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A "Faithful Saying" for the Christmas Season

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." - 1 Timothy 1:15 .

AT THIS season of the year it is our custom to meditate on the story of the Advent, to let our thoughts linger either on our Lord's birth itself, or on some of the remarkable incidents which attended it. While we may, and do, question the accuracy of the date, December 25, believing rather that his birth occurred in the autumn at the beginning of the Jewish year, yet as has been truly observed, since our Lord did not anywhere indicate his wish that we should celebrate his birthday at all, and since the general celebration takes place at this season, we may appropriately enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and his dear Son, our Redeemer.

In our meditations, however, while we invariably derive much spiritual profit as in spirit we accompany the shepherds to Bethlehem (Luke 2:15), it is not because we dwell only or mainly on our Lord's birth, or on any of the circumstances attending it, but rather because we endeavor, under the guidance of the Spirit, to penetrate to its inner significance—to the *mind* of Christ Jesus, rather than to his *birth*; to the motives which prompted him to lay aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5); to the purpose for which he emptied himself of that glory and took on him the form of a servant. For the mind of Christ must certainly be much more to us than any event in his history, however great. *That* maybe the glory of an age: but *this* is for all time, for all eternity. And we know of no passage of Scripture which throws a clearer, stronger, light on the mind of Christ, on the inward significance, on the motive and purpose, whether of the Advent or of the Atonement, than the "faithful saying" we have quoted at the head of this article. And how suitable a "saying" it is for the Christmas season, for it exactly expresses the purpose of our Lord's advent—the salvation of our lost and dying race.

OUR LORD'S PREEXISTENCE IMPLIED

That "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" is still one of the grandest sayings in the world, for all so simple as it sounds; and there must in very deed have been a divine grace and inspiration on the lips which first uttered it. It is only by a sustained effort of imagination that we can in any measure conceive what it was to those on whose waiting and prepared ears it originally

fell. But even to us, whose ears are dulled by long use of the words, they grow impressive as we ponder them, taking on added meaning. Is there nothing strange, nothing startling, in the phrase, "Christ Jesus *came* -- Christ Jesus *advented* -- *into* the world"? That could be said of none but him. For it implied that his coming, his advent, was a conscious and voluntary act, a self-determining effort of his will. It implies his preexistence on some other plane; it implied that he did not begin to be when he came into this world; nor come, as we come, apart from his own knowledge and choice. Nothing less than the great secret of godliness is in these words, or in the New Testament use of them; the change of nature from spirit to human of the mighty Logos, who at all times was so completely one with the Father, in aim, in thought, in purpose, that when he was here he could truthfully say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and of whom an Apostle could write he was "God manifest in flesh" (John 14:9; 1 Tim. 3:16).

No doubt this saying won wide acceptance in the Church, and was commended as a faithful saying by St. Paul, partly because it contained the confession that Christ Jesus had come in flesh; for thus it met and satisfied the test by which the Apostles had demanded that all spiritual utterances should be tried. Yet surely it was not this alone, nor this mainly, which commended it to the general heart. Even *we* value the doctrine of the prehuman existence of Christ, and of his virgin birth, mainly because, holding those truths, we can see and believe that he possessed the ability to become our Savior if he would; mainly because, his willingness being also abundantly attested, we can and do rejoice in him as our Savior indeed. And therefore we may well believe that the early Church loved and adopted this prophetic saying, not so much for its opening as for its closing words. That "Christ Jesus *came into the world*" was much; but that he "came into the world *to save sinners*" -- *this* was the pathetic surprise, *this* was the mystery of grace, which broke men down into tears of penitence and love and rapture, before which Jew and Gentile fell on their faces and worshipped him.

HE CAME TO SAVE

That Jehovah would eventually, "in due time," send a Mighty One into the world to bless, to reward his loyal and obedient servants, was no more than a pious *Hebrew* would have expected of him. The great promise to Abraham that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed -- a promise reiterated and amplified by all the Prophets who followed -- assured him of this. That a god, a mighty one, should come into the world to aid and protect those who were specially devoted to his service, or even to gratify his own lust and caprice, was what any *Greek* would be prepared to expect; for had not his ears buzzed with such fables ever since he had seen the stately forms of his gods towering, in their white marble loveliness, above the altars in street and temple, or listened to the wandering rhapsodists reciting the Homeric strains? But that God in Christ, should come down into the world not to indulge his preferences and lusts, not to aid and protect his devotees, not even to succor and reward the righteous men who walked in all his ordinances and commandments blameless, but to *save sinners*, to bless his enemies, to redeem those whom the pious Jew denounced as "this people that is accursed," and the cultivated Greek scorned as "the foolish and wretched herd, debarred from wisdom" -- O, this was a marvel beyond all marvels; it was a truth, if indeed it could be true, to break and win all hearts, and to revolutionize the whole structure of human life and thought!

In the early Church, too, not many wise, not many "righteous," were called. It was the foolish and the wicked, the peasant and the slave, sinners of the Jews and sinners of the Gentiles, to whom, for the most part, the Gospel was preached, or preached with vital and saving effect. And what a Gospel it must have been *to them*, shut out as they had been from all self-respect and hope; held incapable of wisdom or of goodness, banned and scorned from the cradle to the grave! What a Gospel to learn that the very Son of God had pitied them whom no man pitied, loved them whom

all men hated and despised; that he had emptied himself of his glory, and come down into their low and sorrowful conditions, not to judge and condemn them, but to save them from their sins, infirmities, sorrows, to give them wisdom, to make them righteous, and to restore them to self respect, to kindle in their hearts the cleansing and illuminating fires of an eternal hope! In a Church composed of men who had been lost but were found, who had been dead in trespasses and sins, but were now alive unto righteousness, and who felt that they owed this wondrous change and transformation, this new life, to Christ alone, is it any marvel that the saying, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," was held to be a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance; a saying more precious than all the sentences of the wise or all the ethical maxims of the good; a saying which set itself to the music of the joy it inspired, and which deserved to be had in everlasting remembrance?

"THE CHIEF OF SINNERS -WE"

Nay, though it be so simple and familiar, is it not most precious even to us, full of a divine consolation, an unfailling spring of hope? Which of us has not sinned, try ourselves by what standard we will? Which of us, despite our penitence and faith, does not at this moment sorrowfully confess that he is still a sinner, most unworthy of the mercy of God? If any man think otherwise, what need we further proof that he is the most hopeless of sinners? If any man think otherwise, let him listen to one, even St. Paul, whom even he will confess to possess a better title to saintship than himself. Even in St. Paul's writings there is no more humbling and pathetic stroke than the words he appends to this "faithful saying." Although for more than twenty years he had endured the loss of all things for Christ's sake; although he had been, and knew that he had been more abundant both in labor and in suffering than any other of the Apostles, he cannot say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," without adding, "of whom I am chief! Nay, without going on to explain that he, the chief of sinners has obtained mercy, not for his own sake, not simply that *he* might be recovered to life and hope, but also that in him, as the greatest of transgressors, "Christ Jesus might show forth the whole of his long-suffering as a pattern for those who should afterward believe on him unto life eternal"! And if such a one as Paul -the apostle, the prisoner, the martyr-held himself to be "chief of sinners," which of us must not account himself more sinful than he, and less worthy of eternal life?

SALVATION FROM DEATH

But what is the extent of the salvation which our Lord came to achieve, and how far has his mission been successful? Ah! it is in the answer to these questions that we see the superiority of the Gospel over all the various plans and devices of men for the uplift of our race. Not that we would be understood as speaking against any of these. No doubt many, if not all of them, are laudable, at least in their intention. But they are lacking both in scope and power. Their scope is limited to the present life. And even within this limit they are powerless to accomplish much. None of them even pretend to point out a way whereby we may escape death, or for those of our race who have already entered the grave, a way whereby they may be awakened from the sleep of death; while even if they could do this, they would be powerless to strengthen anyone to walk in that way. And what end do such plans serve but to blind men's eyes to the truth that they are dead, and that their only true hope lies in the wisdom, power, and grace of that God who raiseth the dead?

Man's first need is not moral philosophy (which may indeed have its place and value afterwards) but a pathway out of the realm of death, and power to enable him to walk in that pathway. And the salvation Jesus came to effect includes both. He is the "Way" out of death. He is also the "Life" which enables those who lay hold of his salvation to walk in that way. Many are the plans

for human uplift, but there was only One who ever made or could make, in sincerity, an offer of eternal life. None other has ever truthfully said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead yet shall he live." But, praise be to God, these wondrous words of life *did* flow from his lips, although they could be said truthfully even by him only in contemplation of the sacrifice of his life which he was about to make.

SALVATION FROM THE POWER OF SIN

Commencing then, with salvation from the depths, even from death itself, Christ Jesus proceeds to save "to the uttermost." A work of transformation is begun in us. This work is accomplished by a further appeal to our hearts, for while it by no means ignores the intellect, the gospel of God in Christ Jesus makes its chief appeal, with all the attraction of a personal love, to the heart -the center of the will and affections (Prov. 4:23).

It is the heart and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain.

Not content with explaining to a man what it is right to do, our Lord undertakes to make him disposed to do it. This he accomplishes by revealing to his wondering eyes all the beauty of his own loveliness. As the Apostle declares: "We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." The poet has well expressed the heart sentiment of those to whom the Lord is thus gracious, in those well known lines:

Show me Thy face-one transient gleam
Of loveliness divine,
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love than Thine;
All other lights will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
The beautiful of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again.

That, at least, is the first result in those who "behold" him. But we have this treasure in an earthen vessel, and it is not long before we learn from experience the truth of the Apostle's words: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). "Here," as Brother Russell has observed, "is the great and continual battle, for although the new will asserts itself and puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless, the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the Adversary and is continually being stimulated by these and reinvigorated with earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts, and insubordination to the new will. No saint is without experiences of this kind-fightings without and within."

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

But while our transformation is not instantaneous, but gradual, and progresses more or less rapidly, depending upon the degree of our consecration, and steadfastness in "beholding" him, it is nevertheless sure, in all whose hearts are right. Little by little, as our gaze is fixed upon him, the old traits and dispositions which are unlike him are replaced by his own characteristics. Thus the Living Word (Christ Jesus), operating through the written Word and the holy spirit, becomes the Regulator and Transformer of the minds of those who diligently seek him. Under his powerful influence confusion of thought, perplexities, sinful propensities, self-occupation (a sure breeder of unhappiness and discontent), morbid tendencies, craving for excitement and sensation, evil imaginations, appetites, tastes, inclinations, and desires, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God (as he may be known in the person of his Son)-all these are displaced; and a new mind substituted. We come to possess "the mind of Christ." His serene

tranquility and repose of mind are actually reproduced in those whom first he redeemed by his precious blood.

This is peace on earth, amongst men of good will, indeed! Alas, those who share this peace, "My peace," are few in number-in all but a "little flock." Yet faith's vision looks beyond the present tumult and strife with its intermittent "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," to the time now near at hand, when the Master shall speak with authority, rebuking the fierce and angry passions of men as he did the winds and the waves of yore, and bring in everlasting righteousness and peace. In that day the "government shall be upon his shoulder: and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. And of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:6, 7).

-P. L. Read

What Seek Ye

What seek ye? Earth's glory, or favor, or pleasure,
The things which attract by their glitter and show,
The worldling's power, his ease or his treasure,
Which the god of this world can most fully bestow?

The many are seeking the things which will perish,
And few care for those which will not pass away.
My brother, let me earnestly ask you the question
What is *your* ambition, what seek ye today?

What seek ye? The Savior is beckoning onward,
He offers a kingdom, a crown, and a throne,
But the way to attain them lies often through sorrow,
While the cross and the path to be trod are his own.

Are you willing to follow wherever he leadeth?
Do you seek but the things which his favor can give?
If so, you will find at the end of the journey
That by dying to self, you most truly do live.

Copying but a Fragment

"We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." - 2 Cor. 3:18, R. V.

NOTHING IS more striking to a close observer of human life than the almost infinite variety of character which exists among those who profess to be Christians. No two are alike. Even those who are alike revered for their saintliness, who alike seem to wear the image of their Lord, whose lives are alike attractive in their beauty, show the widest diversity in individual traits, and in the cast and mould of their character. Yet all are sitting before the same model; all are striving after the same ideal; all are imitators of the same blessed life. There is but one standard of true Christian character -- *the likeness of Christ*. It is into His image that we are all in the end to be transformed, and it is toward His holy beauty that we are always to strive. We are to live as He lived; we are to copy His features into our lives. Wherever, in all the world, true disciples of Christ are found, they are trying to reproduce in themselves the likeness of their Master.

WHY THIS DIVERSITY

Why is it, then, that there is such variety of character and disposition among those who aim to follow the same example? Why are not all just alike? If a thousand artists were to paint the picture of the same person, their pictures, if faithful, would show the same features. But a thousand persons seek to copy into their own lives the likeness of Christ, and the result is a thousand different representations of that likeness, no two the same. Why is there this strange diversity in Christian lives, when all have before them the same original type?

One reason for this is that God does not bestow upon all his children the same gifts, the same natural qualities. The Creator loves variety, as all his works attest: no two animals are precisely alike in every feature; no two plants are exactly similar in their structure; no two human lives in all the race are identical in all respects; and divine grace does not recast all dispositions in the same mould. When gold is minted, each coin of a kind is stamped by the same die; and a million coins of the same value will all be precisely alike. But life is not minted as gold is. Grace does not transform Peter into a John, nor Paul into a Barnabas, nor Luther into a Melancthon. Regeneration does not make busy, bustling Martha quiet and reposeful, like her sister Mary; nor does it change Mary's calm, restful spirit into the anxious and distracted activity of Martha. It makes them both friends of Jesus, devoted to him in love and loyalty and service; but it leaves each of them herself in all her individual characteristics. It makes them both like Christ in holiness, in consecration, in heavenly longings; but it does not touch those features which give to each one her personal identity.

"Heaven whispers wisdom to the wayside flower,
Bidding it use its own peculiar dower,
And bloom its best within its little span.
We must each do not what we will, but can,
Nor have we duty to exceed our power."

HIS CHARACTER SO MAJESTIC AND GLORIOUS

Drop twenty different seeds in the same garden-bed, and they spring up into twenty different kinds of plants, from the delicate mignonette to the flaunting sunflower. No skill of gardening can make all plants alike. The fuchsia will always be a fuchsia, the rose will always be a rose, the geranium will always be a geranium. In the same soil, with the same sunshine and rain, and the same culture, each grows up after its kind. In like manner divine grace does not make all Christian women either Marys or Marthas, or Dorcases or Priscillas,

nor all Christian men either Johns or Peters, or Barnabases or Aquilas; but each believer grows up into his own peculiar self. Regeneration neither adds to nor takes from our natural gifts; and since there is infinite variety in the endowments and qualities originally bestowed upon different individuals, there is the same variety in the company of Christ's followers.

A thousand believers may all, in a certain sense, be like Christ, and yet no two of them have, or consciously strive after, just the same features of Christ in their souls. The reason is, that the character of Christ is so great, so majestic, so glorious, that it is impossible to copy all of it into any one little human life; and again, each human character is so imperfect and limited, that it cannot reach out in all directions after the boundless and infinite character of Christ.

AN APT ILLUSTRATION

It is as if a great company of artists were sent to paint each one a picture of the Alps. Each chooses his own point of observation, and selects the particular feature of the Alps he desires to paint. They all bring back their pictures; but lo! no two of them are alike. One canvas presents a sweet valley-scene, with its quiet stream and bright flowers; another has for its central figure a wild crag among the clouds; another a snow-crowned peak, glittering in the sunshine; another a rushing torrent leaping over the rocks; another a mighty glacier. Yet no one of the artists can say that the pictures of the others are not true. They are probably as true as his own, but there is not one of them all that has painted the whole Alps. Each one has put upon his canvas only the little part of the magnificent scene which he saw.

So it is with those who are striving to reproduce the likeness of Christ in their own lives. A thousand Christians, earnest and sincere, begin to follow him and to imitate him. One seizes upon one feature which to him seems to be the central beauty of Christ's character; another, looking upon the same glorious person with different eyes, or from the viewpoint of different experiences, sees another feature altogether, and calls it Christ; each one strives to copy the particular elements of Christly character which he sees. No two reproductions are precisely the same; no two have the same conception of Christ-likeness. Yet no one can say that the others are not true Christians, that they have not also seen the Lord, and have not faithfully copied into their own lives what they saw of Him.

The truth is, the Alps as a whole are too varied, too vast, for any one artist to take into his perspective, and paint upon his canvas. The best he can do is to portray some one or two features -- the features his eye can see from where he stands. And Christ is too great in his infinite perfections, in the majestic sweep of his character, in the many-sidedness of his beauty, for any one of his finite followers to copy the whole of his image into his own little life. The most that any of us can do is to get into his own soul one little fragment of the wonderful likeness of our Lord.

THIS LESSON FORBIDS A SPIRIT OF CRITICISM

Thus it is that there is such variety in the individual dispositions of Christians, while all seek to follow the same copy, and while all may be equally faithful in their noble endeavors. The practical lesson from this fact is, that no one follower of Christ should condemn another because the other's spiritual life is not of the same stamp as his own. Let not Martha, busied with her much serving, running everywhere to missionary meetings, or to visit the sick and the poor, find fault with Mary in her quiet devotion, peaceful, thoughtful, gentle, loving, because she does not abound in the same activities. Nor let Mary in her turn judge Martha, and call her piety superficial. Let her honor it rather as the copy of another feature of the infinite loveliness of Christ.

There is the greatest diversity in the modes of service rendered by different followers of Christ. All may be alike loyal and acceptable, yet no two be the same. Each follows Christ along his own path, and does His work in his own way. Whatever we may say about the sweetness and beauty of Mary, as we see her sitting in such peaceful attitude at the feet of her Lord, we must not forget that it was not Martha's service which Jesus reprov'd, but her anxious, fretful worry. Her service was important, was even essential to our Lord's own comfort, and to her true and hospitable entertainment of him in her home. The Marys are very lovely; and every woman should have the Mary-spirit of peace, and should sit much, Mary-like, at the Master's feet to hear his words, in order to be fitted for the best service. But Martha's work must be done too: no true Christian woman will neglect her duties of service in her privileges of devotion.

"Yea, Lord. Yet some must serve.
Not all with tranquil heart,
Even at Thy dear feet,
Wrapped in devotion sweet,
May sit apart.

"Yea, Lord. Yet some must bear
The burden of the day,
Its labor and its heat,
While others at Thy feet
May muse and pray.

"Yea, Lord. Yet some must do
Life's daily task-work: some
Who fain would sing, must toil
Amid earth's dust and moil,
While lips are dumb.

"Yea, Lord. Yet man must earn,
And woman bake the bread;
And some must watch and wake
Early for others' sake,
Who pray instead.

"Yea, Lord. Yet even
Thou Hast need of earthly care.
I bring the bread and wine
To Thee, O Guest Divine!
Be this my prayer."

LET EACH SERVE GOD WHERE BEST FITTED

Let each of these good women follow the Master closely, see as much as possible of the infinite loveliness of his character, and copy into her own life all she can see; yet let her not imagine that she has seen or copied all of Christ, but let her look at every other Christian woman's life with reverence, as bearing another little fragment of the same Divine likeness. Let every man do earnestly and well the particular work which he is fitted and called to do, but let him not imagine that he is doing the only kind of work which God wants to have done in this world; rather let him look upon every faithful servant who does a different work as doing a part equally important and equally acceptable to the Master.

The bird praises God by singing; the flower pays its tribute in fragrant incense as its censer swings in the breeze; the tree shakes down fruits from its bending boughs; the stars pour out their silver beams to gladden the earth; the clouds give their blessing in gentle rain; yet all with equal faithfulness fulfill their mission. So among Christ's redeemed servants, one serves by incessant toil in the home, caring for a large family; another by silent example as a sufferer, patient and uncomplaining; another with the pen, sending forth words that inspire, help, cheer, and bless; another by the living voice, whose eloquence moves men, and starts impulses to better, grander living; another by the ministry of sweet song; another by sitting in quiet peace at Jesus' feet, drinking in his spirit, and then shining as a gentle and silent light, or pouring out the fragrance of love like a lowly and unconscious flower; yet each and all of these may be serving Christ acceptably, hearing at the close of each day the whispered word, "Well done."

- *The Herald*

"Led by the Spirit"

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God " "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law." - Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18.

THESE two passages of Scripture contain the words of our title. Both are well known, but, whereas the latter postulates the condition and experience, the former teaches that being "led by the Spirit" is the proof and testimony of Divine sonship. Indeed, it characterizes the sons of God, and is the manifestation of this blessed and highly honored relationship which is determined only "by the will of God" (John 1:13; James 1:18). We quote the verse in Romans as given by Rotherham: "For as many as are led by God's Spirit are *being led as God's sons.* " By this they are identified; the nature and character of their life is portrayed. It is therefore important that we should know this as a positive experience and what it means in practice. The Devil is always ready to thrust doubts into our minds along this line as to our personal relationship to God as *His sons* in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. And in the light of the words found in 1 John 3:2 and other passages, testimony to and assurance of this is crucial.

What is shown in part of the preceding context (Rom. 8:4-8) is the clear and absolute distinction between the mind and life of living in the flesh, and the mind and life of living after the Spirit. The two are contrary. This evidently was paramount in the Apostle's mind as he wrote the words found in this section. It is not the contrast between sin and righteousness referred to in verse 2 to the first half of verse 4, with which the Apostle is concerned. He had dealt with that aspect earlier in his epistle. His teaching enlightened by the Spirit, shows the clear demarcation between that which pertains to the flesh and life according to *the flesh*, and, by contrast, that which belongs to *the Spirit* and life in *the Spirit*, a spiritual life as compared with an earthly one.

"IN CHRIST"

At the very beginning of this eighth chapter of Romans the Apostle uses this designation. It occurs once before in the epistle (Rom. 3:24), but there it is used in a general sense of redemption which is in or through Christ. But in chapter 8, verse 1 (Rom. 8:1), it is used to denote a special relationship, and a freedom thereby enjoyed from any condemnation. This latter condition is taken up again in Rom. 8:34. Those "in Christ" in this sense are in living union with Christ, and they are the ones concerning whom the Apostle writes. An intimate and unique relationship is implied in- this term, "in Christ," as here used by Paul and in certain other instances in the New Testament. This is determined by the context, the content of the verse, by the truth enunciated, and by corroborative Scriptures.

Having in mind the particular use of this term "in Christ" used by the Apostle Paul, the blessed and glorious truths set forth by our Lord in John 15:1-17 come to mind. Manifestly, such oneness, a belonging to Him as branches are part of the vine, is not generally true nor the experience of all who believe on Him, or even of all who evince their belief in the Lord Jesus by consecration, however sincere. We draw attention to the words "*as many as are led,*" in Romans 8:14, and to "*as many of you,*" found in Galatians 3:27 and Romans 6:3, to confirm this. The intimate and blessed relationship illustrated by our Lord in John 15:1-17, and all it implies, is true only of those "chosen" by the Lord, as stated in John 15:16. As branches in the Vine (in Him) their life is sustained by Him, and they are subjected to the purging and pruning of the Heavenly Father, the Husbandman.

Then consider those very precious words found in that heartfelt prayer of intercession recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John. Our Lord prays especially for those given to Him by the

The "spiritual" man is one who walks and lives in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25; Rom. 8:3, 12, 13; 1 Pet. 4:2). This is brought about by the exercise of the Heavenly Father's will and power. For this reason we have

given brief consideration to the truths of Divine sonship; what the term "in Christ" means in this connection, to whom it truly applies, and to the prior dealing with and drawing power of God towards some.

The one who is "spiritual" has been "born of the Spirit," "from above," "of God" (John 1:13; 3:3, 5, 6, 8). The absolute difference between "that which is of the flesh" and "that which is of the Spirit" is thus made plain. A complete change has been wrought in mind, heart, and will. New hopes, desires, motives, and longings fill the life. There is a conscious separation from the world; a realization that one is "a stranger and a pilgrim" in the earth, is not of the world, and that one's citizenship is in heaven. Truly, "old things are passed away, and all things are become new."

The child of God thinks of eternity only in terms of being with the Lord who gave Himself for him, and of being with and in the presence of the Heavenly Father, to "see His face," for "they shall see His face"! Not only so, but there is the joyous prospect of "being to the praise of the glory" of His marvelous grace throughout "the eternity of eternities," forever with the Lord. Then and thereby only will these be satisfied when, as expressed in Psalm 17:15 (Rotherham), they "awake by a vision of Thee." Meanwhile, the whole bent of life is heavenward, lived unto God and the Lord Jesus, seeking ever and only to please them (2 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:11; Col. 3:1-3; John 17:16; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Thess. 4:18; Psa. 16:11; Rev. 22:4; Eph. 2:6, 7).

This earthly pilgrimage in an alien world is but the preparation for transcendent, boundless life; the inconceivable blessedness and glory that is "laid up for them" when they enter upon the fulness of their inheritance, even "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). The Holy Spirit is now theirs as an "earnest" or pledge "until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:14). As these behold the wonder of the glory of the Lord as it is revealed to their understanding through the Word, and enjoy a personal experience of the love, mercy, and grace of the Lord; there is a gradual, progressive transformation, a change wrought in them from the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). This is not dependent upon their own feeble effort but by the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:19).

"LED BY THE SPIRIT"

For this experience to be realized, the Holy Spirit must possess, fill, and control the life; self and self-will must be abnegated, the mind of the flesh subjugated. All of life, in every part, must become submissive to "the power of the Holy Spirit;" its constraint and restraint. All is surrendered. The mind of the flesh, our normal sensual reasoning, is subjected to the continual operation of the indwelling Spirit of God so that we think differently, on a higher, spiritual level. This means a complete change in our mode of thought, which becomes predominantly spiritual and not according to human reasoning (Col. 3:1-3). A new process operates: "We have the mind of Christ," the faculty to reason as He did, according to the will and Word of God (1 Thess. 4:3). This is the prayer of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1:9 "That ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and *spiritual* understanding." He prays for that which is possible and attainable in the life of every child of God and which indeed is a condition that increases and is vital. - Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:14-16.

One who is being "led by the Spirit" is no longer in control of his life but is gladly subject to the will of God, his Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes this may be by constraint, and in that manner Scripture uses the words "bring" or "brought." In other instances there is the aspect of being led on by the Spirit and the desire to be so led. Whichever, there is always a meek submission: "Thy way, not mine, O God."

Since to be "led by the Spirit" is the proof of Divine sonship, how and in what form is the leading of the Spirit to be known? It is for us to examine ourselves. First, it should be remembered that this leading is a continuous experience throughout our earthly pilgrimage. How comforting to know this,

that "the eye of the Lord is over the righteous;" that in all the way His Spirit is guiding us as we yield ourselves to God.

Some of the main indications are often through the Word of God as "the Spirit" brings God's counsel to our remembrance, causing us to recall it in unforeseen circumstances (John 14:26; Psa. 73:24). Thereby we receive assurance as to what we should do and the path to follow. There is also the overruling providence of our Father, even His interruption and prevention of elements in the affairs of life. The latter may be unknown to us at the time.

Not infrequently the leading of the spirit comes through prayer and the answers to prayer, often in unexpected and unsought ways. We should ever be watchful to discern these in the seeming little things, for we tend to look for the big and the unusual. But the ways of the Lord are not always so. Then sometimes there is the constraint or urge of the Spirit; some sanctified insistent impression which impels the heart and mind to action of which there has been no prior thought or planning, and which we cannot ignore but should respond to.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations from the New Testament also give us some of the ways the leading of the Spirit is evidenced by its impelling power in the life of the child of God. The life of Jesus is set before us, and in Luke 4:1 we read: "Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit, . . . was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." First, mention is made of our Lord being filled, and then *led by* the Spirit. The account as given by Mark (Mark 1:12) reads:

"Immediately the Spirit driveth [urgeth] Him into the wilderness." Our Lord was under compulsion by the Spirit. The record of His First Advent ministry is replete with evidence of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, of necessities laid upon Him; for instance, in the experience with the woman of Samaria (John 4:4-42). This was more than a geographical necessity, but one to fulfill the Divine counsel. - See John 4:34-39.

Then there are two outstanding illustrations in the life and service of the Apostle Paul for his Lord. One is the occasion recorded in Acts 16:6. In that instance the Holy Spirit was forbidding him to preach the Word in Asia. There was work for him to do in Macedonia, so the providence of the Lord overruled. Again, when on his way to Jerusalem for the last time, Paul told the sorrowing elders of Ephesus that he was "bound in the Spirit" [the Spirit compels me-Goodspeed] to go to that city; he was under constraint (Acts 20:22).

The manner in which the Holy Spirit works and leads is diversified. Just as it brought this constraint, so also it imparted to the Apostle the sense that the elders of Ephesus would "see his face no more" (Acts 20:25); and further, that "in every city the Holy Spirit testified" unto Paul himself that "bonds and afflictions abide me" (Acts 20:23). These were not what, in human terms, are called premonitions. Such are totally different from the leadings of the Holy spirit, which are outside the bounds of human experience. Every child and servant of God, albeit to a lesser degree, knows positively the leading of the Spirit.

OUR ATTITUDE

On our part there must be a childlike trust and confidence as everything is committed to the Lord in the whole of life. We should not try to anticipate what the will of the Lord may be in any particular circumstance. Often it comes as "the light that surprises." We must wait upon the Lord for guidance. "In quietness and confidence," "wait patiently for Him," and then follow the way He opens, content when a door may be closed we have chosen. Never should we force our way in anything for when the Lord opens or closes, none can prevent, as the Apostle Peter learned when he was released from

prison. The heart must be absolutely resolved that only the will of the Lord shall be done, and have no other desire but for that to be so. Faith must depend solely upon the promises of God, "exceeding great and precious," however impossible and inapplicable to our particular case our finite understanding might judge them to be. Our God and Father truly is the God of wonders, the God of the impossible, and is ever faithful as the three Hebrews found when cast into the furnace, "heated seven times" (Dan. 3:17, 25). They had the promise of God in Isaiah 43:2, and so they trusted. Let us be sure of "the peace of God" in our hearts, which if present, although all else may seem to be against us, assures us that He is ever present and that we are in His all-powerful hands. - Phil. 4:7.

Let a loving thankful response and submission, a glad obedience to every urge of the Spirit be ours, and a heart that prays: "Thy way, not mine, O God; lead me by Thine own hand; choose Thou the path for me." These are some of the essentials on our part if we would know the blessed experience of being "led by the Spirit" and the wonderful consolation it brings. Our dear Lord exemplified this as "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. 53:7; Acts 8:32); no resistance but total submission. There is need to be on guard against encroachment of self-will; and for a positive, earnest, and constant endeavor to "live in the Spirit" so that the desires of the flesh should not be fulfilled or allowed to find any lodgment.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In His tender love the Heavenly Father gives us to know through His dealings with us "as with sons" and the work of the Holy Spirit, that these things are true of us. No other explanation can be found for the experiences through which we have been brought and preserved than that His love and wisdom has planned it all; that the power of His Spirit has led, influenced, kept, and sustained us; and that our way has been ordered and directed by a higher wisdom and prescience than our own. Knowing this, we may then be assured that, as we remain faithful, He will lead us on until His work in us is finished, to His endless praise and glory (Phil. 1:6, Eph. 1:12, 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:24). Soon "the toils of the road will be ended"; the night will be gone, and "that glorious day" will dawn when endless blessings, life evermore, and fulness of joy will be realized by the faithful, the called and chosen. The rays of that radiant dawn are already discernible, so let us "lift up our heads" and strengthen our hearts in the Lord.

- *G. H. Jennings*

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;

We kneel, how weak! -we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others, that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage are with thee?

The Sin of Presumption

"The soul that doeth ought presumptuously . . . the same reproacheth the Lord." - Numbers 15:30.

PRESUMPTION leads to the sin of *unbelief*, to *distrust* of God. This in turn leads to *rebellion* against God. Which in turn leads to *disobedience* to God.

The Oxford Dictionary, among many other definitions, defines "presumption" as: "The taking upon oneself of more than is warranted by one's position, right, or ability; forward or over-confident opinion or conduct; arrogance, pride, effrontery, assurance."

Among examples instanced, is Coverdale's translation of 2 Samuel 6:7 in the matter of Uzzah's unfortunate error (in steadying the Ark): "God smote him there because of his *presumption*, so that he died there beside the Ark of God."

Also, King Saul's *presumption* (which cost him his kingdom) in offering a Burnt Offering instead of waiting for Samuel as recorded in 1 Sam. 10:8 and 1 Sam. 13:11, 12. Further, his disobedience to Divine command recorded in 1 Sam. 15:3 and 13, 14.

The Apostle Paul instances others in 1 Cor. 10:1-12, concluding with this exhortation: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [literally "typically"; and they are written for our a monition, upon whom the ends of the ages are met. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth *take heed* lest he fall."

We "take heed" by considering one such tragic example in Israel's experience recorded in Numbers 13:1-3: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 'Send thou men that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.' And Moses by the commandment of the Lord sent them from the wilderness of Paran."

In order fully to understand the foregoing commandment, we must relate it to Deut. 1:19-22, where Moses summarizing Israel's history, reminds them: "When we departed from Horeb . . . we came to Kadesh-barnea. And I said unto you, 'Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites which the Lord our God cloth give unto us. Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.' And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, 'We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.'" (How Psalm 106 forcibly comes to mind!)

Here we have the moral root of the fact stated in Numbers 13:2. It is evident that the Lord gave the commandment concerning the spies because of the moral condition of the people. Had they been governed by simple faith, they would have acted on those soul-stirring words of Moses, "Behold, the Lord thy God . . . hath said unto thee; *fear not, neither be discouraged.* ""

There is not a single syllable about spies in the Deuteronomy passage. What does faith want of spies when it has the word and the presence of the living God? If Jehovah had given them a land it must be worth having. And had He not? Yes, truly; and not only so, but He had borne testimony to the nature and character of that land in the following glowing words of Deut. 8:7-9: "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."

Should not all of this have sufficed for Israel? Ought they not to have been satisfied with the testimony of God? Had not *He* spied out the land for them, and told them all about it? And was not this enough? What need of sending men to spy the land? *Did not God know all about it?* Was there a spot "from Dan to Beersheba" with which He was not perfectly acquainted? Had He not selected this land and allotted it, in His own eternal counsels, for the seed of Abraham His friend? Did He now know all about the difficulties? And was He not able to surmount them? Why, then, did they "come near every one of them, and say, '*We will* send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again.'"? What effrontery, what insolence, what shameless boldness against the Lord!

But perhaps someone may protest a question here. Did not the Lord expressly command Moses to send the spies, in Numbers 13? But this was *in consequence* of the moral condition of the people as set forth in Deuteronomy 1. We shall not understand the former unless we read it in the light of the latter. We learn from Deut. 1:22 that the *idea* of sending the spies *had its origin in the heart of Israel*. God saw their moral condition, and he issued a command in full keeping therewith; and this, we may be sure, for the lessons to be learned, both by Israel after the flesh and Israel after the spirit.

One recalls similar instances recorded in the Bible, where the Lord appears to acquiesce and yield to human judgment. There is the *presumption* of Balaam, who would override the explicit injunction of the Lord, and whose "madness" culminated in his death. Then there is the *presumption* of Israel in desiring a king. In both examples the Lord permitted human desire to have its way and so learn that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the living God and his counsel and lean on the broken reed of human reasoning. The consequence is always catastrophic.

Now we see the same thing in the matter of the spies. There can be no question in the mind of any spiritual person who studies the entire subject, as to the fact that the scheme of send' the spies was the *fruit of unbelief*. A simple heart that trusted God would never have thought of such a thing. What! are we to send poor mortals to spy out a land which God has graciously given to us, and which he has so fully and faithfully described? Far be the thought. Nay, rather let us say, It is enough: the land is the gift of God, and as such it must be good. His word is enough for our hearts: we need no spies; we seek for no mortal testimony to confirm the word of the living God. He has given; He has spoken; it is enough.

But, alas! Israel was not in a condition to adopt such language. They *would* send spies. They *wanted* them; their hearts *craved* them; the *desire* for them lay in the very depths of the soul. Jehovah knew this, and hence he issued a commandment in direct reference to the moral state of the people. So Moses sent the spies to spy out the land of Canaan. And they returned from searching of the land after 40 days. And they told Moses, "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey" - Num. 13:17-27.

Here, then, was the fullest confirmation of all that the Lord had said -- 12 men's testimony of their own senses as to the character of the fruit of the land. There was the telling fact that they had actually been in the land, had spent 40 days in traveling up and down therein, had drunk of its springs and eaten of its fruits. What, according to the judgment of faith, should have been the plain inference to be drawn? Simply, that the same Hand which had conducted safely the 12 men into the land, *could conduct the whole congregation*.

But, alas! the people were not governed by faith but by dark and depressing unbelief; and even the spies themselves--the very men who had been sent for the purpose of assuring and confirming the congregation--even they (with two brilliant exceptions) were under the power of the same God-dishonoring spirit. In short, the *whole presumptuous* scheme proved a failure. It but made manifest the true condition of the hearts of the people. Unbelief was dominant. There was nothing whatever lacking

on God's side. The land was all that He had said; the spies themselves being witnesses. But hearken their further words: "*Nevertheless* the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there." -Numbers 13:28.

There is always sure to be a "nevertheless where man is concerned, and when unbelief is at work. The unbelieving spies saw the difficulties -great cities, high walls, tall giants. All these things they saw, but they did not see Jehovah at all. They looked at the *things that were seen*, rather than at the *things that were unseen* (2 Cor. 4:18). Their eyes were not fixed upon Him who is invisible (Heb. 11:27). Doubtless the cities were great, but God was greater; doubtless the walls were high, but God was higher; doubtless the giants were strong, but God was stronger.

Thus it is that faith ever reasons. Faith reasons from God to the difficulties-it begins with *Him*; unbelief, on the contrary, reasons from the difficulties to God -- it begins with *them*. This makes all the difference. It is not that we are to be insensible to the difficulties; neither are we to be reckless. Neither insensibility or recklessness is faith. Faith looks the difficulties straight in the face; it is fully alive to them. It is not ignorant, not indifferent, not reckless. But it brings in the living God! It looks to Him; it leans on Him; it draws from Him. Here lies the grand secret of its power. It cherishes the calm and deep conviction that there never was a wall too high for the Almighty God -- never a city too great -- never a giant too strong. In short, faith is the only thing that gives God his proper place; and, as a consequence, is the only thing that lifts the soul completely above the influences of the surrounding circumstances, be they what they may. Of this precious faith, Caleb was an exponent when he said, "Let us go up *at once*, and possess it; for we are *well able* to overcome it." These are the pure accents of that living faith that glorified God and makes nothing of circumstances.

But, alas! ten of the spies were no more governed by this lively faith than were the multitude of Israel which had sent them; and hence, the two believers were talked down by the ten infidels. The men that went up with Caleb and Joshua said, "We be *not able* to go up against the people." The language of infidelity was flatly opposed to the language of faith. The latter, looking to God, said, "We are *well able*." The former, looking at the difficulties, said, "We are *not able*."

Thus it was and thus it is. The eyes of faith are ever covered by the living God, and therefore difficulties are not seen; the eyes of unbelief are covered with the circumstances, and therefore God is not seen. Faith brings in God and therefore all is bright and easy; unbelief always shuts God out, and therefore all is dark and difficult.

The ten spies brought up more in the evil report of the land they had searched and said to the children of Israel, "The land ... is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people we saw in it are men of a great stature . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." - Num. 13:32, 33.

Not a word about God! He is entirely shut out. Had they thought of *Him-had* they brought the giants in comparison with Him, then it would have made not one whit of difference as to whether they themselves were grasshoppers, or whether they were men.

But they, by their shameful unbelief, reduced the God of Israel to the level of a grasshopper! Thus had the original sin of *presumption* led to the larger one of *unbelief* -- distrust in God; to culminate (as we read in Numbers 14) in the open sin of *rebellion*-the "great transgression" of Psa. 19:13.

The Divine sentence is irrevocable-"I swear in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest"; and two million human beings were returned to 40 years of wandering in a desert to die! But first, they *again* manifested the sin of *presumption* (read Numbers 14:40-45). It is still true that one can be saved from Egypt, yet die in the wilderness.

It is remarkable that wherever infidelity is at work, it will always be found characterized by this one fact, namely, it shuts out God. This will be found true in all ages, in all places, and under all circumstances. There is no exception. Infidelity can take account of human affairs, it can reason upon them, and draw conclusions from them; but all its reasonings and all its conclusions are based upon the *exclusion of God*. Only *introduce God*, and all the reasonings of infidelity crumble into dust. Thus, in the scene before us, what is *faith's reply* to all the objections advanced by those ten unbelievers? Its one, simple, all satisfying reply to which there can be no rejoinder, is -- God!

Beloved brethren, do we know the force and value of this most blessed answer? Do we know God? Does He fill the entire range of our vision? Is He the answer to our every question? Is He the solution to our every difficulty? Do we know the reality of walking day by day with the living God? Do we know the tranquilizing power of leaning upon Him through all the changes and chances of this mortal life?

If we do, through grace, know God as our Father, let us seek to glorify him in all our ways, by a child-like, unquestioning confidence in all things. Let Him be a perfect covering for our eyes under all circumstances. Thus shall we, in spite of all difficulties, be kept in perfect peace. Let us never yield priority to human *presumptuous* reasonings over the revealed will of God. God help us to overcome this greatest enemy of all-the one within the fortress-our own reasonings, so easily often presumptuous.

Ponder the record in Hebrews 3:12-19. Also these words in Numbers 14:36-38: "And the men which Moses sent to search the land, who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against him by bringing up a slander upon the land, even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, *died by the plague before the Lord*. But Joshua and Caleb which were of the men that went to search the land, *lived still*."

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them who believe to the saving of the soul." - Heb. 10:38, 39.

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." - Rom. 15:4, R.S.V.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." - Heb. 10:35.

"For in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." - Gal. 6:9.

PRAYER

"Mistakes who perceiveth? From things that are hidden acquit me: even from the *presumptuous* keep back Thy servant. May they not have dominion over me. Then shall I be blameless, and shall be acquired from great transgression. The words of my mouth and the soft utterance of my heart shall come with acceptance before Thee, O Yahweh, my rock and my Redeemer!"-Psalm 19:12-14, Roth.

- *W. J. Siekman*

(In grateful indebtedness for spiritual thoughts received from others.)

Show Me Thy Face

"Show me Thy face -- one transient gleam
Of loveliness divine,
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love than Thine;
All lesser lights will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
The beautiful of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again.

"Show me Thy face -- my faith and love
Shall henceforth fixed be,
And nothing here have power to move My soul's serenity.
My life shall seem a trance, a dream,
And all I feel and see, Illusive, visionary --
Thou The one reality.

"Show me Thy face-I shall forget
The weary days of yore;
The fretting ghosts of vain regret
Shall haunt my soul no more.
All doubts and fears for future years
In quiet trust subside;
And naught but blest content and calm
Within my breast abide.

"Show me Thy face -- the heaviest cross
Will then seem light to bear;
There will be gain in every loss,
And peace with every care.
With such light feet the years will fleet,
Life will seem brief as blest,
'Till I have laid my burden down
And entered into rest."

"We Would See Jesus"

"He is altogether lovely." - Song of Solomon 5:16.

LIFE has its battle grounds, where fierce conflicts are waged against opposing forces. Life has its fords and crossing places, where we go over from one great experience to another. Life has its mills, where are ground out the product of a greater love and a serener trust. And life has its gardens of peace, where one can sit beneath the blossoming boughs and rejoice in the warblings of the feathered songsters of the place.

And it was one of the gardens of peace that Jesus found in a certain home in Bethany. It was for Him a little oasis in the world's desert. We know not what took Him there on the occasion of his first visit, but we are told that he conceived a love for Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha.

There were many homes that might have entertained the Master, but they failed to do so. They failed to see their opportunity. It has been said that opportunity knocks once at every door. We do not know. But we do know that it can be turned away. It does not insist on entrance. It just comes. In appearance it may not even seem prepossessing, but it is Opportunity none the less, and it has precious jewels to give to those who can receive it.

Much has been said on the subject of Mary and Martha. No doubt they were both very good women. During one of our Lord's visits to their home it would seem that Martha was occupied with the housework more than was necessary. Consequently she was missing a thing of great value. Mary saw something of this and desired it. Yet at a later time Martha manifested great faith in Jesus, and we can believe that in heart she was his true friend to the last.

There were times when Jesus needed comfort and refreshment, just as his followers do. The world is a hard, stern place in which to live. We do not refer to the natural world, but to the world of affairs that man has reared. There are times when the heart grows weary with the incessant struggle with the inclement elements, and when we yearn to step out of it all for ever so brief a span. Then perchance we think of the home of a friend, one who will understand and whose words will buoy us up and cheer us along life's way. For a true friend is a priceless possession in a darksome world.

Mary and Martha appeal to us as being the friends of Jesus. And the Master did not have many friends on this earth. The people did not understand Him. He had been called with a calling that they knew nothing of. They failed to discern the temple wherein He dwelt. And little did they know that the dome of that temple reached up to the very skies. The thoughts of Jesus soared far above the selfish schemes and ambitions of men. He was in the world, and yet the world saw him not for what he was.

And the world sees Him not for what he is today. Yet the world needs to see Him more than it needs anything else. To see Jesus is the highest vision that God can grant to man. And if we belong to the favored few who see Him-his friends under all conditions of life -- we have a source of joy that the sum total of the world's hardships cannot remove from us.

Suppose that by pressing a magic button we could transfer ourselves from this modern sphere of existence to the little town of Bethany over nineteen centuries ago. Here we are in the home of Lazarus. And here is Jesus, travel-worn and weary, yet able to speak as never man spake. And what is the Master talking about? Is it politics? Is it about the recent arrest of some criminal? Is it

about the affairs that make up the Roman world? Is it about any one of a thousand things that frequently engage our conversation when we meet together? Evidently not. It is something higher than these things that so completely chains the attention of Mary. Jesus must have spoken some beautiful words in that quiet home. We are not given the discourse. But it must have contained something about His Father, something about salvation's mighty plan. How our Lord must have loved to speak of these matters to those who had the heart and mind to receive them! Ah, yes! here in this simple abode we see Jesus-not in the palaces of the great, but with the meek and lowly of heart, with those who possessed the capacity for faith and love.

But the spell is broken. We are back again in our modern world. Men are clamoring for dollars and cents. Pride and selfishness are turning human hearts to stone. Nations have brought upon the scenes the grim terrors of war. Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. Wild beasts of destruction have been unleashed! Oh! that we might see Jesus with the human eye. Oh! that we might hear the tender accents of His voice. "The world is waiting for the sunrise"-a sunrise to be brought to men by Him. Poor world! Poor human hearts that by the million are breaking. O golden Day of God, with your unspeakable plenitude of joy! Come soon! Come soon!

But while we cannot see Jesus with the natural eye we can see him in a higher sense, even with the eye of faith. We see his tenderness, his compassion, his love. And there are times when his presence seems so real that other things just fade away. But for the most part the vision of his face is reposeful and calm, and, as we reach out in the darkness and touch his hand, he speaks to us in a still small voice, yet with words of strength and assurance that drive all our fears away.

We would see Jesus with a still closer and truer vision. Ere long the thunders of the world shall crash, and the billows of human passion shall surge upon the land. But "there is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the dwelling place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early." Let us then look up above the blackness and the gloom, and we shall see a star, and now while we gaze and gaze upon it, it assumes a form. It comes nearer and nearer. And now there can be no doubt about it -- it is indeed the very Christ, the Son of God. Ah! yes, He is looking on, and he knows that the world's approaching change is even now at the doors.

And soon this Mighty One shall wield the rod of his power over a boundless domain. No more then shall the pale specter of death stalk about the land. No more shall rivers of blood flow because of devastating wars. No more shall the gaunt hand of famine lay millions in the tomb. No more shall the sons of toil be exploited by the plutocrat and the profiteer. One country shall arise to catch the beams of glory poured forth by the Sun of Righteousness, and that country shall be the world. One people shall dwell therein in freedom, in happiness and in life, and that people shall be mankind. One law shall shine forth in a mundane paradise to eternally safeguard the interests of the human family, and that shall be the law of Love. And upon a new foundation shall be built a new world -the theme of all God's ancient prophets-to reflect the radiance of righteousness, joy, and peace forever more. That is what the vision of the Christ will mean to the sons of men.

We would see Jesus "when morning gilds the skies," before we start in on the tasks and duties of the day. We would see Him in the evening when night clothes the earth in sable robes, and we want to feel the assurance that his guardian angel will be with us during the hours of sleep. We would see Him when temptation assails us, and receive the overcoming power that he promised to his own. We would see Him when trouble like a gloomy cloud has settled down, and the flail of

anguish beats upon the heart. We would see Him every day, and under all the vicissitudes of the years.

Then *let us* see Him. Let us take care that nothing robs us of our heavenly vision. Let us follow the example of Mary of Bethany, and sit at His feet. Let us enjoy the good portion that cannot be taken from us while our hearts are right. Over two thousand years of sorrows, and over the world's dark sea of death, let us see the Master's face smiling upon us in love, and let us hear his words, pure and tender and sweet as when he uttered them so long ago: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." And, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

- *W. Sargeant*

"We Shall Be Like Him"

We shall be like Him, for we'll have His nature,
What greater could our Father's love prepare?
Few are the words, and softly are they spoken,
But who shall tell the glories hidden there?

We shall be like Him. O, how rich the promise!
He'll lift us up and with His glory bless;
He took our sin, O wondrous condescension!
That He might clothe us in His righteousness.

We shall be like Him, raised above all weakness,
Forever past all weariness and pain;
Even death itself shall have no power to touch us,
When like our risen Lord with Him we reign.

While now in gracious love He calls us brethren,
And we His spotless robe with gladness wear,
Faith grasps the promise of the glorious future
"We shall be like Him when He shall appear."

Entered Into Rest

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