

'After These Things'

5.5 The Lord's Second Coming and the Church's Witness

A summary of a part of a paper by J.N. Darby entitled: 'The Lord's Coming and the Church' Published in Darby's Notes and Comments Vol. 2, p 275.

As we know, there are two comings:

1. **The Lord's first coming:** He came in the flesh, but only those who received Him knew Him, and that through the Spirit. His true Person was veiled¹.
2. **His second coming:** He is seen by all.



Although in the Lord's first coming He came in the flesh, no man could come to Him, except the Father who drew him (See John 6:44). He said to them, 'The words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are Life' (John 6:63). Through the Father's grace, those who had heard believed and had kept His word had everlasting life: their eyes were opened by His name to see Him. They were taught of God and knew who He was – the Son. Others saw His miracles, but He would not commit Himself to them – He spoke in parables.

The real personal coming of the Lord Jesus is His second coming: 'every eye shall see him, they also which pierced him' (Revelation 1:7). His glory will be acknowledged.

The Professing Church

Christ is now in glory. That is how the Church knows Him now. If the church² denies this, it ceases to be the church: it will have ceased to exist in the sight of God. Although salvation may be taught in a casual way, there cannot be faith as a church, and the Spirit would have no office in it, who testifies to Jesus and His glory. Even if the church suffers, that suffering is for nothing because it is joined to the world – it has ceased in its true existence. The same applies to individuals, even evangelicals, who deny the Spirit's voice witnessing His glory.

¹ I like to quote from the opening paragraphs of, 'The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ': (John Gifford Bellett – 1795-1864) 'The glories of the Lord Jesus are threefold — personal, official, and moral. His personal glory He veiled, save where faith discovered it, or an occasion demanded it. His official glory He veiled likewise; He did not walk through the land as either the Divine Son from the bosom of the Father, or as the authoritative Son of David. Such glories were commonly hid, as He passed on in the circumstances of life day by day. But His moral glory could not be hid. He could not be less than perfect in every thing — it belonged to Him, it was Himself'.

² Note I have switched to a small 'c' for church. It is the general profession.

The True Church

Nevertheless, God has not left Himself without a witness. We may be all mixed up, with our errors, weaknesses, and even unbelief. The witness in the true church has not ceased to exist. Competent members of the church acknowledge the power of reconciliation in Christ and the testimony of the Word of God. They believe it, submitting to God, and know the presence of the Holy Spirit, looking forward to the return of the Lord Jesus. They are the glory and hope of the church. Here is a church with faith – held in humility.

May God, our Father keep us humble, giving us grace, patience, and that of faith, qualifying us for His glory, whilst forgiving us our weakness for Jesus' sake.

