹ By this He became our Good Shepherd, and He gave His life for the sheep. Not by His doctrine, nor by His example, but by His death, the erring and lost sheep were saved and brought into the fold of peace. And therefore is it impossible for any human image to show forth adequately His pastorate. "My sheep hear My voice; I know them, and they follow Me." The earthly symbol suffices here; but dropping the image, and ascending to the sublime height of His own unparalleled love and power, the Saviour adds, "And I give unto them eternal life." This is the divine power of Jesus, that by the Holy Spirit He gives life to us; the life of light and knowledge, life spiritual and eternal, life in communion with Him—nay more, life flowing from His own life. He liveth in us. We are branches in Him, who is the True Vine. "Jesus is the Life of my life,"² is the hymn of the Christian, as the Apostle Paul exclaimed, "To me to live is Christ." As sin is the cause of death, so righteousness is the channel through which life was brought. On the cross of Christ we were delivered from death, and by His resurrection Jesus became the quickening Spirit. The law and death are behind us; in union with the crucified and risen Saviour we have life, the life of sons; we are born again of incorruptible seed, of the Father's will, by the Spirit's power, through and in Jesus Christ. This

¹ John x. 10; Gal iii. 21.

² Jesu, meines Lebens Leben.

is the power of Jesus on earth, that He gives life, and that He is the life of His disciples.

4. All power is given unto Jesus on earth to keep His people in faith and love amidst all the temptations and afflictions, conflicts and struggles, giving them the victory over their enemies, and presenting them finally unblameable in body, soul, and spirit before the Father.

The Good Shepherd, whose own the sheep are, by the election of the Father, by the self-sacrifice of His infinite love, by the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Ghost, keeps His people to the end. He guards them and protects the new and tender life against the hostile and adverse influences by which it is surrounded. In heaven He is continually interceding on our behalf, that our faith fail not; on earth He is continually shielding us with the power of His love, and keeping us by the influence of His Spirit.

The more we know of the power of sin, of our weakness, and of the strength of the adversary, the more truly do we feel that divine power alone is able to keep us, and that only divine love and patience can bear with our continual forgetfulness and unbelief. In the great work of the saints' preservation, as in all works of divine grace, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are manifested in blessed union. It is because the Father and the Good Shepherd are one that none can pluck us out of Christ's hands. It is because the Father purgeth the branch in Christ that it brings

forth more fruit. We rest in the bosom of Him who is in the bosom of the Father; we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.¹ It is by the Spirit that the Father and Son come and take up their abode within us. By the Spirit we are joined with Christ, and kept in Him; sealed with the Spirit of promise, we possess the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.

But while Christ reveals and brings to us the love of the Father and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, we look to *Him* as the Rock on which we are built, the Vine in which we are grafted, the Head from whom cometh our life, the Bridegroom who is our sunshine and joy; and we rejoice that all power is given unto Him on earth; all power to protect, to guide, to bless; all power to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Why is it, that when we possess a Saviour, whose power and love are infinite, we are so often filled with fear and despondency, and so frequently need the exhortation, "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees: gird up the loins of your mind, be strong in the Lord, be not afraid nor dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest?" We are wearied and faint in our minds, because we do not look steadfastly unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, who is *set down at the right hand of God*; unto Him whose omnipotence

¹ John x. 29, 30; xv. 1, 2; I Cor. iii. 22, 23.

embraces both heaven and earth, who is strong and mighty in His feeble saints.

While we remember our weakness, we forget His all-sufficient power. While we acknowledge that apart from Christ we can do nothing, we do not rise to the height or depth of Christian humility: I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me. While we trust in the power of the death of Jesus to cancel the guilt of sin, we do not exercise a reliant and appropriating faith in the omnipotence of the living Saviour to deliver us from the bondage and power of sin in our daily life. We forget that Christ worketh in us mightily, and that, one with Him, we possess strength sufficient to overcome every temptation. We are apt either to forget our nothingness, and imagine that in our daily path we can live without sin—that the duties and trials of our everyday life can be performed and borne in our own strength; or we do not avail ourselves of the omnipotence of Jesus, who is able to subdue all things unto Himself, and to keep us from the daily infirmities and falls, which we are apt to imagine an inevitable necessity. If we really depended in all things and at all times on Christ, we would in all things and at all times gain the victory through Him, whose power is infinite, and who is appointed by the Father to be the Captain of our salvation. Then all our deeds would be wrought, not merely before, but in God. We would then do all things to the glory of the Father in the all-powerful name of Jesus, who is our sanctification. Remember

that unto Him all power is given in heaven and on earth, and live by constant exercise of faith in His power. When anxious to follow the Saviour, remember that Christ the Rock is following us, that, being refreshed and strengthened by Him, we may be able to walk after Him. He is the Beginning of all and the End of all ; He Himself is the Way ; of Him is our fruit found, and His strength is made perfect in weakness. Christ's omnipotence is glorified not merely in the heroic deeds and sufferings of His saints and martyrs, but in the daily strife and obedience of His lowliest members. Let us learn to look unto Him ; to lean not on our own strength and resolutions ; to expect nothing from our fortitude, and our remembrance of past mercies ; instead of being angry with ourselves, vexed and desponding on account of our slow progress and our constant failures, let us most fully believe that we have and are nothing, that with man it is impossible, that in ourselves we have no life which can bring forth fruit, but that Christ is all, that, abiding in Him, and His words dwelling in us, we can bring forth fruit to the glory of the Father.

CHAPTER III.

*The Catholic and Spiritual Character
of the Church.*

“Teach all nations.”—MATT. xxviii. 19.

WHAT man or angel, I ask again, could utter such words? Jesus saith, that all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. High above all earthly thrones and heavenly dominions, He speaks of Himself as the Son, equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost. All nations, from the rudest to the most cultivated, and throughout the whole course of time, are to sit as disciples and learners at His feet ; through Him they are to enter into covenant-relationship with the Triune God. In this highest economy of divine grace and power, His commandments have absolute and exclusive authority ; and as the presence of Jehovah was with the children of Israel in the wilderness, and with Joshua in the promised land, so this Divine Lord assures His disciples of His presence with them to the end of the age.

Only a few weeks before He uttered this heaven-high and world-wide commission, His cause had, to all human judgment, and according to all outward appearance,