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God Realised—

the Secret
of Power and Peace.

From an Address

by the

Rev. W. H. FINDLAY, M.A.

Delivered at a Meeting held at the House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, on October 13, 1910, to wish him God-speed in the work of making known to all whom he can reach the lessons of the World Missionary Conference.

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THE lessons of the Edinburgh Conference came through its experiences even more than through its utterances; and its supreme lesson for us all was, to me, *the overwhelming realization of God*. All the preparations and antecedents of the Conference converged to that. All its characteristics contributed to that. I am speaking now, not of my own experience only, but of an experience that, when I have tried, most inadequately, to describe it here and there, already one and another who were present at Edinburgh have said to me: "Yes, that is what I felt. That is what I have been trying to put into words." As the days passed there came a deepening and deepening sense of GOD, a realization that can only be called *vision*. "I saw the LORD, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." It is that sense of GOD—GOD real, present, all-sufficing—that ever since the Conference has to me been what eclipsed all else, as stars and moon are eclipsed when the sun appears; and I have gone about feeling ever since that the one need of churches, of societies, of individuals, for spiritual extremities or material extremities, is just to realize GOD, to *get God real*. I know that I cannot convey to you what I want to

convey. I know that it is beyond words; but it is something that as I go about, as I read and hear, makes me feel as if a great many other people, and good people, have not got it.

There are many in this room at whose feet I could sit most sincerely to learn practical wisdom and goodness, and yet, regarding you and such as you, I cannot but have the feeling that if there were the sense of GOD, the vision of GOD that came yonder when GOD blessed His people, if we learnt to take GOD literally, there is so much in our current speech, so much in our prayers, so much in our plans that would be out of date; so much even in our hymn-books that is of a distant GOD, a next-life GOD, and not a GOD who is here now and everywhere. When I read some of the religious leading articles, when I hear utterances from the pulpit and the platforms of the Congresses—all that is said and discussed and projected regarding the Kingdom of GOD—I feel a wish to cry to you, "There is GOD!" When I see a man in the street with a look of care on his face, I feel as if, could but one give the message "There is GOD!" it would be everything. If we really did *see* GOD, not just hear His voice, not feel His touch now and then, not argue out His hand in this and that and the other, but did see Him! Whence come pessimisms among you? Whence comes despair? Whence come feverish hurryings and clamourings? Whence come all these arguings as to whether and how the cause may be snatched from failure, whether and how success may be contrived?—if there is GOD? It is that sort of feeling that Edinburgh gave me the beginnings of, and that I have been resting in, and growing in, ever since those days.

Do not call it empty mysticism. Nay, it is simple, practical, hard truth, that GOD is relevant everywhere,

that there is absolutely nothing in life where GOD is not relevant, and that the folly, the mysticism—if it deserves to be called so—is in leaving GOD out, and not in keeping Him in. It is GOD who can multiply two by two and make it nothing. It is GOD who can multiply two by two and make it a million. Ought any business office to leave out of account a GOD who can do that? Everywhere, at every turn, in every waking hour of my days now, I find GOD intruding, I find GOD coming in, the factor that cannot be neglected, the supreme factor in everything, that makes all the difference. And oh, how I covet for the men who hold the reins, the men who lead the way, how I covet for the whole Church, just the recovery of some such sense of GOD as that. A lot of our talk about GOD, and our talk to Him, is blind man's talk, it is beggarman's talk. We are feeling Him forsooth, we are hearing Him merely, we are discerning traces of Him, we are cherishing an occasional touch of His fingers; when all the time we might be seeing Him, we might be having Him, we might be dwelling in Him, He might be everything to us. We are craving, and imploring, and cajoling, and exerting our beggarman's ingenuities with Him, when all the time He is there for us in His wealth, in His abundance that we cannot find words for.

I know it is all trite, it is all in the very elements of our theology; but oh, it is tremendous if it is trite, and I can testify that it makes all the difference in life. GOD, the bewilderer of our hopes, the frustrator, GOD the confounder of our logic, GOD the surpriser, the infinite in resource, GOD the magician; GOD, who emerges serene Victor when all is lost; GOD, who sits in the heavens, and with His heart of love laughs down on us poor arguing, doubting, fearing, struggling creatures of His; GOD, the splendid forgiver; GOD,

the indomitable lover of us; GOD, who can pardon anything; GOD, who endures our blindness and our failure; GOD, who puts up with everything from us, and does exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think. GOD, who can throw this meeting away—this influential meeting as it deserves to be called in our human speech—and a thousand such, like a withered autumn leaf, and never miss it; GOD, who can use some chance word that has fallen in this meeting, some flash of vision that comes to one of those sitting here to save England; GOD, who can, if it is His plan, take the bit of work that has been set to me this year and bring out of it for the world magical things; GOD, who can afford, if He pleases, just to crush this year's work under His foot like a beech nut lying in the forest; GOD, who, under some wave from China, could sweep away all the churches of our Christendom that we are so anxious and concerned over—sweep them all away like sand castles before the tide, and the onlooking angels would not falter for an instant, as they saw it, in their song of praise and thanksgiving, honour and might to Him who, if he swept that away which is everything to us, would leave something more glorious and greater in its place.

Do you say that it is all rhapsody? Do you level-headed men say: "What we want is practical advice and policy. We want to know what is to be done in our emergencies? After all, we are human, and the circumstances are human, and all these dreams of GOD do not count." Nay, nay, we are not human. That is just it. We are not human. I say: See GOD; get the vision of GOD, and you are drawn into the current of that mighty will and that mighty power, and, you are one with GOD. Do you ask what is to be done? Do you say that what you need is not

to know something, but to do something? Nay, nay, to know is all. "Be still and know that I am GOD. I will be exalted in the Earth" To know is all. Know GOD, and you will have no sense of anything wanting in the region of action. I came away from the Edinburgh Conference forming no vows, with no inner act of consecration, no new resolves, no lines of action to proceed upon. I just came away sensible that I had received knowledge of GOD such as I never had in my life before; and though nothing else came to me, there was no lack. I knew that I had all, and that everything else in its time and place would come.

Know GOD, and the duty comes in its time, in its turn—the next thing to do; and with the duty the power. You are joined on to the divine, the duty divine, the power divine; and, though the duty that comes be a trifle, though it be dismaying in its inadequacy, though it be to stand still and do nothing, and still do nothing, and still do nothing, yet know GOD, realize GOD, and all is well. It is as mighty as all the action that any man could take, to be doing nothing at GOD's bidding. It may be that He will bury you deep in His foundations somewhere, it may be that He will shoot you as a bolt from one of His weapons, it may be that He will disperse you as fragrance in the air, it may be that He will hide you as leaven, it may be that He will set you to toil all night and catch nothing, in the morning to give you a glorious haul that makes up for the long, empty night. There is no knowing in what way, where, when, how, GOD will use you; but in knowing GOD you will know that you have everything. It is not rhapsody. I say it is the most practical sense that there is, that there can be. It is the most business-like, hard counsel adapted to the situation

that there can be, to take GOD into account. What I am doing is just standing in Aladdin's cave here, and with clumsy hands grasping at random at handfuls of rough gems from the wealth that is there. You cannot stand in that treasure-house and ask: "Does this mean anything?" It means everything. Get there; get into that cave of GOD, where GOD's wealth is. Plunge your hands in it, and you will know that it is the only practical wisdom for life, for the churches, for the world.

The Edinburgh Conference, after all, is not worth talking about. I feel that I can sympathize with people who say: "Have done with the Edinburgh Conference. It is nothing. No event in time can deserve to be talked about so much." Aye, it is only as there was in the Edinburgh Conference that which is abiding, that which is for all time and everywhere, that it deserves any mention. And it is because all that was of value in the Edinburgh Conference is here this afternoon in our midst, everything that vitally blessed it is as real and present to-day, is as available for everyone of us to-day—it is because of that that it is worth while for us to be here, and worth while that I should be sent on any errand about it. We have GOD! For everyone of us there is GOD! Everyone of us is in the hands of GOD—and all things are possible!



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