

THE VERILIES OF JESUS

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The verities of Jesus by David James Burrell

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DAVID JAMES BURRELL

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JESUS**

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BY
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PREFACE.

It would appear that in our study of the teachings of Jesus we have in some measure overlooked the significance of the word Verily. It occurs twenty-five times in its reduplicated form in John's Gospel and fifty times in its single form in the three synoptists. Attention is called to some suggestive facts:

First. The word thus rendered is found only in the discourses of Christ. The Apostles, though fully inspired to formulate and elaborate the truths which he proclaimed, nowhere make use of it. We infer that the word thus divinely copyrighted, as it were, conveys an intimation of singular authority, as of a divine seal, equivalent to a "Thus saith the Lord."

Other words (*γάρ, δὴ ποῦ, μὲν δέ, ναί, ὄντως* and *μὲν οὖν*) are thus rendered by the apostles: but Christ's verily is always *amen* (*ἀμήν*) and he alone uses it in this way.

Second. The word is one of special and peculiar emphasis. It corresponds in form and significance with the Hebrew *amen*, meaning "firm" or "trustworthy," which was the pledge-sign of God's covenant with his people. The addition of "I say unto you"

has precisely the value of a "Thus saith the Lord." This Verily is personified in Rev. iii. 14 as the Faithful and True Witness, from which it would appear that when Jesus uses the term he means "I give you a divine assurance of the truth and importance of what I now assert."

Third. The word is attached to every one of the fundamental facts of the gospel, and only to such. From this we infer that, while the teachings of Jesus were intended to touch every point in the circumference of human life, he intended to impress these particular truths with special emphasis upon us. He wasted none of his Verilies. There is a sufficient reason, as we shall see, for each one of them. In weighing, measuring and comparing truths we shall know where to put the emphasis when we thus discover where he placed it.

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The Verities of Jesus.

I. REGENERATION.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 3.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John iii. 5.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. John iii. 11.

IN a letter from Whitefield to Benjamin Franklin, dated 1752, occur these words: "As I find you growing more and more famous in the learned world I would recommend to your diligent and unprejudiced study the mystery of the new birth. It is a most important study, and, when mastered, will richly answer all your pains. I bid you, my friend, remember that One at whose bar we shall both presently appear hath solemnly declared that without it we shall in nowise see his Kingdom."

The reference is to the solemn words of Jesus addressed to Nicodemus: "*Verily, verily, I say unto*