

A Sermon
from
1 Corinthians XIII, 12

For now we see through a glass darkly,
but then face to face: Now I know
in part, but then shall I know, even
as also I am known.

An unceasing inquiry ^{or} thirst after know-
ledge is one of the noblest aspirations of
man, and the attainment of sound
wisdom far more precious than the treasures
of gold & silver. The one elevates the
mind, the other, ~~as the~~ ^{mainly} affords a little
~~gratification to man's~~ ^{gratification to the} ~~passions~~ ^{mainly} ~~into the~~ ^{serves our}
sensual appetites of our corrupt nature.
But unless our knowledge leads us to some-
thing higher beyond this present world,
it can be of no real or lasting benefit.

There are indeed many subjects of a
worldly nature, many natural truths
worth knowing & inquiring into, but

mainly
serves our
bodily
wants
or affords
some
little
gratification
to the

if they do not lead us to him who is
the Author & Ruler of nature's works,
who upholds all things by his power; if they
do not raise our ideas above this present
passing scene, they will increase little to
our present peace & our happiness hereafter.
For how comfortless & wretched must that
man be at last, when on the brink of eternity,
who, notwithstanding all his enlarged views
on temporal subjects, has remained
ignorant on things ~~spiritual~~ ^{eternal} & eternal,
and is not at peace with God. [The power &
greatness of the Infinite & Eternal as exhibited
in nature's works, may indeed dazzle a
man's mind, and impress him with wonder
& awe, and yet produce no comforting or
hopeful prospects for a future world.]
We must know God in his relation to our-
selves, in his gracious purposes, in his con-
descending love & mercy, ^{in Christ} to supply all our
needs. We must feel deeply conscious of our
own feebleness, sinfulness & guilt, and know
how to be reconciled to God, how to receive
his blessing & will for our present comfort,
mercy

through
Christ

can for our future happiness. Then only can
~~our~~ our knowledge prove a real source
of blessedness, for time & eternity. But withal
we must ever take into account that our knowledge
here as yet is imperfect & partial, that our highest
conceptions of God, and a future world, of bliss &
glory, ~~are~~ ^{are} utterly inadequate to the reality. We must
learn to live by faith, & be sustained by hope. Yet
~~Notwithstanding~~ such faith & hope, as God's word &
promises inspire, will cheer & animate our
souls, until they are realized by sight, & we
are in possession of the inheritance we sought
after & waited for. And this will lead us
to the contemplation of our text in which the Apostle
~~After~~ ~~comparison~~ ~~untracts~~ our present
partial knowledge & ~~conception~~ of things eternal & divine, ~~with~~
~~in their imperfect & partial nature with~~
with that full & perfect knowledge to which we
shall attain hereafter.

And may God so aid & bless our present
meditation as to raise our thoughts & longings
from this imperfect state to the realities &
enjoyments in store for his waiting people
in the world to come.

I) In order to understand & appreciate the
Apostle's sentiments, as intimated in the
text & ~~to apply them for our instruction~~
& ~~edification~~, it will, in the first place,
be necessary, to notice the special object

he had in view. And this we shall ascertain,
from the connexion of our text, as well
as from the whole tenor of the Epistle.
St Paul's ^{evident purpose} ~~express~~ is to correct some
errors which had crept into the Corinthian
Church. The members of that Church have,
in various ways, departed from the
simplicity of the Gospel, and were
^{particularly} ~~greatly~~ wanting in the characteristic marks
of genuine religion, such as brotherly
love & charity. They laid far more
stress on human wisdom & speculative
knowledge, or, the ~~inquiring~~ ^{on} into mysterious
subjects, than ~~practical~~ ^{practical} ~~continen~~ ^{continen}. They
~~exhibited~~ ^{exhibited} shining talents & eloquence,
~~but~~ the speaking with tongues & other
miraculous ~~powers~~ ^{gifts} ~~above~~ ^{above}
their true value. ~~These~~ ^{These} ~~existed~~ ^{existed} ~~vain~~ ^{vain}
ambition ~~rather~~ ^{& envy} among themselves, such,
as would destroy the bond of love &
brotherly concord. Hence their divisions
rather than their party spirit, which ~~was~~ ^{was} a various
disorder, for which the Apostle had to

on the
intent
for which
they were
bedeviled,
& thus
rather

reprove them. ^{But} ~~And~~ whilst reproving them
& counselling them, he points out what is
most essential in the Christian's life &
character, or, fundamental in doctrine,
~~but~~ as contrasted with ~~minor subjects~~
& minor questions & subordinate subjects.
He urges strongly such graces & ~~virtues~~ virtues
~~practices which would tend~~ as well as ~~tend~~
to the edification of the Church, ~~and to~~
to Christian union & mutual peace, whilst ~~he~~
~~he~~ cautions them against ^{ambitious} ~~ambitious~~ & ~~disputes~~ ^{grounding}
which chiefly ^{exaggerate} ~~exaggerate~~ pride & vainglory & strife,
~~or enervate~~ ~~strife~~.

How beautifully does the Apostle des-
cribe the true nature of charity & genuine brotherly
love, in all their bearing & influence
on our daily life. Charity ^{or the Christian love} ~~is the love~~
in his estimation, exceeds all other graces;
it is the brief ~~summary~~ ^{summary} accompaniment of the
~~Christian~~ believer, the characteristic mark of Christ;
~~of the children of God & subjects of Christ~~

disciples. ~~Kingdom~~. It is Divine & heavenly in its
origin, and will endure, when all other
gifts ~~shall~~ cease. It is the best & greatest
of all gifts & graces & ought to be valued
above all others. It will undoubtedly
constitute the way ename of heavenly
felicity. Such is ~~the Apostle's argument~~ ^{St Paul's}
throughout the chapter of our text.

Now it is from these considerations that,
the Apostle draws a contrast between
the believers condition here & hereafter,
and ~~from~~ ^{tho} ~~in~~ in our text, how
little, after all, we know & can know,
even when we have attained to the know-
ledge of the ~~way of salvation~~ ^{Gospel truth} in this
our ~~present imperfect state~~ ^{Mark},
Mark, dear Brethren, the significant language
of our text. "For now we see through a
glass darkly, but then face to face. now,
I know in part, but then, shall I know
even as I also am known."
This contrast between our knowledge here
& hereafter implies, in the first place,

a lesson of humility, as if the Apostle
meant to say: Let no one boast of what
he knows, or, has attained to, in spiritual
understanding; let no one be conceited,
because he may excel some of his brethren
in the comprehension of Divine & mysterious
truth; ^{nor let any one imagine} ~~as if~~ ^{as if} these were little
more for him to learn. ~~Not that~~ ^{not} The great
Apostle of the Gentiles would ~~conquer~~ ^{not} the knowledge
~~of things spiritual & Divine~~ ^{of things spiritual & Divine}
~~in any way~~ ^{in any way} ~~in any way~~ ^{in any way} ~~in any way~~ ^{in any way}
In the very beginning of this Epistle, St Paul
commends his Corinthian converts for their extensive
knowledge of the truth which has enabled
them to give ^{undisturbed} witness of what they believe.
This knowledge, if rightly directed ~~will~~ ^{will}
exercise a powerful influence for
good ^{both on} ~~on themselves & others~~ ^{on themselves & others} ~~ourselves &~~
others. Of this St Paul ^{himself affords} ~~gives~~ ^{gives}
conclusive proof. He ~~himself~~ ^{himself} had deeply
penetrated into the truths & mysteries
of God, especially as regards the wonderful
plan of the sinner's redemption.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ,
& his saving power, had charmed his
heart & animated his mind; his views
& prospects of a future world, ~~and~~
of eternal glory, had given so light &
assurance, that they filled his soul with
praise & joy. ~~and~~ He often pours forth
his heart in grateful adoration, when
contemplating the love of God in Christ
Jesus & the ~~great~~ ^{great} hope set before
us. Moreover he had been favoured with
a heavenly vision, in which he saw & heard
things unutterable, too sublime to
be ~~truly~~ comprehended by the mind of man
or, expressed in human language.
Nevertheless this same Spirit includes
himself among those who, as yet ~~could~~ ^{only}
see darkly, as in a glass, or ~~dim~~ ^{through a} mirror,
like objects ^{faintly} ~~represented~~, or
after off. ~~And~~ As to his knowledge,
how can comprehensive & profound in
things divine & eternal, the Spirit
speak of himself ~~as omniscient~~ & tell
us: "Now I know in part." When an inspira

could speak thus, ~~he~~
Apostle like St Paul, whose writings contain
one of the greatest treasures of truth & divine
instruction for the Christian Church, ~~for our~~
~~cannot stand & without hesitation, for they &~~
divine must have been his conviction concerning
the weakness of ^{our} ~~man~~, in perfect knowledge here,
~~then~~ ^{and} the knowledge ~~to which we are entitled to~~ ^{shall}
hereafter. ~~And this is not to be attained~~ ^{to attain}
~~in general, but as to the enlightened believe & attainments,~~
~~which is indispensable in sound revealed truth;~~ ^{knowledge}
Accordingly this ^{ought to convince us} ~~is a lesson to humiliate~~ ^{in particular}
~~to which we are entitled to~~ ^{ought to}
~~we know but in part.~~ In the same proceeding
our text, the Apostle compares our present
knowledge & retention of things eternal to the
knowledge of a child as contrasted with
a man of mature age saying, when I was a
child, I thought as a child, I spoke as a
child I understood as a child, but when
I became a man I put away childish things.
~~Accordingly~~ We are all, even the wisest of
men, comparatively children, until we attain ^{matured}
to that matured & perfect state, when our ^{reasoned}
knowledge will be no longer ^{beliefs} ~~childish & partial,~~
but full of light & life. An eminent divine
& champion of the Christian faith once said,
that he had learned little more than the

alphabet of Divine truth, ~~as contained in~~
~~the Scriptures~~. Indeed the more a man advances
in spiritual ~~knowledge~~ ^{understanding}, the
more humble & modest he will become when
considering his imperfect attainments.

The glimpses & foretastes of the bliss & glory
to be revealed hereafter, ^{naturally} ~~necessarily~~ tend
to make the true believer long for a more perfect
view of the ^{things heavenly & eternal} ~~reality of a truly joyful~~ ~~enjoyments~~.

How little we know of the ~~real~~ true
nature of things in this material world, of
the things we see with our bodily eyes,
crown us & above us! We can only exclaim
with the Psalmist: when I consider the
heavens, the works of thy fingers, what is
man that thou art mindful of him & the
son of man that thou visitest him! &

Nay, even as regards ourselves, our own
being, our various faculties of body & soul,
the ^{connection} ~~relation~~ existing between them, how
much is there that is mysterious & wonderful,
how many a difficult ^{question} ~~problem~~ presents itself
to a reflecting mind.

Again ~~as~~ in regard of God's dealings with
men, his supreme will & judgments, among nations
& individuals, some more, some less favored with

~~temporal~~ advantages & blessings, ~~as even~~ with light
& Truth from on high, is there not in all these
things something very glorious & ~~difficult~~
for our present comprehension. The only ~~light~~ answer we
~~can give~~ ^{can give} to these & similar problems,
is this, that here we are in a state of probation
and shall know hereafter the why &
wherefore of what at present we cannot comprehend.
~~Further~~

Then, when we look forward to the world
to come, ^{how poor & cold} is our estimate of
it, not as men in utter ignorance, or,
doubt & uncertainty, but as believers in
God's revealed truth, ~~with eyes open before~~
of life eternal, how little ^{are we able to form a}
~~possibility~~ of the state of the ~~bliss~~ ^{heavenly} & ^{revelation}
of the riches of the heavenly inheritance
the abode of the blessed, except that we
are assured by an ever faithful God &
the true witness of heavenly realities, of a glory
unspeakable, of enjoyment & delights beyond
our present comprehension.

^{Moreover} when we contemplate the exalted
nature of the Deity & his various attributes,
of power & omniscience, his perfect purity & glory,
(or, the union of Father, Son & Holy Ghost, or)

or when we try to realize the truth of eternity, how dim
& imperfect are our views, how inadequate even
our highest & purest conceptions.

All this however does not afford ~~a ground~~ ^{a ground}
any ~~reasonable~~ ^{ground} of ~~excuse~~ ^{excuse} for misgivings nor a pretext
for scepticism & unbelief, but rather a solemn
lesson against presumption or, vain curiosity,
~~in the matter as well as the teacher who~~

1) It teaches ~~us~~ ^{us} to humble ourselves under the Almighty,
to have of God & to adore his condescending
love & mercy towards ~~finite~~ ^{finite} ~~mortal~~ ^{mortal}
poor & sinful mortals. For how could
finite beings expect to fathom the nature
of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~even~~ ^{even} ~~ings~~ ^{ings} of the Infinite? How
could a sinful & corrupt creature, ^{imagines that} ~~that~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{the}
High & Holy One ~~could~~ ^{could} ~~comprehend~~ ^{comprehend} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~depths~~ ^{depths} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Holy One~~ ^{Holy One}
~~or~~ ^{or} ~~divine~~ ^{divine} ~~into~~ ^{into} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~depths~~ ^{depths} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~counsels~~ ^{counsels}. For his judgments are past
finer than cut? All this is designed to put
our faith our love of truth our patience
& submission to the test. All is a necessary
part of our present state of probation. Were
it not so, ~~could we~~ ^{could we} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~all~~ ^{all} ~~we~~ ^{we} ~~might~~ ^{might} ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~seen~~ ^{seen}, then would be no trial
of faith.

2) But there is another & brighter view for

us arising from the Apostle's language in our
text. It contains not merely a lesson to humble us to expose
but also a reason, or strong ground for ^{our present} ~~patient~~ ^{steadfast}
~~waiting~~ ^{confident} hope. What now we see
but weakly, as through a dim mirror, we shall
see face to face, by the full glare of Divine
light. The bright & glorious scenes of
Heaven's realities & enjoyments, will
be seen & participated in without any alloy, without
hindrance, or cloud to interest or obscure
our vision. What now we know only in
part, or imperfectly as by forecast &
anticipation, we shall know with certainty
and distinctness, with an intelligence
& appreciation far beyond any thing we
know or comprehend at present. I shall
know even as I am known. As my God
& Maker knows me & is cognizant of ~~all~~ ^{my whole}
~~that appertains to me~~ so shall I know ^{being & character}
things heavenly & eternal, know him ^{in whom}
~~and his glorious attributes in whose~~
likeness I have been made; know & behold ^{my Lord &}
~~him who~~ through whom the Father was ^{known}
more manifest, know & see him in whom
I have believed, ~~in whom I have believed~~
in whom I have trusted for eternal

salvation, ~~and~~ Such is the Apostle's con-
fident hope, with the bright ~~the~~ prospects
which, by faith, he ~~realizes~~ here, & which he
knew ~~will~~ be consummation hereafter. Now
it behoves us, likewise, ~~we are warranted~~, to
entertain the same assurance of hope,
if believers succeed. The Apostle speaks
not for himself alone, but speaks on behalf
of all who fight the good fight of faith.
Now we walk by faith, not by sight. But
~~genuine faith will not be disappointed~~
when genuine faith exists, our hope will
not be dis^{appoint}ed but be consummation
in possession. Our knowledge will be
assimilated to the Divine, so far as creatures
may resemble the original - the image of their
Maker, or the image of Christ ~~who is to whom~~
all who now ~~are made~~ seek & strive for
to be like him shall be made conformable.
Mark what St John says ~~on~~ concerning the
believer's hope: "we shall be like him;
for we shall see him as he is, which ex-
pression implies, that his glory shall be
reflected on us. Now this assimilation
to Christ who is our ~~Heaven~~ we members
of his body, will ~~consequently~~ result
in that higher & perfect knowledge

^ indeed

^ who is the
express
image of the
Father

^ We know
that when
he shall
appear

to which the specible circles our attention &
our hope. Just as a likeness, or portrait, of any man
differs ~~in degree~~ ^{is} ~~in perfect~~ ^{is} ~~comparison~~ ^{is} to the ~~different~~ ^{is}
~~person~~ ^{is} ~~whom it represents~~, ^{is} ~~comparatively im-~~
~~perfect~~ ^{is} ~~for our comprehension~~, from the real
& living image, so will be the difference ~~any~~
greater still, between what we now believe
& ~~hope for~~ ^{is} ~~we~~ ^{is} ~~wait for~~, and the realization
& ~~presence~~ ^{is}. A description, or, map of a
country gives us but a faint idea of the real
landscape. A sight of the country can alone
suffice to give us an accurate & perfect
knowledge of its true features. So it will
be with the world to come, with heaven's
glorious & impendable inheritance,
and with all the inhabitants of the
new earth & the new heavens, with the
saints in light & all the scenes of light,
& ~~life~~ ^{is} of bliss & glory. How our knowledge
will expand & brighten up. How much
we shall see to admire! What raptures
of joy will be beheld. And this not merely
on account of the many objects of wonder
& ~~glory~~ ^{is} & power, of glory & splendor, brought
to our view, but also because we shall
see with new eyes, with ~~new eyes~~ ^{is}
a purified & glorified vision.

Nothing will draw our view. No sin, no
infirmity, no scenes of evil, no wickedness,
^{unnumbered} no evil spirits will interfere, or disturb
the renewed & sanctified faculties of
the happy soul, or of the new & glorified body.
The bright scene of glory will moreover
be enhanced & consolidated by that pure
charity, that perfect love of the brethren,
which will endure for ever and produce
the most harmonious songs of praise & adoration
before the throne of God & the Lamb.

Dear brethren who can be so indifferent, so
insensible & foolish as not to be charmed
& attracted by such a hope set before us!
What manner of men ought we to be
in all godly conversation! Assuredly we
ought not to linger & titer to make ~~our~~
calling & election sure, to strive & labor
with all earnestness & diligence to estab-
lish ~~our~~ ^{our} hope of life eternal in
~~the Kingdom of God & his blessed Son Christ~~
~~Jesus.~~

even a sure title to an inheritance that
falleth not away, but remains for ever in
the Kingdom of God & his blessed Son Christ
Jesus. Now unto God.

In the
house of
God shall
we see