

# **THROUGH NIGHT TO MORNING**

by

A. C. Dixon, B.A., D.D.

THE GOSPEL HOUR, INC. Greenville, S.C.

## **SERMON ONE -**

### **JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING**

**"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).**

EVERY day of twenty-four hours is made up of the daylight and the twilight, the night and the morning. In the winter the nights are long, the days are short; hence the gloom and the cold. In the summer the days are long, the nights are short; hence the flowers in bloom, the birds in song, and the beauty of nature.

With some Christians it is winter-long nights with short days, much darkness and cold. With others it is summer-long days and short nights, with the bloom of flowers, and the song of birds, and beauty all about them. But with all Christians every night is followed by its morning, whether it be the long night of winter or the short night of summer.

We want, first of all, to

#### **LOOK AT THE NIGHT,**

and then at the morning; to inquire what makes the night, and then what gives the morning. What is it that changes sadness into gladness, the gloom into the gleam?

There are many things that make the night. The guilt of sin is a dark night. When Bunyan's Pilgrim realized that he was living in a city to be destroyed, he had happiness in nothing. And when you began to realize that the condemnation of GOD's righteous law was upon you, it was a dark night. The dread of temptation, the fear of to-morrow, the consciousness of failure, the experience of backsliding, and the sense of utter helplessness that comes with them, may make a sort of perpetual night.

A very dark night with some is the knowledge of sin in others. And when there goes with the knowledge a consciousness that we are responsible for the sin - some example of ours, some neglect of ours, or perhaps some sin of ours, makes us responsible for the sin that has blasted other lives - the night grows darker.

There is also the night of doubt. The darkest day in the lives of the Apostles was, I think, the day between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, when they were in doubt as to what was to be the issue.

They were crouching in the shadow. There was not a song that day. I am afraid there was not a prayer. It was a day of darkness. Their Lord was in the sepulchre. His enemies had prevailed against Him, and the disciples seemed to be on the defeated side. There comes to many a Christian this experience of doubt as to the fundamentals - it may be doubt as to the Lord Himself, doubt as to the word of promise and prophecy, doubt as to your confidence in your Christian character, the imperfections of which you have seen so frequently; then is created a night of doubt.

Sometimes there is a sunset at noonday caused by sudden calamity. The Titanic goes down in mid-ocean and all the world is in a night of calamity. Thousands of people are affected by it. Homes are darkened, communities are in mourning. There comes into your life some great disaster. You find yourself standing in the midst of wrecks that you cannot repair, and the night creeps over your soul.

There is the night of bereavement in the death of loved ones - the shadow of death. And it is harder sometimes to walk through the shadow than through the reality - immensely easier to die than to see others die. The shadow of bereavement settles down upon the home.

The night of affliction may be upon us in the midst of it all. Bodily ailments, physical pain, infirmity, inability to work, even to worship, nervousness - all sorts of imaginary forebodings. It is pronounced incurable, and then comes a sort of permanent midnight.

I have rehearsed these things that make up the night, in order that we may turn our vision to what gives the morning, and the proposition of my sermon is this

### **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS A MORNING TO EVERY NIGHT.**

Let us look at the night of sin. The mercy of GOD may seem to have a glimmer of morning in it.

You realize that you are a lost sinner, and that GOD is merciful. But the mercy of GOD suggests His justice; the love of GOD is linked with His holiness. Meditating simply upon the mercy of GOD will never give a day-dawn to the night of sin's guilt. It is dawn when you realize that mercy and justice have both been satisfied, righteousness and holiness have been met, and that GOD now can remain GOD, occupying His throne of righteousness and at the same time be merciful unto the guilty. It was when you caught a glimpse of JESUS CHRIST as the Guiltbearer that the night of sin began to dawn into day. It is not the fact of the Atonement, great as that is, that brings light, but the living CHRIST with the marks of the Cross upon His person abiding with you.

John the Baptist said, "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,**" then those disciples caught a vision of CHRIST as Sinbearer. We are told "**they... abode with Him**"; the Lamb of GOD Who bore their sins is sitting by them and holding sweet fellowship with them.

There comes a day-dawn to the night of temptation. You have a temper you cannot control. It has given you some nights of gloom and sadness. You have an appetite that your will cannot subdue, and you have been suffering as the result of defeat. You have tendencies in your nature that you

have not been able to master, and the defeat that has followed each time has been a night to your soul.

What is the day-dawn to that night? It is the realization that the living Lord JESUS CHRIST is greater than your temper, greater than your appetite, greater than all the powers of sin that work in your members. If you trust JESUS CHRIST, He will give you the victory every day: Let your weakness be linked with His power, and there will come a day-dawn at once.

Thomas had his night of doubts. He was in midnight gloom. And how did he get rid of it? By a course of arguing? By a syllogism? Did he just put together encouraging things and draw conclusions from them? Perhaps there was that kind of arguing in his mind, but the thing that drove the night from Thomas was the vision of CHRIST bearing the marks of the Cross. "**My Lord and my God,**" was the response of his heart, and the night was gone; the day had appeared in its glory.

As to the night of calamities, you can get a gleam, perhaps, from argument. John B. Gough said, when he went down to the Crystal Palace on his first visit to England, he was overwhelmed by the glory of the pyrotechnics. "It was a magnificent display," he said, "on a very dark night." But presently it all sank, the air was filled with bad odours, and he looked out upon gloom. "At that moment," he said, "I took a glance at the heavens, and there I saw the stars in their glory. I said, "Thank God for His stars; there is no pyrotechnic display about them." There is greater glory in the stars than in fireworks.

Baron Humboldt, when in South America, experienced his first earthquake. He said, "The house near me tumbled to pieces; the earth was reeling like a drunken man." He looked out on the ocean and it had receded; the ships were thrown on the beach. He said, "This earth, which I thought was stable, is all in motion; it seems to be in convulsions." Then he looked up at the sky. It smiled in quiet and gave him a peaceful heart, as he thought of the permanence of the heavens.

Yes, that is true; there are some things that abide while the earthly things are crumbling, tottering and passing away. But arguing thus is not like having with you the One Who holds the stars in His hand, and has made His personal pledge to you that He is going to see you through.

The Lord JESUS CHRIST Himself, in any calamity, is more than argument. I have gone to see Christian people after they had lost their fortunes. One man of wealth, because of a new invention which spoiled his business, found himself reduced to poverty. That man was not in the night: he was happy and radiant, because he had a better consciousness of CHRIST's presence. He said, "I never knew what it was to have JESUS as all in all until I found myself reduced almost to beggary, and began to count up my riches in CHRIST. I was a millionaire in Him and did not know it."

He had to move down to a small, insignificant street, but he took CHRIST with him, and he knew Him better down there than he did on the Avenue in the midst of wealth.

When you come to afflictions, the fact that GOD can heal the body is a glimmer of dawn. The best picture Tissot painted is the one which represents JESUS coming along the highway, and a long string of people are sitting by the road, this one with a crutch, that one with his bed, and

every one of them indicating that they are ill and waiting for His appearance. Behind Him there is no one sitting by the wayside; all are restored to health, and running across the fields, going home.

Where JESUS CHRIST has come they have all gotten well; His touch has healed every one of them.

He can heal the afflicted, for He is GOD the Healer. But suppose He does not heal? Then the glad hope that by and by, in the new order of things in Heaven, there will be no disease and all sickness shall have disappeared, gives a glad gleam of the dawn. We can quote the promise, "**All things work together for good to them that love God,**" and our heart sings for joy as we quote it. But the day-dawn does not grow very much brighter.

Dr. Wallace, the scientist, has asserted that the very existence of the fertile portions of this earth depends upon its deserts; that if we had no desert of Sahara there would not be a vineyard within a thousand miles. The vineyard on the hillside is dependent on the desert. The scientist says that it is the particles which come from the desert, floating in the air, that makes the clouds and rain possible; and if you remove the desert, you remove the fertility.

Whether that be scientific truth or not, it is certainly true that what we call the desert places of life, the times when we have to keep quiet; when there is no strength for money-making or for active duty, but we must just be still and wait upon GOD; such times of quiet prepare us for the times of activity: the desert gives the fertility.

The night makes the morning. The morning comes and drives away the night, it is true, but GOD knows how to make the night produce the morning. Jesus said, "**Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.**" Your sorrow shall be transmuted into joy. And certain it is that the darkness of Bedford Jail made the morning dawn of *Pilgrim's Progress*. It was out of the darkness of the jail the allegory came that has gone over the world and down the ages.

It was the darkness of Wartburg Castle, into which Luther was thrust, that made the light of the German translation of the Bible. It is the darkness of Calvary, with its broken heart and its sin-bearing, that makes the light of salvation and of Heaven.

GOD knows how to make the morning out of the night. He can touch the black charcoal into diamonds. He knows how to speak and the darkness becomes light. The very affliction that would drag you down lifts you up; the things that are weights become wings. That which, if you could, you would have prevented lifts you up to Heaven.

When Sir William Russell was on the way to the scaffold, he took his watch out of his pocket and handed it to the physician who waited upon him, as he said, "Will you kindly take my timepiece and keep it; I have no more use for it; I am now dealing with eternity." With us Time is slipping away; eternity is coming. And it is the presence of CHRIST which fits the Christian to deal with eternity.

"**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.**" Why? Because I will meet my loved ones by and by? Because the separation is very brief? Yes, but the

principal reason is, Because "**THOU ART WITH ME. Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.**" The SHEPHERD is with us, and joy comes through His presence. As we deal with eternity, JESUS CHRIST, the everlasting GOD, is the only One Who can make the day-dawn.

Shall I apply this a little more widely? The world is in a night. The darkness in the Egypt of unbelief about us is growing deeper and darker, while the light in the Goshen of faith is growing brighter and brighter. Our faces are towards the morning. The Bride of CHRIST is being made ready; the Church is being called out. "**They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.**"

The time of sowing and of growing may be the time of shadows. We may sow in the winter in anticipation of spring. We may sow in the cold and the fog, looking for the harvest in GOD's own time. It is ours to go ahead with the sowing, though tears may water the seed. By and by the harvest song and the harvest home.

**"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."**

Whatever be the night of your weeping, look forward to the morning. Better than that, have the morning now, for **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN HIS FULNESS IS THE MORNING.**

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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