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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor  
on Sunday Morning, June 5. 1983.

Lesson. 1 John 5.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three ~~are~~ in one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. 1 John 5. vv.7.8.

There is an especial delight in our souls in this glorious text for a very specific reason. I wonder if you are able to judge the nature of the reason? It is because God by His Spirit has made us loving, established Trinitarians. This is indeed a foundation stone for living faith. It is the foundation stone, and all who are bound for Heaven, quickened by the Spirit and being matured in spiritual experience for Glory, will know definitely, clearly, abundantly how the Lord by His blessed Spirit expounded to them in order and brought home to their souls what is vital, powerful, especially ~~the~~ glorious doctrine of the Holy Trinity. We are not Unitarians. God has made us Trinitarians. You believe in the distinctiveness of the glorious Persons of the Trinity, Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Ghost in co-equality and eternity. They are perfectly equal in person, work, glory, majesty, dominion, power, grace, love, infinite goodness, faithfulness. And you believe in their unity of essence; one God. So for a specific reason the subject before us is of particular delight to the preacher ~~and to~~ all Trinitarians present. You may well examine your souls to discover how the Lord taught you personally the vital, indispensable, glorious ~~foundation~~ truth without which there can never be establishment in your souls. I wonder whether you are able to name any particular year if you have kept diaries, or the period in your spiritual life, or it may be you will remember the age group you were in, or the phase of life you were passing through when the Lord made you Trinitarians. I can tell you, you at once felt the blessedness of your eternal salvation, and a concentration of joy that is inexpressible, for the simple, profound reason that you were instantly brought by the Holy Ghost into harmony

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with the glorious Trinity, and in harmony with the whole of the heavenly host, the whole Church of God in Glory, and His blessed Church on earth and with the whole of the Bible. You were brought into an inexpressible experience of oneness, peace, joy, love; to a sense of safety and security which removed the fear of death. These are things to test you. If God has placed you on the Rock you will have felt your eternal salvation, the forgiveness of sins, security and safety and the removal of the fear of death.

? "I'm safe!" I'll shout, "O law and sin,  
Ye cannot bring me guilty in,  
For Christ was crucified!"

I rest on the Trinity, His path, covenant, blood.

I therefore ask you - I hope you have not been diverted by earthly things: I hope your mind has not been preoccupied with things that perish - I ask you, is there a little thrill of joy in your spirit in relation to your knowledge of the glorious Trinity? It must be small at the greatest. "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." But it will bring a thrill of joy. This is an unusual term for many Strict Baptists perhaps: it is true. J.H.G. used the word. It will do that for you. It makes you feel like flying straight to Heaven. It is Spring and Summer: all the Winter, trials, sorrows are gone. You going to meet your Love who has loved you with an everlasting love, to see and be with Him for ever. You will never come back. (This is a kind of preface.) Does it give you a singular translating joy, the doctrine divine, fundamental and indispensable for your salvation, the glorious doctrine of the Trinity?

I will say two things. In the epistles by the apostle of love, John who wrote the gospels - in the wonderful epistles of John is one vital principle I want to postulate. Do you know what it is? The whole of the epistles are personal and exclusive to the Church of God. It is Father and His little children. The world is seen as outside, and there is something intimate concerning the epistles. There is a key sentence I will expound to you in order and show you the whole setting and spirit of the epistles. It is in chapter 2. We have it all through, but I will name it to you from chapter 2. He says, "My little children." The concept is father and his children, his sons and daughters, the world

outside. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." You will long to be preserved, upheld, kept. You will not want to grieve your loving, faithful Father, your Beloved. Alas, we do! He says, "And if any man sin - (if any of these children of Father sin." I hope you will be enabled to assimilate this because it will be for your solid peace, instruction, knowledge if you hope you are among these little children and He your Father. "And if any of these dear children sin, we have an advocate with the Father." One of the blessed office characters of the Lord Jesus which in Heaven He exercises is, Advocate with the Father. It is on the ground of the glorious merit of His Person, and on the ground of the infinite merit of His accomplished priestly work of atonement and it is eternally efficacious. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." That is where we see the infinite nature of the epistles of John. They are sins of children: they are no longer against the law because the law has received full satisfaction and been dealt with at Calvary. They are sins against Father. "And if any man sin," if any child of God sin - they are sins against Father - now they have an Advocate with their Father, and the divine efficacy of His being Advocate is, they are restored as they confess their sins to full communion with Father. They are not considered sins against the law because Justice has received its payment. This makes all the difference. It is a line of truth not clearly perceived by many. "I am a child, a son or daughter. I have sinned against Father. I have an Advocate, and if I confess He will restore me to full communion." As for the law it cannot bring it up against <sup>you</sup> ~~you~~. How can it? Christ paid the debt, fulfilled the law, satisfied Justice, so it cannot bring anything up against you. It is a sin of the family. Here you have your Advocate with the Father. If only you dear people could go home and assimilate this you will find a wealth of comfort in it. People are inclined to hark back to the law as if it can charge them. It is a sin against Father: there is an Advocate so you are restored.

There is another word I would name to you. When the Lord has restored you to full, blessed union and communion and the enjoyment of it, please remember, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Do not keep harking back to sins of years ago. They are drowned in the

depths of the sea, put behind God's back, and it must be the same between the people of God. We are taught to love and to forgive one another, "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." If the Lord forgives sin and iniquity they are remembered no more for ever. They are gone. Some people keep raking up sins of years ago. They never forgive; they do not know how to. The Lord does not keep raking up the past. If He has forgiven your sins and iniquities He will remember them no more for ever. You have two vital principles of truth enunciated. May they be hidden in your heart for your solid teaching and comfort. This is so often lacking. Very vital it is.

So you see how wonderful it is. I feel completely swallowed up in these truths in my spirit. When Jesus comes to be our Judge, will you fear Him? will you be afraid? Not if all your sins are behind God's back and He has paid your debt. They will be published as forgiven, gone for ever. You see what glorious truths we have, all merging in one before us continually. I will make one reference to the first chapter. It is of the children in relation to Father. "If we confess our sins," I do not know - who would? God knows - how many burdened hearts there are before me in the Sanctuary. If you have sinned - O those sins we have committed! Are there any this morning who come in this state? "Here on my heart the burden lies." You have sinned, haven't you? I do not know in what way. You have sinned in thought, word, deed may be. No one has seen them but God perhaps. Are there any here with a burden of sin? This is not popular. It does not seem to be now as if people are burdened with sin. Are you, any of you? The Lord can smite you in a moment, and in smiting in love bring your sins to remembrance so you are bowed down heavily. It may be by a child's remark. I have known for the Lord to sting me with a simple sort of earthly remark. O what it means! I will tell you one word that once stung me. It will show you how the Lord can use something that is comparatively simple to be a word of powerful conviction to one of His dear children. There was a man who had a beautiful car. It was wonderful to look at, beautiful to drive. After a few years rust appeared here and there. He said, "I suppose it was one of those that went out into the open and there was a bit of rust. Before it was put on show it was dealt with and no one knew." He said, "Of

course, the truth will out." That stung me. It is right, my friends, truth will out. I thought, what a word, and it went to my heart. I have told you; there it is. It is before God you know. So there is special comfort in the text if the Lord brings it to your heart. It is the same with various conditions of disease. A simple word it is: what is in the body comes out. It is true, my friends.

"If." If any of you are under the burden of sin. If we confess our sin by the Spirit. It is wonderful how God on the Throne of Grace will listen to our confessions of sin. You tell Him the worst. He knows more than you. He says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful. There is forgiveness with him that he may be loved." Heaven is filled - not yet, because not all the ransomed are Home - but it is filled with those who once were poor sinners, forgiven, washed and made whiter than snow. I want to sound it out before the congregation. "If we confess our sins," It is for children or adults taught of God. "He is faithful and just," Why just to forgive sin? Because it has already been laid on His Son, judged and condemned in the flesh of His Son. Sin has been dealt with and expiated. So as we had recently, it meant for Christ, death: for His children, justification. So "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." To forgive us. It is lovely. Is there any thing more precious, more wonderful than to be forgiven by God? All gone; everything put right. And there <sup>is</sup> something else. "And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." To wash <sup>us</sup> you clean. (Whatever would you feel like if you really knew you were clean before God, ready for Heaven? So it is in the family. The Father, the law, justice have been satisfied, sin atoned for. It is sin against Father. His children. So, Advocate. His infinite merit restores you. Do you feel it this morning? This is the theme of the general epistles. I am so concerned to get this truth clearly enunciated and established in your spirits so you understand and enjoy the fruits of it. What is it here? "For there are three that bear record in heaven," What does it mean, bear record? what to, and what of? It means they give infallible proof and evidence of the eternal Sonship of Christ. Blessed be God.