

FULLY FURNISHED

or

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

by

Dr. F. E. Marsh

CHAPTER THREE

THE WORKER'S ATTRACTION

SATAN'S motto is, "Anything but Jesus." Religion, philanthropy, or pet pursuits, may engross, if by these the mind be diverted from "Jesus only," the one Soul-Satisfier. The voice of the Father, the teaching of the Spirit, and the utterance of the Word are one on this point.

"Jesus only." God's fulness is centered in Christ: His thoughts are of Christ, who communicates God's thoughts to us. Would we know God, then we must know Christ.

- All approach to God is through Him, so that if we would draw near to God, we must come in His name.
- All God's gifts are in Christ, so that if we would possess them, we must have Christ by being in Him.

God's strength is Christ: He is the "**Power of God**": to have strength, we must have Christ. The love of God is manifested in Christ: would we experience the glow of that love, it must be as we are in touch with Him. All that God is, is revealed in Christ: "**He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.**" The glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. Let us therefore abide in His presence, so that we may reflect His glory. What better attraction could we have than Jesus HIMSELF? Jesus Himself having us, and we having Him - let this theme engage our thoughts.

I -What Jesus has done in His completed work upon the Cross, is our salvation and our stay.

The Apostle Paul, in his second prayer in the Epistle to the Ephesians, asks that the saints at Ephesus "**may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height**" (Ephesians 3:18). Of what? "**The love of Christ**" is the usual answer. We think this is not correct. He expresses his desire that the saints may know that, in verse 19. The "**breadth, length, depth, and height,**" we apprehend, refer to Christ Himself:

- The breadth of His power:
- The length of His love:
- The height of His glory:
- The depth of His sufferings.

We would now direct attention to the last, especially in connection with the benefits that flow to us, as the outcome of His death.

There are many passages of Holy Writ, which tell us in touching and telling words, that Christ died for us; but the one word which makes them so touching and telling, is - **“Himself”**:

- **“Who gave Himself for our sins”** (Galatians 1:4);
- **“Gave Himself for me”** (Galatians 2:20);
- **“Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it”** (Ephesians 5:25);
- **“Who gave Himself for us”** (Titus 2:14);
- **“When He had by Himself purged our sins”** (Hebrews 1:3);
- **“He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”** (Hebrews 9:26);
- **“Who gave Himself a ransom for all”** (I Timothy 2:6).

We apprehend that the finished work of Christ, is the hub in which all the spokes of our blessings meet, and the tire by which they are held together, and in which they are all secured.

The work of Christ for us in His atonement on the Cross, is “like the blue flower of the German legends, long sought for and hidden, but when found, admitting into every guarded treasure, which, without its possession, would have been closed up.”

“In one of Miss Wilkins’ latest books, that exquisite and consummate artist tells the story of a New England woman, whose fame was bright among the poor and lawless, whom she perseveringly befriended. Withal she was not a believer, never “went to meeting,” and smilingly put aside the arguments of a boyish young minister who tried to reason her into faith. But one whom she had befriended, became a murderer, and she had, with infinite reluctance, to surrender him to justice. The next Sunday she went to church for the first time in twenty-five years.

“ ‘I ain’t got much to say about it,’ said she, ‘but I’m goin’ to say this much - it ain’t no more’n right I should, though I don’t believe in a lot of palaver about things like this. I’ve made up my mind that I’m going to believe in Jesus Christ. I ain’t never, but I’m going to now, for’-Tuella’s voice turned shrill with passion. *‘I don’t see any other way out of it for John Gleason.’* “

She felt that the case of the murderer was such a desperate one, that no one but the Lord Jesus Christ, in the sufficiency of His atonement, could meet it. This is true in the case of everyone who really knows himself. The seeds of every evil thing lurk in the nature of man, and only want circumstances to bring them out. Hence, every man needs Christ, whether he feels that need or not. But we who have received Christ, know Him as our Stay and Support: glory in the sufficiency of His death, in its Godward and manward aspects, for just as each of the boards of the Tabernacle rested in, and on, two sockets of silver, so we rest on, and are identified with Him who died to meet the righteous requirements of a holy and righteous God, who must by the very necessity of His nature punish sin. And Christ by that same death meets our need as sinners.

Those who thus know Christ, can sing-

“Thy death, not mine, O Christ.
Has paid the ransom due;
Ten thousand deaths like mine
Would have been all too few.
To whom. save Thee. ‘Who can alone
For sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?’”

II - What Christ is at the Right Hand of God in His position and person, is the measure of our acceptance and standing.

“**Christ . . . hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour**” (Ephesians 5:2). As the burnt offering went up a sweet-smelling savour to God (Leviticus 1:9), typical of the delight the Father has in Christ (Matthew 3:17), so we are in Christ a sweet-smelling offering to Him.

To be saved *by* Jesus is good, even as the first-born of the children of Israel were saved from death by the sprinkled blood of the paschal lamb, in Egypt. To be saved *in* Christ is better, as Noah and his family were saved in the ark, and passed through the waters of judgment. But to be safe *as* Christ is best, for this means that we are as secure as He is. A friend once said to the late George Silwood, of Keswick, “How blessed it is to be ‘safe in the arms of Jesus!’”

“Yes,” he replied; “but I am safer than that.”

“Safer than that!” replied the friend in astonishment, “how much safer can you be?”

George Silwood replied, “I am safe AS AN ARM of Jesus.” And so it is.

An old writer, in speaking of the believer’s completeness in Christ, says: “There is life in Christ, and glory in Christ: Christ our Life and His glory, our glory, which agrees with the words of the Saviour, ‘**Because I live, ye shall live also**’: and where I am, you shall be.’ As if the Lord had said, ‘My beloved saints, you are as safe as I am; your lives and your glory are bound up in Mine. I laid down My life to take up yours, and now I have laid up your life as sure as My own, both in My Father and your Father’s bosom. I in the Father, and you in Me: My love, My fair one, My undefiled, you are where I am.’”

Well might Luther exclaim, on realizing his position in Christ before God, “Oh the blessedness of knowing, - that as Christ is before God, so am I!” Well might the Apostle ask, “**Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us**” (Romans 8:33-34)

God, who in His righteous grace has pronounced us righteous, will never bring an accusation against us, and Christ who died and rose, and is seated at God’s right hand pleading in our behalf, will never condemn us. Since those who have the right to charge us and to condemn us, will not do so, we need fear none. This being so, the conclusion of the whole matter is-

- In Christ we are as His worthiness, in His acceptance (Ephesians 1:6).
- In Christ we are as His comeliness, in His completeness (Ezekiel 16:14).
- In Christ we are as His perfection, in His spotlessness (II Corinthians 5:21).
- In Christ we are as His sanctity, in His holiness (Hebrews 10:10).
- In Christ we are as His fulness, in His plenitude (Colossians 2:9, 10; Ephesians 1:22).
- In Christ we are as His beauty, in His loveliness (Song of Solomon 4:7).
- In Christ we are as Himself, in His glory (I John 4:17).

III -*What Christ possesses, is the amount of our blessings and property.*

“**The things concerning Himself**” (Luke 24:27). Such are the pregnant words that describe, and sum up the conversation, the Lord Jesus had with the two disciples, as He journeyed with them to Emmaus. There were two main things of which He spoke, viz., His sufferings and His glory. But how pregnant are these things! And they are so, because they are about Himself, and He Himself is the One who has done all. His sufferings are the foundation of the house of His grace, and His glory is the top-stone. But what a store of things there is in Himself, who is the House of God’s provision!

We can never be poor with Christ, because we can never have a poor Christ. We should have no riches at all if it were not for Christ: therefore, Christ is our riches. Just as the cherubim were inwrought in the beautiful curtain called “**The Tabernacle**” (Exodus 36:8), so Christ’s gifts are all in Himself, and He Himself is in all His gifts.

When John the beloved disciple was banished to the Isle of Patmos, being in the Spirit, he heard a voice behind him, which told wondrous things, but not more marvellous than we hear, when we listen to Christ as He speaks to us in His Word.

In musing upon Christ in His gifts, the writer was waiting upon Christ to reveal Himself upon this line of thought, when a voice seemed to say, “Call to mind, and look up in My Word, what I say in connection with the word ‘**My**,’ as illustrating what you have, in possessing Myself, and thus see what you have, and what I expect in consequence.”

As I began to meditate, it seemed as if Christ said:

- ‘My body’ (Matthew 26:26) I gave to be bruised for you, in suffering in your stead.
- ‘My blood’ (Luke 22:20) I gave for you, to atone for your sins.
- ‘My life’ (John 10:15) I gave up for you, that you might have eternal life.
- ‘My flesh’ (John 6:51-56) I gave, that you might be sustained and satisfied.
- ‘My hands and My feet’ (Luke 24:39) I gave for your inspection, that you might ponder and see the completeness of My work.
- ‘My Word’ (John 5:24) I gave, that you might be assured of your interest in Myself.
- ‘My Church’ (Matthew 16:18) I give you, to be a member of it, that you may be one with Me.
- ‘My Father’ (John 20:17) I give to be your Father: He is your Father because He is Mine, and you are Mine.
- ‘My yoke’ (Matthew 11:29) I give you, to take upon you, that you may know and delight in My will.

- ‘My rest’ (Hebrews 4:1-5) I give you to enter, as you are obedient to My directions.
- ‘My Spirit’ (Acts 2:17) I give you, to carry on My work in making you like Myself during My absence.
- ‘My laws’ (Hebrews 8:10) I give and write in your hearts, that you may do them out of love to Me.
- ‘My Commandments’ (John 14:21) I give you, that you may show Me you love Me by obeying them.
- ‘My voice’ (John 10:2); I give you to hear, as you heed Me in following My steps.
- ‘My joy’ (John 15:11) I give you, to enjoy as you abide in Me.
- ‘My name’ (Matthew 18:20; John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23-26) I give you, as the center of gathering, and as your passport and plea in prayer.
- ‘My grace’ (II Corinthians 12:9) I give you, as your sufficiency, O delight in trial and suffering.
- ‘My power’ (II Corinthians 12:9) I give you, to strengthen you in your weakness.
- ‘My love’ (John 15:9) I give you, that you may give Me your obedience. [30]
- ‘My peace’ (John 14:27) I give you, that you may be calm amidst life’s storms.
- ‘My hand’ (John 10:28) I give you, that you may be assured of your security.
- ‘My barn’ (Matthew 13:30) I will give you, to be garnered in, when the great harvest comes. And
- ‘My glory’ (John 17:24) I give will you to share, that you may be eternally blessed.”

These are but a few of the golden beads that Christ gives us, in the necklace of His grace, and we may well count them, and discover, as we gaze, fresh beauties of our adorable Lord in whom we have all our possessions, for without Him we should be poor indeed.

Since this is so, let us prize Him above all.

- He is the Prize that makes all prizes, prizes.
- He is the Gift that makes the gifts, gifts; for there were no gifts were it not for the Gift, for He is all our gifts.
- He is the Blessing that makes all our blessings, blessings; for there were no blessings in our blessings, were it not for Him, who is the blessing of our blessings.

IV - What Christ is doing as our High Priest, and our Advocate with the Father, is an evidence of oar dearness to Him.

“We have such an High Priest” (Hebrews 8:1).

“We have an Advocate with the Father” (I John 2:1).

We must not look upon the offices of Christ as our High Priest and Advocate, as one and the same: they are distinct and different. The distinction has been thus defined:

“Priesthood is between God and His people, Advocacy is between the Father and the children. The one is for us as worshippers; the other is connected with our fellowship with the Father and His Son. The one is preventive; the other, restorative.”

These distinctions are seen in the history of Peter.

- As the High Priest, Christ prays for Peter, that his faith may not fail; but as the Advocate, He restores Peter after his failure Luke 22:31,32; comp. John 21:15-19).

- As our High Priest, He is able to succour us (Hebrews 2:17, 18), sympathizing with us in our difficulties, even as He did with Paul, when he was in danger of being shipwrecked, by assuring him of safety (Acts 27:23-25).

He is able to succour us in sustaining us in the time of temptation; for as the priest of old, ever looked after the lamps in the lampstand, and kept them burning by supplying them with oil, so our High Priest ever supplies us with all the grace we need (Leviticus 24:3, 4; Hebrews 4:15, 16).

He is able to succour us in being with us in our trials, even as He was with the young men in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:25-27).

He is able to succour us in our weaknesses, by enabling us through His strength to glory in them, so that His power may rest upon us, even as it did upon Paul, in connection with his “**thorn in the flesh**” (II Corinthians 12:7-9) ; and this He is able to do, because He has trodden the path before us.

Now, in the position of Advocate, He serves us in removing defilement, when we confess our sins. God has made no provision for us to sin, but, if through unwatchfulness we do sin, there is provision made, as the following indicates: “**These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous**” (I John 2:1).

This present ministry of Christ, is illustrated in John 13, when Christ is seen washing His disciples’ feet.

As we travel this sin stained world, we get defiled and contaminated.

- The breath of the world dims the brightness of our confession of Christ, and it needs His master-hand to burnish us.
- The prince of the power of the air causes the germs of disease to enter, and mar our spiritual health, and it needs the touch of the Divine Physician to heal us.
- The mud of sin is apt to be splashed upon us by the vehicles of Satan, and the cleansing blood of Christ alone can remove the stain.
- The root of bitterness is ready to grow in our nature, and this needs to be removed by the Heavenly Gardener.

Thus Christ ever lives to succour, save, strengthen, sympathize, and sanctify, as our High Priest and Advocate, and this loving and continual service of His proclaims our dearness to Him.

V - What Christ can be in us, is the cause of our Christlikeness, and progress in the Christian life.

There are two expressions which are used again and again by the Apostle Paul - “**In Christ,**” and “**Christ in us**” (II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20).

The one is the counterpart of the other, and dependent upon the other, just as the cog-wheels move each other by being the one in the other. In Christ we have life, hence we live unto God; and Christ as our Life, lives in us, hence we live for Him before men.

Some time since, the writer saw in a vinery, what is called by the gardener *inarching*. When from some cause, a vine is not doing very well, the gardener determines to get a healthy young vine, and "*inarch*" it to the older one, which means, that he gets the young vine, and taking a piece of bark off the sides of both vines, he ties them tightly together. Thus they grow together and become one. When they are thus bound to each other, the gardener cuts the young one about half through, an inch or so below where they are fastened together. Then when the two are thoroughly united, and the wood of the young vine is ripe, he severs the latter completely from its root, so that all its nourishment is derived from the older vine. After a time the older vine is cut just above where the two are joined; thus all the sap and nourishment from the older, goes to the younger tree, which in this way partakes of its fruitfulness and fatness.

Even so is it with Christ and us. The bark of our nature was cut when the Holy Spirit convinced us of sin: and the bark of His nature was cut when He gave Himself up to die for us.

We are severed from our natural root and standing in Adam; and Christ was "**cut off out of the land of the living,**" that the sap of His Divine nature might be infused into us, in resurrection power by the Holy Spirit. Thus do we partake of the fulness of His life, the fatness of His grace, and the fruitfulness of His love.

- It is as Christ in His love lives in us, that we are able to live in love to Him, even as the fire is in the piece of iron, by the iron being in the fire, and causes it to burn that which it touches.
- It is as Christ in His holiness lives in us, that we are well-pleasing to Him, even as the perfume on the garment, is pleasing to the sense.
- It is as Christ in His gentleness lives in us, that we are gentle towards others, even as the soaking of the wick in the oil, gives the bright and continuous flame.
- It is as Christ in the sufficiency of His grace dwells in us, that we have sufficiency of grace to overcome temptation, and to delight in whatever may come to us, even as the tree can stand the storms that shake it, by virtue of the life that is in it, and roots itself firmly in the ground.
- It is as Christ lives in us, that the fruitfulness of Himself in the ninefold cluster of "**the fruit of the Spirit**" (Galatians 5:22, 23), is manifest in our life, even as the grapes show the fatness of the vine.

For Christ-likeness, we must have Christ. For the imitation of Christ, we must have the Christ within us, so that we may imitate the Christ without.

VI - What Christ was in His life, is the Object of our desire; and how He lived, is the Copy for our imitation.

"Christ pleased not Himself" (Romans 15:3).

When we call to mind the character of Christ as revealed in the Gospels, we are constrained to own, that it stands out in the black history of humanity, like an oasis in a desert.

What kind of life was His?

Godward, it was a life of prayer, telling out His dependence upon His Father. It was a life of perseverance in His Father's will: a life of purity from which there radiated a holiness that was pleasing to God. It was a life which, from beginning to end, went up as a sweet-smelling savour in which the Father delighted.

Manward, the life of Christ was one of incessant "**doing good.**"

His compassion for the lost, His concern for the welfare of the people, His care to faithfully represent the Father, and His completed work upon the Cross, all bear testimony to His intense love to, and for mankind.

"It has been said by a great poet, that great characters and great souls are like mountains - they always attract storms; upon their heads break the thunders, and round their bare tops flash the lightnings, and the seeming wrath of God. Nevertheless, they form a shelter for the plains beneath them."

So with Christ.

He was always a Shelter for the fallen and downtrodden: a willing Listener to the penitent cry of anguish; and ever ready to respond to the touch of the child, as in clinging confidence it nestled to His side.

It is true, He brought down on Himself the lightning of man's hate, but He sheltered those who confided in Him.

What He was, we should seek to be, and we can only be like Him, as He Himself lives within us; for the indwelling Christ can alone imitate the Christ. He alone must use our fingers to copy the perfect lesson that He puts before us, otherwise the down-strokes will be crooked, and the up-strokes clumsy not to speak of the number of blots in the copy-book of our life, and the omissions in copying.

We are all agreed that we could not have a better Copy; but we are also assured that He who is the Copy must Himself be the Copyist, if there is to be a reproduction of His life, and the representation in our life of Him in His lovely character.

VII - *What Jesus says is the ground of our authority, and the reason of our action.*

"**Jesus Himself . . . saith**" (Luke 24:36). We are always under orders. The Lord in His grace does not leave us to our whims and fancies; but He bids us act according to His will and fiat. He is our Lord and we are His bondservants, and since this is the case, we want no will in the matter, for the matter of His will is our only want.

- His commands are our comforts: for there is no comfort except in obeying His commands.
- His Word is our warrant, and we want no warrant but His Word.

- His directions are our delight, and there is no delight but in carrying out His directions.
- **“Thus saith the Lord”** is our plea in prayer, and our power with men; and we have no plea in prayer, nor power with men, but as we have **“Thus saith the Lord”** for our direction.
- His sayings are our stay, and we have no stay but in His sayings.
- His promises are our cordials, and we have no cordial but in His promises.
- His behests are our blessings, and there is no blessing but in carrying them out.

“Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it,” was the wise utterance of Mary. And as the servants got the waterpots which had been filled with water, filled with wine, so are we filled with joy by doing whatsoever He saith. We love to do what He saith, for love makes the work worth doing.

As an old writer puts it: - “A musician is not recommended for playing long, but for playing well: it is obeying God willingly that is accepted. The Lord hates that which is forced. It is rather paying a tax than making an offering. Good duties must not be pressed or shaken out of us, as the waters came out of the rock when Moses smote it with a rod, but must freely drop from us as myrrh from the tree, or honey from the comb. If a willing mind is wanting, there is wanting that flower which perfumes our obedience, and makes it a sweet-smelling savour to God.”

VIII - What Christ will yet do, is the hope of our expectation: and what He is, will be the measure of our likeness.

“Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27). Such are the graciously glorious words used by the Holy Spirit as to what Christ has done, and is doing, and will yet do, for His Bride, the Church.

Like the steps of Solomon’s throne, these verses lead us to the place of blessing.

- (1) There is affection - **“Christ loved the Church.”**
- (2) There is substitution - He **“gave Himself.”**
- (3) There is absolution - He has cleansed.
- (4) There is sanctification - He has separated us to God.
- (5) There is regeneration - He reminds us by His Word and Spirit, of what He has done for us, and as we listen and heed, we are renewed.
- (6) There is presentation - He is going to present us to Himself.
- (7) There is classification - We are told what we shall be by His grace.

It is to the presentation mentioned, that our thoughts are now directed.

PRESENTATION - “The thought,” says the Rev. H. C. G. Moule, “is of the Heavenly Bridegroom welcoming the glorified Bride at the marriage feast hereafter. True, she is now His Spouse and His Body: but the manifestation then, will be such, as to be, in a sense, the marriage as the sequel to the betrothal. The words **‘present to Himself,’** suggest that the Bride is not only to be welcomed then by her Lord, but welcomed as owing all her glory to His work, and as being absolutely His own.”

The words “**present to Himself**” bring to our mind the promise of our now absent Lord, in John 14:3: “**I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.**” Having prepared a place for His Bride, and His Bride for the place, He comes to receive her to Himself, that she may be with Him forever. As Eliezer presented Rebecca to Isaac, who received her to himself to be his henceforth, so the Holy Spirit will conduct us to our Lordly Bridegroom, when, by His power, we shall rise to meet Christ in the air. The Lord shall then receive us to Himself, we shall be like Him, and forever with Him.

IX - “*What would Jesus do?*” is the guide of our life, and the inspiration in service.

“**He . . . made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant . . . He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death**” (Philippians 2:7, 8) - “**Committed Himself**” (I Peter 2:23). Christ is seen in service, in sanctification, and in suffering, in the above Scriptures. Running through all that He did - as the golden thread in the ephod of the High Priest - was the consuming desire: . . . What would My Father wish Me to do?” So must it be with us: our wishes should sink under the thought: . . . What would Jesus do?”

What would Jesus do in the home? He would brighten it by His presence, as the light gladdens the weary watcher. He would cheer all by His loving manner, as the mother comforts her child; He would lighten all by His gentle help, as one who takes the burden from the shoulders of the weary traveler; He would sweeten the home by His tender words, as the scent perfumes the garments; He would purify it by His holy influence, as the disinfectant kills the germs of disease; He would bush every disturbing voice, as with His “**Peace, be still,**” on Galilee’s troubled waters; and He would deny Himself for the good of others, even as He did when He died for us on the Cross.

What would Jesus do in the Church? He would love all its members, as a mother loves her children; He would be interested in all its work, even as the father takes note of the rough model that his boy has been making; He would be present at the gatherings for worship and prayer, as the High Priest, at the appointed time, was present to trim the lamps; He would be sure to visit those of its members who were sick, and would cheer them as friend cheers friend; He would feed and encourage those who were young in grace, as the shepherd specially tends the lambs of his flock; He would seek to restore those who had backslidden, even as the shepherd searches for the stray sheep; He would admonish those who were unruly, as the father corrects his child; and He would be an Example to all, even to the washing of the disciples’ feet (John 13).

What would Jesus do in the world? He would reflect the holy character of His Father, as the mirror reflects the face; He would tell out the Word of God in His testimony, as the wax reveals the impression of the seal; He would lend a helping hand to the downcast and fallen, as He was wont when here on earth; and He would contemplate the godless multitude with a compassion which could alone reveal the love of God, as the moon reflects the sun’s light.

What would Jesus do in temptation? He would trust in God to deliver Him; in the strength of God, He would overcome; and by the Word of God, He would frustrate every evil suggestion of the enemy.

What would Jesus do under persecution? He would neither plead His own cause, nor stand up for His rights, but commit Himself to the righteous vindication of His Father.

Finally, what would Jesus do always? In a word, He would consult His Father by prayer, and thus obtain His guidance and grace. This consideration of what Jesus would do, is a safe means of guidance for the disciple who follows in His steps.

X - What Christ is in Himself, is the delight of our heart, and the joy of our song.

“Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them” (Luke 24:36).

These words describe the manifestation of Christ to His sorrowing disciples, gathered in the upper room at Jerusalem. It was no optical delusion, but the illustrious Person of their Divine Lord, that addressed the astonished disciples. He, whom but a short time ago, they saw on the Cross in shame and agony, now stands before them in glory and grace. The One whom they saw but lately, distressed on account of contact with sin’s penalty, now confronts them with **“Peace be unto you.”**

To assure them, He further adds: **“It is I Myself!”** No wonder that their joy was great.

In those days He revealed Himself in person: but not the less really, does He manifest Himself to the obedient heart of to-day (John 14:21).

“Which would you rather have - happy feelings without Christ, or Christ and no happy feelings?” asked the writer of a young Christian who was seeking joy in her feelings, rather than in the possession of the Lord Himself. She did not take long to decide that she would rather possess Christ, and let the happy feelings go. Like many of greater experience, she had been seeking her joy in something outside of Himself.

Now the way to miss joy, is to be taken up with the possession of it, while the secret of possessing the joy, is to have the Lord of the joy.

- If we have the Giver, we are sure of the gifts:
- If we have the Treasury, we possess the treasure.
- If we are united to the Promiser, we are certain of the fulfillment of the promises.
- If the Lord is our Delight, our delight will be the Lord, and so the Lord shall answer to every blessing, and to every need.

There is no greater want than to be without Christ; but possessing Christ, we have no want to want.

The Christian who seeks for highest joy apart from Christ, will, like the prodigal, discover himself to us in want; while he who has the Lord, shall never want.

The Christian who is taken up with some happy experience, is like Peter, whose soul did not rise above the happy surroundings of **“being here”** (Matthew 17:1-8); the Transfiguration scene was felt by him to be **“good;”** but having Christ amid circumstances ever so adverse, we can say:

“Lord, it is good to be with Thee.”

We shall be above circumstances when we can truthfully say this. Let us learn to spell our own blessings, gifts, doctrines, and graces with one word of five letters-

“Jesus”

“Once it was the blessing; now it is the Lord;
Once it was the feeling; now it is His Word.
Once His gifts I wanted; now Himself alone;
Once I sought for healing; now the Healer own;
Once ‘twas painful trying; now ‘tis perfect trust;
Once a half salvation; now the uttermost.
Once ‘twas what I wanted; now what Jesus says;
Once ‘twas constant asking; now ‘tis ceaseless praise:
Once it was my working; His it hence shall be;
Once I tried to use Him; now He uses me.
Once the power I wanted; now the Mighty One;
Once I worked for glory; now His will alone.”

~ end of chapter 3 ~

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