

**THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD
OF CHRIST,
AND THEIR PERMANENT
LESSONS, PP. 1-151**

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The Spirit and the Word of Christ, and Their Permanent Lessons, pp. 1-151 by G. Vance Smith

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THE WORD OF CHRIST,

And their Permanent Lessons.

BY
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"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

ST. PAUL, Rom. viii. 9.

"He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

ST. JOHN, Ep. 2, v. 9.

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PREFACE.

A LITTLE more than a year ago, it was proposed to me by a friend that I should write, and publish at his expense, a short account of the ministry of Christ, more especially as viewed in its practical, moral and religious aspects, and including some notice of such connected circumstances as might seem to illustrate the spirit and purpose of his teaching.

This task I undertook, but with a little hesitation, because I was not sure that my own idea of what was desired was exactly the same as that of its proposer; while circumstances which I need not state rendered it impracticable for us to communicate, except by letter. Such was the origin of the present little work, which, as I wrote, I soon found it impossible to compress within the limits of a 'Tract' of twenty or thirty pages, as had been at first contemplated. I received, however, perfect liberty in regard to the size to which the work might run; while yet

it was desirable to remember distinctly the leading motive for its preparation,—to obtain a short exposition, simply written, and suitable for the use of unlearned readers more particularly. This purpose I have kept in view throughout, even though led so far beyond the limits originally thought of; and the work is now published not as a Tract, but as a substantive volume.

Alas, I must add, he who interested himself about it, as I have mentioned, has not been spared to see its completion. He died, not many weeks ago, leaving a name and an example of Christian well-doing widely and affectionately remembered in the community amidst which he had lived, and such as will not fail to recommend the object which he had at heart to all who knew him, far more persuasively than any poor words of mine.

I need scarcely say that, in what I have written, it has been my earnest desire to exhibit the Teaching and Spirit of Christ simply as they *were*, without exaggeration, negative or positive. I have sought to observe the just mean between over-criticism on the one hand, and the strange and superstitious extremes of popular orthodoxy on the other. I may add, that the effect of my inquiries and reflections in writing this book has wholly been to

strengthen my own feelings of reverence towards the Christian Master. It has also been to give me a more unbounded confidence that, in returning to the simplicity of his words, and making these more entirely than heretofore the foundation on which to build not only our churches but even other organizations of civilized life, will be found the true solution for some of the most urgent and perplexing problems of our time.*

Written in February, 1874.

* On many of the topics which are only slightly touched in the following pages, or which, within so short a space, it was not possible to touch at all, I would beg to refer the reader to another little work of my own, 'The Bible and Popular Theology : a Re-statement of Truths and Principles, with special Reference to recent Works of Dr. Liddon, Lord Hatherley, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, and Others.' (Third Edition, 1871.)



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