

FULLY FURNISHED

or

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

by

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CHAPTER NINE

THE WORKER'S SUPPLY

THE following report of certain structural alterations that had been carried out, in connection with a place set apart for the worship of God, was announced in a religious periodical some time ago;

“Structural alterations have been effected in connection with the church at __, producing many advantages, among which may be mentioned more room, more ventilation, more internal conveniences, and a much more improved external appearance.”

It occurred to me, in reading the above announcement, that what is said of this building in a material sense, would apply in a spiritual way to the believer in Christ. For:

- Is there not a need for “more room” in our hearts and lives for the love of God, that we may love Him and each other more?
- Is there not a need for “more ventilation” in our experience that the pure air of the Spirit of God may make and keep us fresh?
- Is there not a need for “more light” from the holy lamp of God’s truth, on every question that relates to the different spheres in which we move?
- Is it not true that we all want “more internal conveniences,” or capacity for the development of Christ within us, that He may be “fully formed,” and work unhindered through us?

And if these wants were supplied, would there not be a “much more improved external appearance” in our manner of life? For as the hands of the watch indicate the working of the machinery within, so if our inner life is right, it must tell its own story in the walk without.

We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the Church of God is not making the progress it should, in holy living and in zealous working. As Mr. Moody said a few years ago, in a circular calling a Northfield Convention: “There are in the churches, stores of unconsecrated wealth, unused or misused talents, multitudes at ease in Zion, witnesses who bear no testimony for their Lord, workers without the Spirit’s conquering power, teachers who speak without authority, disciples who follow afar off, forms without life, church machinery substituted for inward life and power.”

What is the remedy for all this? We cannot deal with churches, but we can seek to be individually right; and the way to accomplish this, is to see what grace has done for us; what the Lord is willing to do for, in, and with us; and to follow the directions of His Word. To this end, let us ponder the “MUCH MORES” of the Epistles, and seek to know the power of them by the Holy Spirit, so that our experience shall have a new epoch in it, in that our spiritual life shall be deepened, and thus our usefulness extended.

I - the much more of salvation.

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” (Romans 5:9-10)

There are two “**much mores**” in these verses. The first argues from the greater to the lesser, and the second, from the lesser to the greater.

“Being justified by the blood of Christ,” thus freed from every charge brought against us, and accounted as righteous in the Righteous One, we need not fear that we shall be overtaken by the wrath of God. And not only so, but **“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life;”** that is, we are not only brought to God, but we are united to a living Saviour, and energized in His life. As Dr. Brown says, “If that part of the Saviour’s work which cost Him His blood, and which had to be wrought for persons incapable of the least sympathy, either with His love or His labours on their behalf—even our **‘justification,’** our **‘reconciliation,’** is already completed; how much more will He do all that remains to be done, since He has it to do, not by death agonies any more, but in untroubled life?”

I well remember being in the office of Mr. Quarrier’s Orphan Home, Glasgow, when a poor, dirty child was brought for admission into the Home, and after the necessary enquiries were made, and the child had been given over to the friend of the waifs, the next thing was to get him stripped, washed, clothed, and duly placed in the commodious and comfortable Homes at Bridge of Weir - But what a contrast and a change from the old associations for the lad! If that lad had been interviewed after he had been in the Home some time, and the interviewer had said: “Do you fear, my boy, that Mr. Quarrier will cease to care for you?” I think he would have replied, “I am sure that since Mr. Quarrier took me when I was filthy and needy, and made me what I am, he will continue to care for me.”

In like manner the believer can argue, “Since the Lord has reconciled me to Himself, justified me from every charge, and made me His own, therefore I am sure now, as He ever lives, and is unchanging, that He will keep me for Himself to the end.”

Let us who are united to the Living Saviour, evidence our union with Him, by being saved by His life, or, saved in His life. Let the knowledge of the preserving power of His life, be made a practical power in our walk, and then we shall be saved from barrenness, even as the branch of the vine is saved from fruitlessness, because of its union with the vine.

II - *the much more of supply.*

“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. ... Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans 5:17, 20). **“For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory . . . For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious”** (II Corinthians 3:9, 11).

The one thought that predominates and permeates the above Scriptures, is the excellent surpassing glory of the Gospel, whether it be in contrast to Adam’s transgression, or the glory that was given by Moses. The glory of the law pales before the glory of the Gospel, even as the stars fade away in the light of the sun. Whether it be our need as sinners, as saints, or as servants, there is abundant and sufficient supply in the grace of God. The light that streams from the sun, is an illustration of the abundance of God’s grace.

Sir Robert S. Ball, in his admirable book on *“The Story of the Heavens,”* in speaking of the superabundance of the light and heat that streams from the sun, says: . . . In all directions the sun pours forth, with the most prodigal liberality, its torrents of light and heat. The greater part of that light and heat, seems quite wasted in the depths of space. Our earth intercepts only the merest fraction, less than the 2,000,000,000th part of the whole. Our fellow-planets and the moon also intercept a trifle; but what portion of the mighty flood can they utilize? The sip that a swallow takes from the river, is as far from exhausting the water in the river, as are the planets from using all the heat that streams from the sun.”

In the following abundant things, we have illustrated, what the Lord says He will abundantly do for those who believe and abide in Christ.

Abundant grace - **“God is able to make all grace abound toward you”** (II Corinthians 9:8). As the prodigal confessed that the hired servants had bread enough and to spare, so there is more than sufficient in the grace of God, to meet our need.

Abundant life - **“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”** (John 10:10). The abundant life of Christ is a vehement flame, which burns up every sinful thing. The word rendered **“more abundantly,”** is translated in Mark 14:31, **“vehemently.”**

Abundant hope - **“Abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost”** (Romans 15:13). As the spring increasingly abounds in its supply of water, as the rain descends, so the believer is filled to overflowing, as the Lord ministers His grace.

Abundant love - **“I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more”** (Philippians 1:9). As the battery charged with electricity communicates its power as it is applied, so if the love of God constrains us, it leads us in holy devotion to Him, and in beneficent service to others.

Abundant rejoicing - **“That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again”** (Philippians 1:26). The rejoicing spoken of, refers to the increased boasting in Christ there would be, with the presence of Paul. All mercies should increase our boasting in Christ.

Abundant work - “**Abounding in the work of the Lord**” (I Corinthians 15:58). The work of the Lord, is work received from the Lord, work done in the Lord, and work done to the Lord. To abound in such work, is to work as the Lord, of whom it is said that He was “**wearied**” (John 4:6).

Abundant suffering and consolation - “**As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ**”. (II Corinthians 1:5). Mark the “**as**” and “**so**.” The “**as**” of suffering makes us appreciate the “**so**” of sympathy. In the dark cloud of pain, there is the silver lining of Christ’s presence.

Abundant prayer and an abundant answer. “**Praying exceedingly**” (I Thessalonians 3:10). “**Able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think**” (Ephesians 3:20). Dr. Pierson says upon the latter passage: “There is a word in the Greek which means abundance; add a participle, and it means overabundance; add another, and it means the excess of the superfluity of abundance, and that is the word here.” With such riches in Christ for us, how rich We should be in experience!

There is no lack on the part of God. May there be no want of faith on ours.

It is said of two women who were going to a free soup kitchen, that one took a comparatively small jug, and the other took a large bedroom jug. These two women met on their way to the kitchen, when the woman with the small pitcher said, “You don’t expect to get that jug filled, do you?”

“I mean to try,” said the other woman, “for we were told to bring a jug, but the size was not stated.”

When the women got to their destination, they both had their jugs filled.

“Well,” said the woman with the small pitcher, “if I had known it, I would have fetched a big one, too.”

“Ah,” said the other, “you have got to suffer for your unbelief.”

How often do we lack because of our unbelief! “**Shall not want any good**,” is the Divine promise to the upright walker. Let us not limit the Lord, for all things are possible with Him, and to those that believe.

III - The much more of sanctification.

“**Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**” (Philippians 2:12).

While the Apostle was at Philippi, he had looked after the saints, as a nurse cares for the children under her charge, and they had made progress in their spiritual life; but now he is separated from them, he urges them to be even more devoted in their obedience to Christ, than when he was present with them.

One phase of sanctification is thus signified, in this working out of salvation. There are two things implied in this exhortation, and these are: first, that we have the salvation to work out; second, that there is not anything between us and the Lord, so that He can work unhindered through us, for we can only work out as He works within, even as the engine can only do its work by the power of the steam within it.

There is one Scripture which always seems to illustrate in a very practical and simple way, how we may work out our salvation, and that is, II Peter 1:5-8, where we are told by the Holy Spirit:

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.”

I thought at one time that it meant here, we were to add to our faith the different graces mentioned, as the bricks in a building are added, the one on the top of the other; but this implies that there may be some one or more of the graces wanting, if one is in the act of adding grace to grace. Now that is not what the Lord intended. He means that there shall not be wanting anyone of the graces mentioned, even as the good cook sees that no ingredient is lacking in the making of the cake. After supplying the flour, she supplies the butter; after supplying the butter, she adds the sugar; and after supplying the sugar, she adds the currants; and so till everything is added, thus each ingredient goes to make up the whole.

I remember a good sister in Christ who had not had very much experience in cake-making, thought she would see what she could do in that line, so she duly assailed the kitchen, and commenced operations.

After the cake was made, she asked one of the inmates of the home how she liked it, and the reply was, “It was very nice, but the plums were playing hi’dee.”

I am afraid that in the lives of many Christians, there are some of the graces lacking, and if this is the case with you, my reader, remember what the Lord has said, **“He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.”** Let us see to it that the Lord works in us, then we shall be quite able and willing to work out our salvation in a truly saintly manner; and then, as the hands of the clock tell and keep the time, because every part of the works is in good order, and in union with the spring, the motive power, so the Holy Spirit will work unhindered and ungrieved in us; thus our whole inner life will be in submission to Him, and it shall be evidenced, that we are truly the saved of the Lord.

IV - *The much more of service.*

“And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent” (II Corinthians 8:22).

“And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the Word of God without fear” (Philippians 1:14).

The one thought in each of these verses, is increased activity on the part of those named.

The nameless brother of whom Paul speaks, had been diligent in service previously, but the Apostle found him much more so, when he knew the state of the Church at Corinth. Similarly, when the saints saw the Apostle was imprisoned, they became much more bold in proclaiming the Gospel. This is as it should be. Too often, circumstances retard workers in Christian service, instead of being a stimulus to greater zeal.

Dr. John G. Paton, in speaking of the outcome of the trials and difficulties that he had passed through, in the earlier experiences of his mission work at Tanna, says: "Oftentimes while passing through the perils and defeats of my first years, in the mission in Tanna, I wondered why God permitted such things. But on looking back now, I already clearly perceive, that the Lord was thereby preparing me for doing greater things, and providing me materials wherewith to accomplish the best work of all, in being the instrument under God of sending out missionaries to the New Hebrides, to claim another island, and yet another, for Jesus. That work, and all that may spring from it in time and eternity, never could have been accomplished by me, but for first the sufferings, and then the story of my Tanna enterprise"

If workers are taken away, or circumstances arise that would seem to engulf the work, let us make these a means of grace, to spur us on to more zealousness of purpose, and diligent, prayerful, dependent service. The writer well remembers one Christian worker, who had a class of young women, being called into the mission field in North Africa, and the members of the class thought the class would decrease in numbers and interest. The cousin of the worker took it up with fear and trembling, but with prayerful trust in the Lord. The consequence was, the class trebled its members.

It is for us to remember that the work is the Lord's, and if He buries His workers, He carries on the work, for He is the Great Worker, and therefore can do without anyone of us.

Think of some of the similes which the Lord uses in reminding us of our position in the Christian service.

- We are witnesses to tell what He has done, and what He is able to do.
- We are ambassadors who are sent forth with the message of the Gospel and with instructions from the Lord Himself as to its delivery. - We are the nets to be used by the most skilful of all Fishermen.
- We are the baskets to carry the seed of the Word that the Divine Sower scatters.
- We are vessels that contain the treasures of the Gospel, which are carried by the best of Servants.
- We are the instruments that are to be taken up by the Lord to accomplish His purpose; and
- We are the arrows that the Heavenly Marksman takes, and puts to the bow of His Word in aggressive conflict against the enemies of truth and right.

May we keep our right place, and then verily we shall not only work, but be in labours more abundant.

V - *The much more of suffering.*

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:7).

What a contrast there is between gold and faith!

- There is a difference in their source: the gold is from the earth, faith is of heavenly origin.
- There is dissimilarity in their nature: gold is material, while faith is spiritual.
- There is an unlikeness in their endurance: gold is perishable, while faith leads to eternal results.
- There is a disagreement in their use: gold debases if loved, while the greater our love for faith, the more our spiritual life increases.
- There is a distinction between gold and faith in their outcome: the former is enslaving, while the latter is liberating. And
- There is dissimilitude in their testing: gold is tested, and being found pure, there the matter ends; but faith, when tested, the believer enduring the trial, it puts to his account **“honour and praise and glory,”** which shall be given when Christ comes.

What a comfort this should be to God’s suffering saints! It may seem to some that there is no brightness or newness in the future for them. It is simply the old suffering and weariness.

My suffering friend, remember there is a ministry of suffering, as well as of active service.

Call to mind the gain that the three Hebrew young men received, by being cast into the fiery furnace at Babylon. They lost their bonds, and found the company of Jesus. Do not forget that the trial of your faith is precious, and that the branch of the vine is never so near the husbandman’s hand, as when he prunes it. Therefore, suffering saint, sing upon your bed (Psalm 149:5):

“Is not the way to earthly gain through earthly grief and loss?
Rest must be won by toil and pain. The crown repays the Cross.
As woods, when shaken by the breeze, take deeper, firmer root.
As winter’s frost but makes the trees abound in Summer fruit,
So every Heaven-sent pang and throe, that Christian firmness tries,
But nerves us for our work below, and forms us for the skies.”

Many a tourist has found it trying work to ascend the Great Pyramid, but there is a pyramid of blessing which God has given His tried saints, not to tire them but to comfort them, which is to be found in II Corinthians 4:17. Here it is:

“Glory.”
“Weight of glory.”
“Eternal weight of glory.”
“Exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”
“More exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”
“Far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Now scale that height by faith (see verse 18), and see if it is not a means of consolation to you, and if it does not cause you to sing aloud on your bed. Ponder each word in the light of the Scriptures, pray over each sentence, and take the whole verse by faith, and thus make it your very own by experience.

VI.- *The much more of synthesis.*

The meaning of the word “*synthesis*,” is simply, “*a putting together*,” for instance, in surgery, it means the operation by which divided parts are united.

In this relation the Divine Word is, “**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching**” (Hebrews 10:25).

Is there not a needs be for the Church of God as a whole, and in each gathering, to carry out the above exhortation? Do we not find that there is unhappy division in the body of Christ, and that there is a needs be for the several members of the mystical body of Christ, to be put together? The one thing that brought sickness, death, and the loss of spiritual power to the saints at Corinth, was the division among them. Is it not an indicator of the spiritual state of anyone, when he neglects to attend the assemblage of God’s people? The neglect generally arises from one of the following causes: business, pleasure, secular education, a root of bitterness, or unbelief. Whatever it is, it means disobedience to our Lord, and more than that, it is treating Him with contempt, for He has said: “**Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them;**” and if we don’t come to meet Him, where is the evidence of our respect for Him, leaving out the question of love?

Ignatius has well said: “When ye frequently and in numbers meet together, the powers of Satan are overthrown, and his mischief is neutralized by our likemindedness in the faith.”

And besides, our meeting together for prayer, and remembering the Lord’s death, is an illustration of our being together with the Lord when He comes again.

It is significant that the word which is translated, “**assembling of ourselves together,**” only occurs in one other place, and that is, II Thessalonians 2:1, which speaks of “**our gathering together unto Him.**”

The assembling of ourselves together for Christian communion, is an earnest of our being gathered together to Him at His appearing.

Union is strength; continual assemblings beget and foster love, and give opportunities for provoking to good works by exhorting one another. Let us, therefore, stir each other up, that we may be in unison. in worship and work, and the more so, for the day is approaching, and the coming of the Lord draws near.

VII - *The much more of severity.*

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven” (Hebrews 12:25).

The bleached bones of the children of Israel in the wilderness, are a testimony as to the hardening power of unbelief, and the punishment that overtook God’s people in consequence.

We are warned of the evil effect of a heart of unbelief. We must not think we shall escape punishment, if we refuse to obey our Leader, for we have a greater than Moses, even Christ.

Remember the warnings that Christ gave to the seven Churches, and how each message ends with, **“He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith.”**

If we refuse to obey what the Lord says in reference to:

- Pureness of heart (I Peter 1:22),
- Separation from the world (II Corinthians 6:14-18),
- Whole-heartedness in Christian life (Philippians 1:21),
- Clearness in testimony of the truth (Jude 3),
- The being filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18),
- Prayerful dependence upon the Lord (Philippians 4:6),
- Humble submission to Himself (I Peter 3:15).

Then we place ourselves under His chastening hand (I Corinthians 11:32), and what we would not learn by prayerful obedience to His Word, we have to be taught by painful suffering.

Let us rejoice in these **“much mores”** of our risen, living, coming Lord, and live in the power of them, by abiding in communion with Him every day of our life, and then it shall be lit up with the indwelling presence of our Lord, and others shall be drawn to Him through us. [105]

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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