

CHAPTER VI.

Counterfeits of the Divine.

IN seeking to obtain full control of the believer, the first great effort of evil spirits is directed toward getting the man to accept their suggestions, and workings, as the speaking, working, or leading of God. Their initial device is to counterfeit a "Divine Presence," under cover of which they can mislead their victim as they will. THE WORD COUNTERFEIT MEANING THE SUBSTITUTION OF THE FALSE FOR THE TRUE.

The condition on the part of the believer, which gives the deceiving spirits their opportunity, and the basis of this counterfeit, is the mistaken location of God; either (1) in them (consciously); (2) or around them (consciously). When they pray they think of, or pray to God in themselves, or else to God around them, in the room, or atmosphere. They use their imagination, and try to "realize" His presence, and they desire to "feel" His presence in them, or upon them.*

THE LOCATION OF GOD BY BELIEVERS

This locating of God, in, or around the believer, usually comes about at the time of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost; for up to that time of crisis in his life, he lived more by the acceptance of facts declared in the Scriptures, as understood by his intelligence; but with the Baptism of the Spirit he becomes more conscious of the presence of God by the Spirit,† and in the spirit, and so begins to locate the Person of God as in, around, or upon him. Then he turns inward, and begins to pray to God as within

* Page 112. † See pages 50, 52.

him, which in time, really results in prayer to evil spirits,* if they succeed in gaining admittance under counterfeit.

The logical sequence of prayer to God as located within, can be pressed to absurdity, *i.e.*, if the soul prays to God in himself, why not pray to God in another elsewhere? The limitation of God as a Person within, and all the possible dangers arising from this misconception of truth are obvious.

Some believers so live inwardly in communion, worship and vision, as to become spiritually introverted, and cramped and narrowed in their outlook; with the result that their spiritual capacity and mental powers become dwarfed and powerless.† Others become victims to the "inner voice," and the introverted attitude of listening to it, which is the ultimate result of the location of God as a Person within, so that eventually the mind becomes fixed in the introverted condition with no out-going action at all.‡

In fact, all turning inwards to a subjective location of God as indwelling, speaking, communing, and guiding, in a MATERIALISTIC, OR CONSCIOUS SENSE, is open to gravest danger; for upon this thought and belief, sedulously cultivated by the powers of darkness, the most serious deceptions, and final outworkings of deceiving spirits have taken place.

THE ULTIMATE RESULT OF MISTAKEN LOCATION OF GOD

Upon this principle of the mistaken location of God; used by evil spirits as the ground work for manifestations to support and deepen this belief; has come about the delusions of believers during past ages, and of recent years, who assert themselves to be "Christ." On the same principle will come about the great deceptions at the end of the age, foretold by the Lord in Matthew xxiv. 24, of the "false Christs" and false prophets; and the "I

* Pages 96, 131. † See Appendix.

‡ See the "Planchette" use of the man by evil spirits, page 143.

am the Christ" of the leaders of groups of side-tracked believers; and the thousand others who have been sent to asylums, although they are not monomaniacs at all. The devil's richest harvest is from the effects of his counterfeits; and unwittingly, many sober and faithful teachers of "holiness" have aided him in his deceptions, through the using of language which gives a materialistic idea of spiritual things, and which is eagerly laid hold of by the natural mind.

Those who locate God personally, and wholly in themselves, make themselves, by their assertions, practically, "divine" persons. God is not wholly in any man.* He dwells in those who receive Him, by His own Spirit communicated to them. "God is Spirit," and mind or body cannot hold communion with spirit. Sensuous feelings, or "conscious" physical enjoyment† of some supposed spiritual presence is not true communion of spirit with Spirit, such as the Father seeks from those who worship Him (John iv. 24).

God is in heaven. Christ the Glorified Man is in heaven. The location of the God we worship is of supreme importance. If we think of our God as in us, and around us, *for our worship*, and for our "enjoyment" (?) we unwittingly open the door to the evil spirits in the atmosphere which surrounds us; instead of our penetrating in spirit through the lower heavens (see Heb. iv. 14; ix. 24; x. 19, 20) to the throne of God, which is in the highest heaven, "above principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 21, A.V.).

THE TRUE LOCATION OF GOD

The Word of God is very clear on this point, and we need only ponder such passages as Heb. i. 3; ii. 9; iv. 14-16; ix. 24; and many others, to see it. The God we worship, the Christ we love, is in heaven; and it is as we approach Him there, and by faith apprehend our union

* See page 104.

† Page 112.

with Him in spirit there, we, too, are raised with Him and seated with Him, above the plane of the lower heavens where the powers of darkness reign, and seated with Him, see them under His feet (Eph. i. 20-23 ; ii. 6).

The Lord's words recorded in the gospel of John, chapters xiv., xv. and xvi., give the truth very clearly concerning His indwelling in the believer. The "in Me" of being with Him, and in Him, in His heavenly position (John xiv. 20), being the fact for the believer's faith, and apprehension; and the "I in you"—spoken to the company of disciples, and hence to the Body of Christ as a whole—following as a result in the individual life of the believer. The union with the Person in the glory, resulting in the inflow and outflow of His Spirit and life, through the believer on earth (see Phil. i. 19). In other words, the "subjective" is the RESULT OF THE "OBJECTIVE." The "object" of Christ in heaven, being the BASIS OF FAITH for the subjective inflow of His life and power, by the Holy Spirit of God.

CHRIST AS A PERSON IN HEAVEN

The Lord said "If ye abide in Me (*i.e.*, in the glory), and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will . . ." (John xv. 7). Christ abides in us by His Spirit, and *through His words*, but He Himself, as a Person, is in heaven, and it is only as we abide in Him there, that His Spirit, and His life, through His Word, can be manifested in us here.

"Abiding" means an attitude of trust, and dependence on a Person in heaven; but if the attitude is changed into a trust and dependence upon a Christ within, it is really a resting upon an inward experience, and a turning FROM THE CHRIST IN HEAVEN, which actually blocks the avenue for the inflow of His life, and disassociates the believer from co-operation with Him by the Spirit. Any manifestation therefore of a "presence" within, cannot be a true "manifestation" from God, IF IT UNCENTRES THE BELIEVER FROM HIS RIGHT ATTITUDE toward the Christ in heaven.

There is a true knowledge of the presence of God, but it is IN THE SPIRIT, when joined to Him Who is within the veil; a knowledge of spiritual union and fellowship with Him which lifts the believer, so to speak, out of himself to abide with Christ in God.

The counterfeit "presence" of God* is nearly always manifested as love,† to which the believer opens himself without hesitation, and finds it fill and satiate his innermost being, but the deceived one does not know that he has opened himself to evil spirits in the deepest need of his inner life.

COUNTERFEIT PRESENCE OF GOD.

How the powers of darkness counterfeit the presence of God to those ignorant of his devices may be somewhat as follows. At some moment when the believer is yearning for the SENSE of God's presence, either alone, or in a meeting, and certain conditions are fulfilled,‡ the subtle foe approaches, and wrapping the SENSES round with a soothing, lulling feeling—sometimes filling the room with light, or causing what is apparently a "breath from God" by a movement of the air—either whispers "This is the presence you have longed for," or leads the believer to infer that it is what he has desired.

Then, off his guard, and lulled into security that Satan is far away, some thoughts are suggested to the mind, accompanied by manifestations which appear to be Divine; a sweet voice speaks, or a vision is given, which is at once received as "Divine guidance," given in the "Divine presence," and hence beyond question as from God. If accepted as from God, *when from the spirits of evil*, the first ground is gained.

The man is now so sure that God has bidden him do this or that. He is filled with the thought that he has been highly favoured of God, and chosen for some high place in His Kingdom. The deeply hidden self-love is fed and

* Page 105.

† Page 108.

‡ See Chapter IV. on passivity.