

Thoughts of Jesus

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Peace throughout the world is the desire of mankind. Yet peace between nations and between individuals cannot exist until each man but peace within himself. Peace must first be a personal thing and only through trust in God will man find it for himself. This is the beginning of all peace, and this is the topic of Frederick Lee's thoughts. This book describes how you can eliminate your inner conflicts and be happy with yourself and with others.

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Thoughts of Jesus

JESUS, THE VERY THOUGHT OF THEE

J e s u s , t h e v e r y t h o u g h t o f T h e e , W i t h s w e e t n e s s f i l l s m y b r e a s t ; B u t
s w e e t e r f a r T h y f a c e t o s e e , A n d i n T h y p r e s e n c e r e s t .

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
The Savior of mankind.

O hope of every contrite heart!
O joy of all the meek,
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! this
Nor tongue nor pen can show:
The love of Jesus-what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our prize wilt be;
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

How Well Do You Know Him?

PICTURE a throng of people on the shore of Galilee near Capernaum. They have been waiting since early morning for the return of Jesus. As He steps from the boat in which He has been sailing, the eager expectant multitude press close upon Him. Curious, they follow Him into the village to the home of Matthew.

While the people stand in the crowded street, wondering what this new day will bring forth, Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, appears, and calls upon Jesus to come and help his daughter, who is at the point of death.

Now Jesus comes forth as He responds to this plea. He walks along beside the ruler as best He can with the people surrounding Him. In that throng is a poor afflicted woman. She has spent all she had on many physicians, but was "nothing bettered" and "rather grew worse," as the Sacred Record states. She has heard of the healing power of this great Man of Galilee. She has summoned her waning strength and joined the crowd as they wait for Him.

Now, how can she possibly get near Him? The press of the people almost suffocates her. It seems that she will fail of her purpose.

But wait! The heart of this woman thrills as she sees Jesus coming toward her. He seems to be seeking her out! Yes, He is almost at arm's length! Daring not to speak to Him, she says to herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." What a faith is this! There He is before her. She may never be so close to Him again. So stooping quickly, she puts forth her hand and touches His garment as He slowly passes by.

At once the woman feels a thrill go through her body. Triumphantly she stands up and turns aside, not daring to attract attention by speaking to Jesus. But the Great Physician knows what has taken place.

Indeed, the deep longing and simple faith of this poor woman draw Him closer to her so that she might have an opportunity to touch Him.

Now Jesus speaks. "Who touched me?" He says. As usual, the impetuous Peter, not knowing what is going on, but wanting to say something, speaks up, "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and says thou, Who touched me?"

Jesus replies, "Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." Then turning to the timid woman, He says, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

This inspiring chapter in the life of Jesus reveals His thoughtfulness and compassion for the weak and lonely, those lost in the crowd. We like to read it again and again. But let us not overlook the most important lesson there is in it for us.

Many in that throng were pressed close to the side of Jesus as they drifted along with the crowd, but only one consciously, voluntarily, hopefully touched Him and obtained the blessing she needed so much. There was no virtue in her touch. That would be superstition. But the faith that prompted the touch, the deep longing that urged the woman on, brought her healing. Yes, just one deliberate touch was sufficient to release her from her ills and answer her prayers. What a difference there was between the casual touch of the crowd and the conscious touch of this poor sick woman!

"Just one touch as He moves along, Pushed and pressed by the jostling throng, Just one touch and the weak was strong, Cured by the Healer divine."

"The Savior could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual contact of the careless throng." "To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul-hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as a Savior of the world, can never bring healing to the soul." - *The Desire of Ages*, pages 344, 347.

Two persons may attend the same service. One will come away blessed; the other will experience no special uplift. The first will talk of the spiritual lessons brought out by the speaker. The other will refer to his oratory, his appearance, and say, perhaps, "Wasn't that a wonderful sermon?" but remember little of its content.

Two persons will be observing the same scene. One giving it a casual look will say of the trees, "How beautiful!" But the other sees the trees and much more, and besides, thinks of the Creator who made them all for our enjoyment.

Would you like to know Jesus better? Casual contact with Him will be of little help. To see Him in the throng of some great meeting, to read about Him in some book, to listen to others talk about Him, will not give you the personal, conscious contact with Him that you must have if you wish to truly know Him.

The frail woman of Galilee could have seen Him at a distance, and thrilled at the sight, but she never would have been healed if she had not pressed close to Him and in conscious faith touched Him.

The thoughtless contact of the multitude drew no virtue from Jesus. Being near to Him that day did not bring the deep satisfaction and fullness of joy to most of those people that it might have done. So it may be with us who would know Him better. We may meet Him in prayer. We may see Him revealed in the Scriptures. But unless the heart is in these devotions and the mind attentive to them, we will receive no healing balm.

The thoughtless repetition of prayers and the indifferent perusal of Sacred Scripture may leave us as barren as the hills of Gilboa. What a pity that we do not consciously tap these reservoirs of blessing and clear the channel into our souls for receiving the water of life.

"Prayer and preaching, without the exercise of living faith in God, will be in vain. But the touch of faith opens to us the divine treasure house of power and wisdom. . . . This living faith is our great need today." *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 288.

It was the conscious, deliberate touch of faith that wrought such great blessing for the woman of Galilee. Though she was one of a multitude that followed the Lord, it was this that separated her from others and brought her the release from pain that they missed.

It was not great faith that she possessed, only enough to say as she approached her Lord, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole," and to act upon it. Can we not do as much?

Would you like to receive the help, the comfort, the joy, that others are finding in Jesus? Then you must feel your need of the blessings that only He can give you. You must have more than a nodding acquaintance with Him. You must deliberately and hopefully search Him out and cultivate His friendship. This is the only way that we learn to know our earthly friends. How could it be otherwise with this heavenly Friend?

Now, open your Bible with a new and prayerful purpose. Peruse every detail that describes the life of Jesus. Study the prophecies and promises that relate to Him. Read the Bible as the life record of a Person. Learn all you can about Him as Creator, as Leader and

Deliverer of Israel, as Son of man, as Substitute and Mediator, as coming Redeemer and King. There is so much to learn about Him. And the better you know Him, the more you will love Him.

Your Friend and Mine

JESUS loved people. It did not take very long for the dwellers of Judea and Galilee to find this out. Everywhere He went, men, women, and children gathered about Him, not because they were curious, but because they felt a sense of warmth in His presence.

Jesus had times when He withdrew to some secluded place for meditation, but these were generally when the people were asleep, late at night or in the early morning. As soon as the marketplace began to hum with activity or the Temple courts were filling with the throng, there you would find this friendly Person.

As He goes about, you see Him stop to chat with the merchantman, inquiring as to his business, dropping a word about goodly pearls.

Perchance He meets one blind, and you hear Him say, "Son, how came you to such a fate? Wouldst thou be made whole?"

Again, He sees a mother carrying a babe in her arms as she passes by, and He stops to give the little one a smile and a caress with His gentle hand. Then you see Him enter a home where He remains for some time, conversing with the family.

Jesus did not hold Himself aloof from anyone. Jews, Gentiles, Roman soldiers, people of every class-how He loved them and longed to linger with them on friendly terms.

But He had a holy purpose in all this. It was not to gratify some fleshly desire, some social instinct, or to pass the time in idle gossip. When the Pharisees criticized Him for eating with publicans and sinners, He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Matthew 9:12, 13.

He was in truth the friend of sinners as they called Him, for all men are sinners and in need of His friendly ministration.

What would have happened to Mary Magdalene if He had not shown a real interest in her welfare after her repeated delinquencies?

How would Peter have been restored to full discipleship after his fall if on the resurrection morn Jesus had not shown a special anxiety for his well-being? It was Jesus no doubt, who told the angel guard to notify His disciples "and Peter" (Mark 16:7) that He would meet His appointment in Galilee, meaning that He would like to see Peter there along with the other disciples.

Would the wayward woman of Samaria have found deliverance from her sins if Jesus had not loved to converse with anyone who would respond to His friendly approach?

God sent His only-begotten Son into the world to save sinners because He loved them. It was this same love and real interest that sent Jesus here and there over the countryside, speaking to this one and that one, at times loitering beside the road or at some wayside home to enjoy the companionship of strangers. Yes. we do well to sing:

"What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and grief to bear."

And what of the multitude that followed Jesus so persistently? Concerning them Matthew records: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." Matthew 9:35, 36.

Jesus loved the multitudes. He was never fretful with them or annoyed because they ran after Him when they discovered where He was. This was the great test of His friendliness. Sometimes they wearied Him and allowed Him no rest, but still He continued to talk with them, giving them words of comfort and counsel and patiently answering their questions.

One day as Jesus was journeying toward Jerusalem, He paused in a certain village, as usual, to visit the people. While He taught and healed, some of the mothers of the place came to see Him, bringing their children with them for Him to touch, and perhaps to bless. The disciples, in their brusque manner, rebuked the mothers for bothering Jesus when He was ministering unto the people, but Jesus was displeased with this, and said unto them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Mark 10:14.

Matthew, relating the experience, says, "He laid his hands on them," but Mark adds this personal touch: "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

The warmth of Jesus' soul is evident from the way children liked to be in His presence. The gospel mentions His loving concern for children on several occasions. He could not have been austere and sad in His appearance, or they would have turned from Him. It has been said that Jesus was never seen to smile. We are told that Jesus wept, but we do not need to be told that He smiled when we read how He took the children in His arms.

We speak of Jesus as Lord and Master, as Creator and Redeemer, as Prince and King, but the terms that draw Him closest to us are Brother and Friend. This relationship was emphasized by the Savior as He was about to face the cruel cross. Then it was that He said to His disciples: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:13-16.

How thankful we can be that we have a Friend in the courts of God. There before the throne stands Jesus pleading for our cause.

The Lonely Man of Nazareth

HOW seldom we think of the loneliness of Jesus. We read about Him teaching the multitude by the sea, on the hilltop, in the Temple. We note that even as He walked from village to village He was not alone. The disciples were with Him; the sick and distressed pursued Him.

Nevertheless, after a closer inspection of His life we shall see that Jesus was the loneliest of men. Most truly He was not of the world. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:10, 11. He was indeed a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth.

Have you ever lived in a foreign land? You cannot understand what the people are saying. They think you are odd and peculiar. They smile as you have difficulty in making your wants known. Because of this handicap you feel weak and ineffective. You are an outsider. Outlandish is the word that best pictures your plight. But suppose you learn to speak the language, dress in the native garb, live as the people do, and still they look upon you as one not of them—a foreigner. You may mingle with the people, yet there is not that comfortable feeling of being among your own, who receive you as one with them, and who give you sympathetic understanding no matter what you say and do. None but those who have passed through such an experience can know the depths of loneliness.

Under these circumstances home beckons with a radiance such as you never realized before. It is the place where you long to be. You dream about it night and day. You see father and mother seated beside you at the table spread with food that refreshes because it is the kind you are used to. You think of the scenes along a village street or a country lane where you played as a boy. Oh, how you'd like to go home! But that cannot be. And then what loneliness sweeps over you.

Think you that Jesus never thought of home? Home—where the angels adored Him and He communed with His Father face to face. Home—where the wants of His sensitive nature could best be met. Home—where no tear fell, where suffering was absent, and where life was sweet. Home—where the struggle against sin and temptation was unknown. Yes, the Man of Nazareth must have thought often of home!

The most lonely place you can find is the crowded streets of a great city. People press against you and hurry on. None nods recognition. None shows any interest in your welfare. Thus it was with Jesus as He went up and down old Palestine. He was there to bless others, to give the needy a kindly look and the helpless a healing touch. But who looked upon Him with tenderness? Who ran out to give Him a drink?

One would think that the little group of disciples who were closest to Jesus, upon whom He spent so much time and affection, would comprehend and appreciate His mission. But how often they failed to give Him sympathetic understanding.

One time toward the close of Christ's ministry, when He was greatly troubled in spirit, He invited three of His disciples to go with Him to a remote place to pray. The disciples seemed unaware of His struggle of soul, nor were they conscious of the wonderful privilege that was theirs. When Jesus went apart to pray they slept. But when they suddenly awakened they saw Jesus wrapped in the glory of heaven and two men talking with Him, whom they recognized as Moses and Elias. Being unconscious of the significant and

wonderful happenings, Peter, “not knowing what he said,” idly remarked after the glory had departed, “Master, it is good for us to be here.” Luke 9:32, 33.

How lonely Jesus must have felt when the glimpse of His heavenly home disappeared, and He was left with those earthly friends who were so slow of understanding.

But later He was to have an experience that brought Him even greater disappointment and agony of heart. That was in those last hours before His betrayal, while He was wrestling out His soul problem with God in the Garden of Gethsemane. Peter, James, and John again were with Him. He had told them of His coming betrayal and death. Now that His hour of suffering had come, He asked them to pray with Him. But they little understood how much He needed their sympathy and support. As He returned from His first season of prayer and found them asleep, with sorrow He rebuked them, saying, “What, could ye not watch with me one hour?”

Now He knew that He could expect little help from earthly friends. As the Scriptures had prophesied, He must tread the wine press alone. (Isaiah 63:3.) No man has ever been so lonely as Jesus was that night. The leaders of His people had rejected Him as an intruder. One of His disciples was about to betray Him. And His closest friends on earth seemed wholly unaware of His inward conflict.

There are other experiences that reveal how little these men who had lived with Him and studied under Him as the master teacher comprehended His life objectives. At the close of His teaching work, when He was giving His disciples one of His last discourses, He referred to His Father. As He did so Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father.” This request seemed to come as a surprise to Jesus, for all along He had made it known that He was in their midst revealing the Father.

With what a pathetic sense of failure He replied, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how says thou then, Show us the Father.” John 14:9.

Again, at the very time when He was to depart this life and return to His home in heaven, how utterly disappointing to Him must have been the words of the disciples, “Will thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel.” Acts 1:6. Surely He had made it plain that His kingdom was not of this world, and that His was a spiritual mission. But He could wait no longer, for the time had come to leave them. He could only hope that after His departure they might better understand what He had said and done.

One thing He had done. He had opened the way of salvation for lost mankind. But what little evidence He had that day that His efforts had been successful. Except for the fact of His personal triumph over sin and the grave, there was little to encourage His heart as the result of His thirty-three years of sojourn among men.

The dark shadow of loneliness hovered over Jesus all through His life. We are told that in His youth “many avoided Him, because they were rebuked by His stainless life,” and that His brothers and village companions -were impatient at His scruples, and pronounced Him narrow and strait-laced.” The Desire of Ages, page 89.

“Through childhood, youth, and manhood, Jesus walked alone. In His purity and His faithfulness, He trod the wine-press alone, and of His people there was none with Him.” - Ibid., page 92.

“No one upon earth had understood Him, and during His ministry He must still walk alone. Throughout His life His mother and His brothers did not comprehend His mission. Even His disciples did not understand Him. He had dwelt in eternal light, as one with God, but His life on earth must be spent in solitude.” -Ibid., Page 111.

“His sensitive nature was tortured, His motives were misunderstood, His work uncomprehended.”

How revealing are the words: “Jesus walked alone in the midst of men.... He had dwelt amid the love and fellowship of heaven; but in the world that He had created, He was in solitude.” Ibid., page 422.

This is the picture that we have of the lonely Jesus. Are you ever lonely? Jesus understands and cares. He knows your heartaches and disappointments. He notes your sorrow when friends and loved ones depart or fail you, and longs to fill the void with sweet companionship.

Jesus knew the bitterness of seeming failure as He beheld His weary and bewildered flock; He knew the agony of hesitation when the cup trembled in His hand. Think you that you are as alone in your trial as He was in His? Never! For the loving, faithful Jesus is always near, waiting your beck and call. “Behold, says He, “I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Revelation 3:20. What glorious assurance for the lonely!

WHERE JESUS REIGNS

“Where Jesus reigns there is no fear,
No restless doubt, no hopeless tear,
No base deceit nor faithless prayer,
No angry strife or weak despair,
No greed for gain nor selfish pride,
No bitterness for aught denied,
No evil tongue, no cruel arm,
No envy, hate, nor wish to harm,
No wicked lust nor trace of stains,
But all is pure where Jesus reigns.

“Where Jesus reigns there is no night,
For He is wisdom, love, and light;
No raging sea nor tempest dread,
But quietness and calm instead;
No anxious care, no blind unrest,
No heavy heart by guilt oppressed,
No discontent, no gloomy days,
But highest hope and sweetest praise;
No stumbling oft nor galling chains,
No shame nor sin where Jesus reigns.

“Where Jesus reigns there's joy untold,
There's wealth that's richer far than gold,
There's service glad and courage true,
There's power to be and strength to do,
There's sacrifice and sweet content,
There's grace divine in mercy sent,
There's triumph over self and sin,
And blessed peace abides within;
There's truest faith that never wanes
There's love supreme where Jesus reigns.”

Selected

The Gentle Jesus

WE HAVE talked much about the majesty of the Lord, His miraculous power, His triumph over the tomb. We like to think of Him as He rebuked the waves and commanded the winds to be still, and again as He called forth Lazarus from the tomb, or when He denounced the Pharisees, or drove the merchants from the Temple courts. We feel that at such times He revealed His full stature. But are we right about that?

Isaiah portrays Jesus in different terms. This is what he says: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights. . . . He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.” Isaiah 42:1-4.

This is not a picture of a spectacular personality, one who moved about to be seen of men, or to curry favor with the great of earth. He would shun fame and praise. His eye would be upon the weak and helpless. And even the outcast would feel the persistent ministrations of One who would not be discouraged in His efforts to bless the needy.

Again the prophet said of Him, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” Isaiah 40:11.

How gently the Lord dealt with the wayward Mary. How patient He was with impetuous Peter, intolerant James and John, the sons of thunder, and yes, the treacherous Judas. He knew how to discriminate between the weak, the proud, the arrogant, the deceptive, and the sincere ones. His touch was gentle, except on special occasions when He had to rebuke the hardened hypocrites. Even then, we are told, “tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes.” - *The Desire of Ages*, page 353.

The gentleness of Jesus is beautifully illustrated in the phrase “the smoking flax shall he not quench.” He turns not aside when His overtures are first rejected. He comes again and again to awaken one's lagging interest in spiritual things.

Many a time in the Orient I have watched while the dying embers of a charcoal fire were fanned into flame. This is a delicate task. One must be careful not to scatter the coals, for they must gather warmth from those nearest them. And one must not be in a hurry. Impatience and rough handling may destroy whatever spark is left in the embers.

How delicate is the task of dealing with erring souls: Listen to Jesus as He says to the wayward woman, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” John 8:11. And as the masses followed Him mostly out of curiosity, and desire, perhaps, for some material gain, leaving Him no time for rest, it is said of Him that when He saw the multitude He “was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd.” Mark 6:34.

David, writing of Christ in the immortal twenty-third psalm, presents this same picture of the Shepherd of Bethlehem. “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters.... I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. . . . Thou anoints my head with oil; my cup runs over.”

Here we find the tender solicitation and attention of a shepherd beautifully portrayed. There is guidance but not rebuke. Even the rod in his hand brings comfort. The wanderer is retrieved and given something more precious than the thing he sought. The shepherd is near in sickness or in want. His goodness and mercy follow his charges all their days.

Paul tells us that it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance, and not His denunciations. (Romans 2:4.) We need to think of Jesus in this light and seek to emulate this outstanding virtue of His character.

All too often those who are zealous for the Lord show little of this gentle touch. It is too easy for one who has strong convictions in religious belief to strike sledge-hammer blows when he needs to use the delicate touch of the watchmaker. We are told: “With tender compassion should brother deal with brother. Delicately should he deal with feelings. It is the nicest and most important work that ever yet was done to touch the wrongs of another.”

To win a soul for Christ is not a project that one dare begin thoughtlessly. The method of approach is as important as the message to be delivered. There must be a keen sense of discrimination. All cannot be dealt with alike. Many a man has stopped his ears to the truth because he felt that he had been misjudged or that his sensibilities had been disregarded. Heavy dogmatic strokes, condemnatory words, dire warnings, and tactless aggressiveness turn many a sensitive, sincere soul away.

This is all true in winning men to Christ. It is likewise true in our seeking to keep them in the Christian way. How often someone will rise in the church and, with careless denunciations, endeavor to bring about some needed reform. This is the very thing that will hinder the work of the Spirit of God on hearts sorely in need of His blessed ministrations.

“Whenever you see or hear something that needs to be corrected, seek the Lord for wisdom and grace, that in trying to be faithful you may not be severe. It is always humiliating to have one's errors pointed out. Do not make the experience more bitter by needless censure. Unkind criticism brings discouragement, making life sunless and unhappy.

“My brethren, prevail by love rather than by severity. When one at fault becomes conscious of his error, be careful not to destroy his self-respect. Do not seek to bruise and wound, but rather to bind up and heal.”-Gospel Workers, page 496.

Would you be great in the eyes of God? Great in the work of reclaiming men and women from the error of their ways? Then consider this word of David written in a day of triumph over his enemies: “Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy gentleness hath made me great.” 2 Samuel 22:36.

The Courageous Jesus

THE natural meekness and humility of Jesus was not an evidence of cowardice. On many occasions He manifested great courage and boldness. He was unafraid in the presence of men, and did not hesitate to declare the truth of God in uncompromising terms when He felt it was necessary to do so.

In the early days of His ministry we find Him in the Temple court. As He stands apart from the throng He observes the noisy buying and selling in the sacred precincts. He notes the frauds and extortion perpetrated in the name of religion. He sees the priests watching the transactions from which they reap unrighteous gain.

A feeling of holy indignation rises within the heart of Jesus. His searching eyes begin to flash with the majesty of Heaven.

Unconsciously the attention of the traffickers is drawn toward Him. They begin to realize that something startling is about to happen. And they do not have long to wait. Suddenly, like the voice of doom, they hear this Stranger cry, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." The response is like the rush of men before a storm. Soon the confusion is hushed, and there is silence in the Temple courts.

This was not an easy thing for Jesus to do. Should He not have been more cautious? How did He dare strike at the heart of priestly rule? Would not His mission be hindered by such bold tactics? But no such thoughts were harbored when He had an unpleasant but righteous task to perform. It was never for personal reasons that He exercised caution.

Jesus had come to do a work of reform. Of course, He could not be running through the land at all times striking down evil with the lash as He did that day. Nevertheless, it was necessary for Him on certain occasions to reveal this holy boldness, and then He did not hesitate to do it.

We see Him again during the latter days of His work on earth, when He faced a group of scribes and Pharisees who had joined the multitude to listen to His teaching in the Temple courts. These insincere leaders of the people had been drawing Him out with questions to see whether they could trap Him, and thus have greater reason to condemn Him as a traitor to His people. For a long time the priests had tried to press Him into a corner, that they might attack Him and nullify His work.

Not for Himself did He cry out against their hypocrisy and evil deeds that day, but to expose them before the people who crowded about Him. Never has anyone uttered more scathing denunciations against a religious hierarchy still able to wield the power of life or death. But this mattered not to Jesus. He feared not to denounce their illicit traffic in souls, their oppression of the poor, their unholy pride, their blind conformity to tradition. That day was a high point in His earthly ministry. And it brought Him grief, as He knew it would.

These were strange words to come from One so humble: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold?" "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Matthew 23:13-17, 23, 24.

This was a task that Jesus did not enjoy. Much rather would He gather the little children about Him and bless them, comfort a brokenhearted mother, or teach things that pertained to eternal life.

It was with no unholy zeal that Jesus scattered His words of woe, woe, woe that day. He did not utter the words because of some personal issue. Even when He was haled before rulers and councils, and false witnesses spoke against Him, He answered not a word. But when the honor of His Father was at stake, He spoke up without thought of how it might affect His own standing.

No, it was not without soul searching and daily communion with the Father on behalf of sinners that He took up the sword to slay the unrepentant. We are told that when He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, "tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes." Steps to Christ, page 12.

Let no one who feels called to a work of reform and denunciation of wrong find comfort in the fact that Christ did a similar work.

Let all such be sure that they are as ready to go to Calvary for those whom they would condemn as Jesus was for the evildoers of His day. Not until we have learned to love the sinner as Jesus did will we be ready to reprove the erring.

But in doing this we must be like our Lord, who, though compelled to denounce sin, still loved the sinner. Zeal for the cause of God must never take the form of personal battle. Whether we personally win or lose in an argument is of little moment. The great thing that matters is whether we are advancing the cause of truth and righteousness. All thought of self must be laid aside when we rise to defend our faith. We must be sure that it is holy boldness that we are manifesting rather than an unholy rashness born of self-righteous pride.

The important thing is not that we do a good work but how we do it. An intemperate, prideful spirit has wrecked many a good cause. It was this that Jesus avoided in all His ministry, His thought being, "Not I, but the Father." Today in all our labor we too should say and feel, "Not I, but Christ."

The Joys of Jesus

THE character of a man is revealed by the things that give him the greatest joy. Where does he seek his pleasure? What brings him the most satisfaction? How does he spend his leisure time? Answers to such questions are very significant.

What do we find when we look into the life of Jesus? As we follow Him about with the disciples, where does He take us? What do we hear Him talking about much of the time?

Although we know very little concerning the thirty-three years of Jesus' life on earth, yet enough has been recorded to give us an insight into the character of this Man who pleased God. Two things are very evident, we believe: His love of nature and His love of home.

One of the most poignant facts in the life of Jesus was His lack of a home of His own, where there was understanding and comfort. One who gave such tender consideration to women and children, and who evidently found great comfort in addressing God as His Father, could not have been stoically unmindful of the joys to be found in a happy home. But did He have one? No. That He felt the grievous lack is seen in these pathetic words spoken to a man who wanted to follow Him: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matthew 8:20.

Jesus' home in Nazareth, where He was reared, was not one to draw Him thither. There had always been contentions over His strange ways. He had brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55, 56; Mark 6:3) who had little regard for His mission. In early life they were unsympathetic with Him. He was often the object of their censure.

Concerning this, we have this comment: "They [his brothers] were greatly annoyed at the clear penetration of Jesus in distinguishing between the false and the true. His strict obedience to the law of God they condemned as stubbornness. . . . His brothers felt that His influence went far to counteract theirs. He possessed a tact which none of them had, or desired to have. When they spoke harshly to poor, degraded beings, Jesus sought out these very ones, and spoke to them words of encouragement. . . . All this displeased His brothers. Being older than Jesus, they felt that He should be under their dictation. They charged Him with thinking Himself superior to them, and reproved Him for setting Himself above their teachers, and the priests and rulers of the people." *The Desire of Ages*, pages 86, 87.

After Jesus had fully entered upon His work and began to raise the wrath of the Pharisees, His brothers thought it necessary to seek Him out in the hope of persuading Him to cease His labors or to be more circumspect in His attitude toward the leaders in Israel. Of this we read:

"They felt keenly the reproach that came upon them through their relation to Jesus. They knew what a tumult His words and works created, and were not only alarmed at His bold statements, but indignant at His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees. They decided that He must be persuaded or constrained to cease this manner of labor, and they induced Mary to unite with them, thinking that through His love for her they might prevail upon Him to be more prudent." - *Ibid.*, page 321.

In spite of His unfortunate experiences in His own home life, Jesus often referred to marriage and the home and sought to lift them to a higher plane than they had ever known before.

In His statement, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26), He wished to convey the idea that to give up wife and children and family relationships is the supreme sacrifice that man can make.

And how often He showed special attention to women in their sorrows, their sicknesses, and their spiritual needs. Jesus' attitude toward little children reveals the fondness He had for them. On many occasions He used them as examples to follow. Thus He said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:1

Denied the human satisfaction of love and understanding in His own borne, Jesus found them to some extent elsewhere. A humble home in the little town of Bethany for a time supplied the restful retreat among loved ones for which His soul often longed. No more beautiful picture is given of His life on earth than the one recorded by Luke, where the apostle describes a visit of Jesus to the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. (Luke 10:38-42.) How typical it is, Martha showing her love in service, Mary showing it in attention to His words. Though Jesus rebuked the one and commended the other, that does not mean that He did not find satisfaction in the tender

ministrations of that homebody, Martha. Of this home we are told: "At the home of Lazarus, Jesus had often found rest. The Savior had no home of His own; He was dependent on the hospitality of His friends and disciples; and often, when weary, thirsting for human fellowship, He had been glad to escape to this peaceful household, away from the suspicion and jealousy of the angry Pharisees. Here He found a sincere welcome, and pure, holy friendship.

Here He could speak with simplicity and perfect freedom, knowing that His words would be understood and treasured." - The Desire of Ages, page 524.

Then we must not forget the tender love that Jesus manifested for His own mother in the very last hours of His life when, looking down from the cross, and turning to John, He said, -Behold thy mother!" meaning, of course, that He was committing the keeping of His mother to faithful John. (John 19:25-27.)

Next to the joys of home were the thrills that Jesus found as He observed the world of nature. It was amid nature in childhood that He learned to know God and His creative power. Often He would escape from the contention of His home to the hillside, where He found release as He watched the birds on the wing, viewed the waving fields of wheat, and took note of the flowers.

How often He used the objects of nature to illustrate spiritual truths. It was easy for Him to say: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow"; "Behold the fowls of the air"; "A man went forth to sow"; "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed"; "I am the vine, ye are the branches"; "Learn a parable of the fig tree"; "The harvest is the end of the world"; "First the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear."

We are told that Jesus' "hours of greatest happiness were found when He could turn aside from the scene of His labors to go into the fields, to meditate in the quiet valleys, to hold communion with God on the mountainside, or amid the trees of the forest."

Again and again in the Gospels we read of Jesus seeking retreat in the mountains, far from the hurrying throng. He gathered the multitude on the mountainside, where He could point out the beauties of nature and speak of its wonders. He desired to turn away their thoughts from the works of man.

Man's natural state is in the country, surrounded by the living objects of God's creative hand. The city is his invention. It is here that he is most likely to forget God, amid the ceaseless striving for gain, the restless seeking for unholy thrills. It is here that man reveals his superficial character.

Jesus illustrated His greatest joy in the parable of the lost sheep. After telling how the shepherd went out into the desert and the mountains in search of the straying one, He said, "And when he hath found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." Then He adds, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Luke 15:5-7.

In telling of His purpose in life Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10. How His soul must have rejoiced as He saw men and women turn from their wicked ways and follow Him. And how He loved the little flock He had gathered out from the world. With what tender solicitude He prayed for them, "I pray for them. . . which thou hast given me. . . Holy Father, keep through your own name those whom thou hast given me." John 17:9-11. Thus it will be with His true followers today.

The Patience of Jesus

JESUS was the perfect example of patience in all its varied shades of meaning. He was self-possessed in the face of provocation. He suffered trial and affliction without complaining. He persevered in the course He had undertaken until His work was finished. He endured as a good soldier, holding on in faith and confidence when the way was dark and the outcome seemed uncertain.

We too should seek to possess this all-important virtue of saints. In Hebrews we are bidden, "Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted." Hebrews 12:3, Revised Standard Version.

Consider Jesus as He meets His avowed enemy in the wilderness at a time when His own body is faint from fasting. He does not shrink from the battle but rises calmly to the challenge. At each thrust of the devil Jesus confidently replies with a text of Scripture.

He fires no blast of vituperation. He makes no accusations. He merely tells this angel of darkness to consider what God has said. Satan had no weapon against such self-possession and such persistent faith. So he left Him.

Again we see Jesus in the latter end of His life as He stands before His accusers in the court of Caiaphas and Pilate's judgment hall. His composure was astonishing. We are told that as the ignorant rabble and court guards mocked and derided Jesus, "His meekness, His innocence, His majestic patience, filled them with hatred born of Satan." The Desire of Ages, page 710.

Again as Pilate talked with Jesus, seeking information from Him, we are told that "Jesus gave him no answer." When the governor said, "Speak thou not unto me? Know thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." John 19: 10, 11.

There was no blustering self-defense, only patient endurance of the ordeal through which He must pass. Jesus' patience in dealing with men is illustrated in His relation to Peter. This disciple was a most impetuous person. He had little control over his emotions. He seemed always to be the first to speak up, the first to proclaim his loyalty, and the first to change his mind.

How he must have troubled the Master and tried His patience. But Jesus knew the heart of the impulsive fisherman, and He was determined to make something of him for the glory of God.

Jesus warned Peter that he would forsake and deny his Lord. Peter vehemently protested that this could never be. But he was not long in finding out that Jesus was right. That very day found him denying Him in a most shameful manner.

If Jesus had revealed any impatience with Peter at that time, He would have lost a good convert. In one look Jesus revealed His love for and confidence in His wayward disciple. It was this that both broke the heart of Peter and also gave him hope for a new start.

Jesus' emphasis on patient continuance in well-doing and persistence in a right course of action is well illustrated in His life and parables. We note this in His dealings with the curious multitude, with His trying disciples, with the prying scribes and Pharisees, and in His parables of the importunate widow (Luke 18:18), the barren fig tree (Luke 13:6-9), the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5-10), the hidden treasure (Matthew 13:44), the goodly pearl (verses 45, 46), and the lost sheep (Matthew 18:11-14).

In His teaching concerning His second coming Jesus drew attention to the need of patient endurance. Thus He said: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matthew 24:13. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36.

He warned against the feeling of weariness that would lead one to say, "My lord delays his coming," and give up hope. (Matthew 24:48.)

Jesus waited through a lifetime for a vindication of His mission to the world. Not until He conquered the tomb, ascended on high, and sent the promised Spirit at Pentecost did men begin to know the full import of His life and work.

We too may have to wait long for a fulfillment of our faith and hope. For years the imminence of Christ's coming has been preached. Many who had anticipated seeing the Lord's Advent have gone to their graves. Shall we lose heart because of this? No, like Jesus, we must have the virtue of patient endurance, and hold on to our hope and purpose so long as life shall last, or until our hopes be fulfilled.

Thus it is that the people who wait for the second coming of the Lord are characterized by God as those who have patience, meaning endurance and continuance. (Revelation 14:12.) Again and again the Scriptures call our attention to this valuable Christian asset. Paul wrote to the Romans: "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Romans 8:25. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Romans 2:6, 7.

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord, we read in James 5:7. "Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

In the Revelation we are admonished: "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come." Revelation 2:25. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Revelation 3:11.

Finally that oft-quoted text of Scripture comes to mind: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:35-37.

The Unobtrusive Jesus

LET us follow Jesus that resurrection day late in the afternoon as He turns down the Emmaus road. Where is He going? What are His plans on this momentous day? Why is He leaving the great city when His closest disciples had not yet seen Him since His triumph over the tomb? He must be on some important mission. We shall see.

Hastening on, Jesus approaches two men who seem to be in deep discussion as they slowly walk along the rough and winding road. Accommodating His stride to theirs, He silently joins them, and listens to their conversation as is done so often in Oriental lands.

So unobtrusive has He been in this seemingly unplanned course that the forlorn travelers continue their talk, unconscious of His presence.

As they speak of recent events that had to do with the loss of One who was dearly loved, and express their grief and disappointment, tears flow down their cheeks. And yet this very One is by their side!

Jesus hesitates to rudely tear aside the veil that makes them unaware of His presence. Very tactfully He enters into their conversation.

The disciples seem wounded and troubled. Indeed they are offended by the actions of their Lord. He who had healed the sick, cast out devils, could He not have delivered Himself from the wicked plotters against His life? Had He not said, too, that on the third day He would rise from the tomb? And here it is late on that day and only uncertain rumors have come to their ears about an empty tomb.

“What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?” The troubled thoughts and conversation of these men are unconsciously broken by this sign of interest on the part of the stranger who has quietly joined them.

How naturally they reply to His question, “Are thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”

This is the opportunity Jesus has been seeking. Now He can turn their thoughts in another direction. For this He has left the city streets and turned to this dusty road. How delicately He handles the conversation. He could have boldly declared, “I am your Lord and Master.” All He would have needed to do to prove His words would be to show them His nail-pierced hands, His wounded side, as He did later to doubting Thomas. But no; they are not prepared for such a sudden revelation.

Now Jesus begins to reason with them gently. What right have they to doubt? Have they not read in the Scriptures that these things must be, and has He not told them what is to happen to Him? Why are they leaving the place of His burial so soon? Have they heeded His counsel to meet Him in Galilee? Why this hasty retreat homeward? Surely the Word of God will be fulfilled. Have patience and hope.

Like the choicest ointment are these tender sympathetic words to their wounded souls. The balm of Gilead begins to do its work, and their hearts awaken to renewed hope.

Now the disciples turn to look more intently upon this Stranger. Who is this one? they question. But still they know Him not.

One more step must be taken before they fully recognize Him. Why this devious approach by the Lord of glory? Could He not then have touched their eyes saying, “Behold me, the one whom ye love and seek?” But no; still He hesitates. A crucial moment has come. They stand before the home of one of the disciples.

These men have been greatly comforted by this highway companion. As He is about to bid them farewell and pass on, they say, “Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” But Jesus does not readily accept this invitation, and not until they press Him to tarry (the Scripture says, “They constrained him”) does He enter in.

Now, in the closest fellowship of the evening meal, when all barriers of reserve have been voluntarily laid aside, does the Savior choose to reveal Himself. And how quick the response. All the arguments have been presented. The proofs of Messiah ship have been made plain. Prejudices have been overcome. The hearts of these men are prepared for what is about to happen. The Holy Book states:

“And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” Luke 24:30-32.

As Christ makes Himself known a new spirit takes full possession of the disciples. And strange to say, when Jesus suddenly disappears from their midst, no gloom settles down upon them. Now they are certain of their faith, and without taking time to eat or to rest, they spring to their feet and hurry back to the disciples in Jerusalem declaring, "The Lord is risen indeed!"

There is a vital lesson in this beautiful story for all who would be as helpful to others as Jesus was. Why did He act so carefully? Why was He so unobtrusive in His approach to these despondent men? Even when He had an invitation to enter their home He did not respond at once. We are told, "Had the disciples failed to press their invitation, they would not have known that their traveling companion was the risen Lord. Christ never forces His company upon any one."

All too many in their zeal to turn a person from his wayward ways, and not fully realizing the delicate task they have in mind, speak words that repel and do not win. By an unnatural, tactless approach they drive sinners further away from Christ rather than draw them to Him. That is particularly true of persons of delicate and refined natures who resent sudden intrusion upon their privacy. Some, of course, bear more rough handling, but beware lest you blunder in your approach to any man or woman in need of ministration to the soul.

Here is good instruction for this kind of work: "In the work of soul-winning, great tact and wisdom are needed. The Savior never suppressed the truth, but He uttered it always in love. In His intercourse with others, He exercised the greatest tact, and He was always kind and thoughtful. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave unnecessary pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He never made truth cruel, but ever manifested a deep tenderness for humanity. Every soul was precious in His sight. He bore Himself with divine dignity; yet He bowed with the most tender compassion and regard to every member of the family of God. He saw in all, souls whom it was His mission to save." Gospel Workers, page 117.

"Of all people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous. In their lives should be seen the true goodness of unselfish deeds. The worker who manifests a lack of courtesy, who shows impatience at the ignorance or waywardness of others, who speaks hastily or acts thoughtlessly, may close the door to hearts so that he can never reach them.

"As the dew and the still showers fall upon the withering plants, so let words fall gently when seeking to win men from error. God's plan is first to reach the heart. We are to speak the truth in love, trusting in Him to give it power for the reforming of the life. The Holy Spirit will apply to the soul the word that is spoken in love."

"Let your speech," says Paul, "be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians 4:6. This was the manner of Christ toward all who were in need of saving truth. His words were seasoned with grace, and His approach was one of sympathy and understanding.

The unobtrusive manner in which Christ dealt with the two discouraged disciples on the way to Emmaus and on other occasions with the Samaritan woman by Jacob's well and the timid woman of Galilee who was healed by a touch of His garment, is an important lesson to all who would be His followers in the delicate work of turning men to righteousness.

The Frugal Jesus

FRUGALITY is a virtue that both the poor and the rich should possess. A person may have sufficient means to supply himself with all he desires, but this does not give him a right to be spendthrift and wasteful. The poor, of necessity, should be frugal, but even among these there are many who exercise little thrift.

Jesus lived among the poor. He knew what it was to be in want for even the necessities of life. Yet He could have been rich if He had wished to avail Himself of the powers with which He was endowed.

One particular experience in the life of Jesus reveals His frugal spirit as well as His ability to produce wealth. By simply blessing and breaking five barley loaves and two small fishes, Jesus was able to feed five thousand men at one sitting. Thus He revealed His great power.

In this connection it is surprising to read His command to His disciples when the people had eaten all they wanted: "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." John 6:12.

Some might wonder why Jesus was so particular. Was it because of His very evident neat and orderly ways or because of His economical habits? It must have taken quite a little time to gather up those fragments, and the hour of the day must have been late after the arduous ordeal of passing out the food to five thousand people. But for Jesus it was just as necessary to dispose of the fragments properly as it was to prepare the meal carefully.

We may wonder what He did with the twelve baskets that were filled with the leftovers from the great feast. We are told: "After the multitude had been fed, there was an abundance of food left. But He who had all the resources of infinite power at His command said, 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.' These words meant more than putting the bread into the baskets. The lesson was twofold. Nothing is to be wasted. We are to let slip no temporal advantage. We should neglect nothing that will tend to benefit a human being. Let everything be gathered up that will relieve the necessity of earth's hungry ones. And there should be the same carefulness in spiritual things. When the baskets of fragments were collected, the people thought of their friends at home. They wanted them to share in the bread that Christ had blessed. The contents of the baskets were distributed among the eager throng, and were carried away into all the region round about. So those who were at the feast were to give to others the bread that comes down from heaven, to satisfy the hunger of the soul. They were to repeat what they had learned of the wonderful things of God. Nothing was to be lost. Not one word that concerned their eternal salvation was to fall useless to the ground." - *The Desire of Ages*, page 368.

It is clear that Jesus could not tolerate waste, even amid abundance. He was economical without the taint of penuriousness. He saved, not that He might add to His own possessions, but that He might have the means by which to help others and also that nothing good might be lost.

Some may feel because they have no great means to give to preaching the gospel, nothing much can be expected of them. However, this experience of Jesus teaches us that although we may have little left after we have cared for our own needs, yet through frugality and thrift we will be able to save something for the Master's use. He then can bless and multiply it to the good of many.

The teachings of Jesus emphasized the necessity of frugality on the part of all who follow Him, and He spoke against the pursuit of gain for the sake of acquiring an abundance of earthly possessions.

Like a runner in a race who is determined to win, and strips himself of all impediments, so the Christian must lay aside every weight and run with patience the race that is set before him. (Hebrews 12:1.)

This is what Jesus tells us: "Whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:33.

Here the principle of renunciation, in contrast to acquisitiveness, is emphasized. Again He says, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses." Luke 12:15.

Jesus' conception of life is wholly contrary to that which we are taught in these modern times, when abundance and waste go hand in hand. But Jesus came not to teach men how to blend into their environment and be subject to it, but how to be different and to be independent of it.

In the parable of the talents Jesus taught that men should not be wasteful with any endowments. One may waste them as the prodigal did, or he may do so, as did the one-talent man, by hiding them in the ground. Talents are to be put to use. All of us should ask, What am I doing with the talents that have been given me? For instance, there is the talent of time. What am I doing with it? Do I have much or little leisure? Am I wasteful of it? Some have only a little time of their own beyond their assigned duties. If we are in that class, then what are we doing with the one talent of time that we have?

Do we say, "Oh, I have only a little time left. I will not do anything special," and thus waste it? Jesus wanted to teach us that we can do much with little when His blessing is added to it. No time is too short to make some use of it, either for the upbuilding of our character or for the blessing of others.

Jesus taught the lesson, both in His life and His words, that we should give careful attention to little things. Not many have riches to give or much time to offer the Lord. If we do anything at all, it must be in the conservation and right use of the pennies, the minutes, and the little talents that we have.

So let us be frugal as was Jesus, never wasting any of the gifts of Heaven, but making the best use of all things that are in our possession, that we may live to the glory of God and for the blessing of those around us.

The Tried and Tempted Jesus

IN THE person of Jesus were combined all the inherent powers of the Godhead and all the inherent weaknesses of the human race. How He overcame the latter in every instance and refused at all times to use the former in His own behalf, other than those accessible to all human beings, is told in the remarkable epic of His life.

It was the marvelous self-control over His dual personality always manifested in the life of Jesus that set Him apart from all other men and made Him the Savior of the world. It was thus that He demonstrated His fitness for this role. Most truly Peter declared, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

First, what is said in the Scriptures concerning the divine power of Jesus? It is very clear that He was conscious of this power. At the close of His ministry He declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18. He also said that God had "given him power over all flesh." John 17:2.

When Jesus was about to inaugurate the communion service the Sacred Record says of Him: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he rises from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself." John 13:3, 4.

Paul later wrote of the great power of Jesus in these words: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Hebrews 1:1, 2.

On the other hand, Jesus was continually reminded of His human lot and the frailty of the flesh. We read that at the close of His fast in the wilderness "he was afterward an hungered." Matthew 4:1 In another place He said of Himself, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Luke 9:58.

Referring to the bad reputation of His home town, an inquirer asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth!" John 1:46.

It was because of this frailty that Jesus spent so much time in prayer. He was as dependent as any one of us for daily aid from the throne above. Thus we often read about His departing to a quiet place, where He spent the night or the early hours of the morning in prayer. Jesus plainly said of Himself, "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30. Of Jesus the Scriptures say, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Hebrews 2:14.

Again we read: "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it became him to be made like unto his brethren.... For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Verses 16-18. He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15.

Jesus "took the risk of failure and eternal loss." As He faced the great issue of life in the Garden of Gethsemane, the cup trembled in His hands as His humanity sought release from the dark venture before Him. It was because of this that He struggled until great drops of blood, as it were, appeared on His forehead. Three times He prayed for resignation to the will of God.

Let us turn to another aspect of His life, and note how remarkably Jesus steered His course between the consciousness of His human weakness and His divine power. Think, for instance, of many miracles He performed in behalf of others. He healed all kinds of sickness, He cast out devils, He fed the multitudes, yes, and He even raised the dead. But never once did He use these powers in behalf of Himself.

One time when the Jews came to Him and said, "Show us a sign, work us a miracle," Christ made no move to satisfy their curiosity or to prove that He was a wonder worker. He wrought no miracle to advance His power among men or to hinder the evil that men were planning toward Him. "Christ never worked a miracle except to supply a genuine necessity, and every miracle was of a character to lead the people to the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." - *The Desire of Ages*, page 366.

Of Jesus' life in Nazareth one has beautifully written: "Jesus lived in a peasant's home, and faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in bearing the burdens of the household. He had been the Commander of heaven, and angels had delighted to fulfill His word; now He was a willing servant, a loving, obedient son. He learned a trade, and with His own hands worked in the carpenter's shop with Joseph. In the simple garb of a common laborer He walked the streets of the little town, going to and returning from His humble work. He did not employ His divine power to lessen His burdens or to lighten His toil." - *Ibid.*, page 72. (Italics supplied.)

Some might well question, "Why should Jesus live in poverty when He could create from five loaves and two fishes sufficient food to feed more than five thousand people?"

But was it not on this point of fleshly desire that the devil tempted Jesus at the outset of His ministry? When He was very hungry after a fast of forty days, Satan came to Him and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Matthew 4:1

Here was a subtle stroke on Satan's part. If he could break down Jesus' control over both the fleshly and divine natures, and have Him use His holy power to satisfy a human craving, Satan's battle would be won. But even while Jesus' body cried out for food and His divine nature said, "I can create," Jesus refused to fall into such a trap.

Concerning another occasion of temptation, we are told, "Had Jesus yielded for a moment, had He changed His course in the least particular to save Himself, Satan's agencies would have triumphed, and the world would have been lost."

Again some may ask, "Could not Jesus have escaped from the mob who came to take Him in Gethsemane?" Yes, He could have. When Peter drew a sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, thinking to deliver Him, Jesus said, "Put up again thy sword into his place. . . . Think thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Matthew 26:52, 53.

The disciples had already heard Him say, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." John 10:17, 18.

The disciples were keenly disappointed when Jesus did not use in His own behalf the power they knew He had. They felt He had been untrue to them, but this was because they misunderstood His mission. How true were the words spoken at the cross by those who taunted Him: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Matthew 27:42. Little did these enemies of the Savior know why this was so. No, He could not save Himself and still be our Savior. When He stepped down from heaven to identify Himself with man, He was committed to go all the way. He must both overcome in His human nature and hold in check those divine powers that could have delivered Him from that nature. We know not how many times Jesus must have had to make the decision not to save Himself.

In contrast to this self-denying spirit of Christ, let us think of modern man. How does he use the powers that have come to him? Never before this day have such godlike powers been accessible to man. All nature seems to be opening its secrets to him. Now the climax in the search for power has been reached in the splitting of the atom, and man today has at his finger tips apparently unlimited power. But what is he doing with it? Is he using it to bless humanity and spread the gospel of good will? No, he is using it for the exaltation of self and to gratify his lust for power.

Because man is unable to use properly the great powers that are his, he has proved himself unworthy of life. Only those, who deny themselves and take up the cross and live as Jesus did will become fit subjects for the eternal kingdom of our Lord. We are told that we may be "more than conquerors through him that loved us." May we daily avail ourselves of this help.

The Man of Sorrows

JESUS was not immune to the sorrows of mankind. Like others in this world, He knew the bitterness and grief of misunderstandings, slander and abuse, unjust criticism, false witness, and cruel judgment. Isaiah prophesied that He would be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isaiah 53:3.

We may think of Jesus as vicariously bearing our grief and sorrows, but let us remember that these were in addition to His own, which must have been sufficient to weigh Him down all through His life on earth. It was not remorse for mistakes and failures on His own part that filled His soul. He knew no sin in Himself, and had no regret so far as that was concerned. His grief came because of what He saw and heard about Him.

Imagine Jesus trying to accommodate Himself to the vulgarity, irreverence, and impurity of village life in Nazareth. How the coarseness in human nature, its lack of shame and humility, its constant absorption in thought of meat and drink, its shallowness and indifference to spiritual values, must have troubled Him. Only an inborn pity and desire to help could have kept Him from showing horror at the sight of blind beggars, stumbling cripples, and offensive lepers who pressed close to Him and cried for mercy.

Jesus suffered much when He saw others in pain and distress. When He heard the moaning of the weeping widow over her dead son, He thrust through the crowd and said to her, "Weep not." Then with another word He restored the young man to his mother. But the knowledge of other weeping widows up and down the land tempered the joy He had in making this one happy.

We can better know the bitterness that Jesus felt when others suffered as we read the story of Lazarus' death and burial. When Jesus first heard of Lazarus' death He seemed unconcerned. This astonished His disciples, but Jesus knew He could awaken His friend. It was not until He came to the little town of Bethany and saw Mary weeping that His soul was filled with grief. The Scriptures say of that scene:

"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept." John 11:33-35.

The Jews seeing Jesus weep said, "Behold how he loved him!" But it was not for Lazarus that He wept. His heart was touched when He saw the sorrowing people about Him, and with His wider vision He saw also the whole world weeping. He could raise Lazarus and restore him to Mary, but how could He comfort a world filled with sorrow and woe?

Jesus was one who must have thought deeply on life. He saw people all around Him who were bringing upon themselves pain and misery because of their wrong course of action. Then how the harsh noises of quarreling neighbors seeking redress from some minor injury or the loud haggling of buyers and sellers in the market place seeking some advantage for themselves must have cut deeply into His sensitive soul.

Yes, He saw it all-the grime and misery not alone of a village but of a nation and the world as well-and how He must have suffered because of it! How He would have liked to heal all the sick, calm all the restless ones, and purify the hearts of the whole nation, making it a true representative of God.

But this He could not do. Only here and there could He perform a token healing or make a token convert. Completion of the great task of saving the world was far ahead, and though each day He labored long and earnestly He made no recognizable change in the sea of human misery. He came to earth, went about doing good, and when all was done, what could He see as a result of His travail of soul?

Little do we know what awful feelings of failure must have afflicted Jesus as He approached His final test. We gain some glimpses of this in a few scenes and utterances. One time at the height of His popularity He found the multitude, who only the day before had wanted to hail Him as their king, turning from Him. Of this disheartening scene the Scriptures say, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." John 6:66.

That Jesus was keenly disappointed at this time is seen in the words He then uttered to His disciples, who were standing about Him, "Will you also go away?" Again Jesus revealed this sore feeling of failure in His words to Philip after he had manifested an obtuseness unworthy of a true disciple. What pathos we find in these words: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" John 14:9.

The depth of Jesus' disappointment in His closest friends is expressed in these words spoken to the inner circle of His disciples on the occasion of His last agony in the garden: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Matthew 26:40.

There was one other occasion in the life of Jesus when it is recorded that He wept. Traveling toward Jerusalem one day, He came to the brow of a hill where He saw the city spread out before Him. As He stood there looking over the city that He loved so much, He saw in imagination the crowded streets, the seething market places, the busy Temple courts. He saw a weary people seeking respite from the yoke of the foreign Romans, surcease from the weight of their sins through a round of ceremony, healing for their diseases of body, and peace for their restless souls. As in vision Jesus watched the panorama of misery and woe pass before Him, He could not help crying out in agony of soul and weeping bitter tears. Of this we read:

"And when he was come near he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that your enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side." Luke 19:41-43.

Matthew records Jesus' painful solicitude for His people in these words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killed the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matthew 23:37.

It is in these incidents, scattered through the Gospels, that we get a picture of the sorrows of Jesus. But as we think of whence He came we say to ourselves, "Was it necessary that He thus should suffer?" We were born into this world without our choice; but Jesus, knowing what was before Him, took upon Himself the likeness of men. He shunned nothing in order that He might become a perfect Savior. The Bible says that He was made "perfect through sufferings." Hebrews 2:10. He did not need suffering to perfect Him in holiness, but it must be so to fit Him to be the Savior of mankind.

How wonderful to know that Jesus understands all our sorrows. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Verse 16.

The Conquering Jesus

LIFE is a conflict for all who would live godly in this present evil world. When the Son of God voluntarily took man's place and thrust Himself directly into this struggle, He found no easy road. The way to victory was as hard and painful for Him as for any man, and no doubt it was even more so.

Jesus came out to meet Goliath with no armor or weapons not available to other earthly Davids. With trembling and fear He went forth to face the towering enemy, trusting only in His sling of faith and the smooth stones of promise picked up from the brook of God's Holy Word. And like David of old, who was challenged to come out and prove the might of the God whom he served, Jesus staunchly stood His ground, when Satan came forth to dismay Him at the very outset of His ministry in man's behalf, and He hurled one scripture after another at His enemy until he departed from Him.

It took only one stone from David's sling to slay Goliath, but it took three stones before Satan was defeated in that first encounter with the Son of man. So Jesus knew very early in His contest with the devil that the prince of this world would not yield up his throne without a terrible struggle.

Christ warned His disciples of this spiritual warfare. He had been instructing them in regard to their work and telling them of the treatment they would receive from those who would oppose them. They were to go forth "as sheep in the midst of wolves." They were to be hated and persecuted, He declared. But they must not deny their Lord no matter what the circumstances, for they were entering a great conflict in which they would have to meet enemies both at home and abroad.

"Think not," said Jesus, "that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that takes not his cross, and follows after me, is not worthy of me. He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew 10:34-39.

Jesus was well acquainted with this awful struggle. He did not ask of men what He Himself would not endure. He was at the very forefront of the battle, and even before He felt the cruel nails pierce His hand He often was wounded in soul and spirit.

While He was telling His disciples about conflicts they must meet, He said of Himself: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." Luke 12:49-51.

How often the sensitive soul of Jesus must have been pained as He saw men and women reject His offers of salvation and yield to the blandishments of the enemy. How one among His closest friends must have troubled Him—Judas, who trod the narrow and precarious line between right and wrong. When Judas first joined the disciples, he was attracted to the lovely character of Jesus and felt His good influence, but he hardened his heart toward the Master and bargained with those who would slay Him.

Even on the night of the betrayal Jesus stooped low to wash Judas' feet, desiring to do all He could to win this wayward man. We are told that "Jesus hungered for his soul. He felt for him a burden such as He felt for Jerusalem when He wept over the doomed city. His heart was crying, 'How can I give thee up?' - The Desire of Ages, page 645.

Again we see Jesus as He painfully struggles to hold on to Peter. With what anxiety He says to him, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:31, 32.

Jesus felt it keenly when any of those nearest to Him fell into the enemy's trap. He suffered greatly as He struggled to extricate them. He knew the sorrow and pain that would be the lot of those who followed Satan. It was His purpose to do all that He could to rescue men and women from such a fate. He plucked them as brands from the burning, searing His own hands as He did so.

It was not alone for other men that He struggled. He must Himself meet His antagonist and overcome him, and we can be sure that this enemy of His did not leave Him alone. He came continually to Jesus with insinuating doubts, with terrible temptations, to see if possible he might not overthrow Him. It was because of this that Jesus often had to go into the mountains alone with God, where He might receive strength and help to meet His adversary. There was no other way but this. The help He received one day was not sufficient for the next. Thus we read of Him again and again seeking out His heavenly Father in prayer.

What an example this is to us in our struggles against sin and temptation. We can no more conquer alone than could Christ. Thus He says to us as He did to His disciples, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

As Jesus neared the close of His ministry His struggles grew more intense. He realized what awaited Him, and He was pained as He considered it. He could only move along toward His destination, trusting in God as He went, seeking for strength that He might not fail. On one occasion as He was thinking of this He said to His disciples, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." John 12:27, 28.

As God heard this cry for help He audibly answered Jesus and said, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Then last we come to the struggle in the Garden. "As Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness in the wilderness of temptation the destiny of the human race had been at stake. Christ was then conqueror. Now the tempter had come for the last fearful struggle. For this he had been preparing during the three years of Christ's ministry. Everything was at stake with him. If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of this world would finally become Christ's; he himself would be overthrown and cast out. But if Christ could be overcome, the earth would become Satan's kingdom, and the human race would be forever in his power. With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ's soul was filled with dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom, and would never more be one with God." Ibid., page 687.

"Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul. The awful moment had come,-that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity.... The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, 'O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, thy will be done.' Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice." - Ibid., page 690. (Italics supplied.)

Victory for Jesus was not an easy one. But His efforts brought their reward of triumph over His enemy, and opened the way of salvation for the human race. Let us ever remember the terrible struggles through which He passed for us. Let us be grateful that He has provided the means by which we may become "more than conquerors."

Jesus, the Christ

IF WE knew Jesus only as the sweet babe of Bethlehem, the patient carpenter of Nazareth, the master teacher of Galilee, the holy Martyr of Calvary, the transcendent character of history, this would not be sufficient to explain His power over men. He is more than this. He is very God.

This is the key that unlocks the mystery of his miracle working Figure who came into this world without assets of any kind. He did nothing to make a name for Himself until after He was thirty years of age. Then for a brief span of three and a half years He spoke about the kingdom of heaven to the multitudes who flocked to hear Him, and He healed their sick. Often in contention with the religious leaders of the day, He enunciated a new way of life that shocked their ecclesiastical scruples. Hence they fiercely opposed Him and finally falsely accused Him as a disturber of the peace before the Roman ruler, who condemned Him to a shameful death upon the cross.

The little flock of disciples, distraught by the happenings they had little understood, were scattered and disheartened. Thus He came to an early end of His life, apparently an utterly defeated soul.

Then something happened. He burst the tomb, rose from the dead, and went forth to gather up the fragments of his life work. He instilled hope in the little flock, and commissioned them to carry on His teaching. Finally He told them He must return to His heaven Father above, and promising to come again, He suddenly was taken up from them and disappeared in the clouds.

Startled by this turn of events, still feeling fearful and forsaken, the distressed company of believers retired to an upper chamber and talked over their experiences. They prayed, and waited many days for further counsel.

Then we read: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4.

Peter explained this phenomenon as evidence that Jesus of Nazareth had been exalted to the right hand of God. This gave them courage to go forth as He had commanded them to, and preach in His name. As they did so, great numbers of believers were added to the little flock, and soon the name of Jesus as Savior was known throughout the Mediterranean world.

Since then, in spite of persecution, interdiction, and apostasy, the Christian way of life has spread to all lands of earth. Christ has become the mightiest influence for good in all the world.

How do you explain all this? Is it because of the great momentum that a strong, human personage initiated? There have been other more dominant men, far greater in their influence during their lifetime than He, but their names have had no power to inspire men to greater works or to create miracles of transformation.

Was He merely another Confucius, Plato, Buddha, Alexander, or Napoleon? Not at all. Human indeed was He, fully identified with the lot of men, but He also was Almighty God who had spoken the worlds into existence and who took the form of man.

Jesus was conscious of His divine prerogatives. He knew in His soul that He was the Son of God. He admitted as much on several occasions. Furthermore, He acted like, the Son of God.

The very name Jesus means Savior. (Matthew 1:21, margin.) He became familiar with the Old Testament prophets early in life. He knew the prophecies of the coming of One "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," as Micah declared. Micah 5:2.

He was thoroughly acquainted with -the scroll of Isaiah, the gospel prophet of the Old Testament. It was from this that He read at His first recorded Sabbath service a chapter that told of the coming Messiah's work. After having read it He said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:21.

He knew the words of Isaiah that read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and 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." Isaiah 9:6. And Mary, His devout mother, must have told Him about the wonders of His birth and the glorious happenings that took place at that time.

He knew that portion of Isaiah that depicted the sacrificial work of the Messiah as found in Isaiah 53. He no doubt used this prophecy and others to help the two discouraged disciples on their walk to Emmaus. The Holy Word states, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27. And of His crucifixion He said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Verse 26. There can be no doubt that Jesus fully understood His divine appointment."

Jesus did not go about declaring, "I am the Son of God." That would have defeated His purpose and created a gulf between Him and those about Him. He wished to live close to men and to the lowliest of them. But He never once denied that He was the Son of God.

At His baptism God reminded Him of His Son ship, and Jesus went forth to meet Satan with that thought in mind. He knew that the world's salvation was dependent upon His behavior, and He dared not make a misstep when He was dealing with the subtle prince of this world.

Jesus referred to himself mostly as "the Son of man," wishing especially to impress His followers that, He was one with them, but He used this term in such a way as to make anyone understand that He believed also that He was the Son of God. We note this in the following verses:

"And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27, 28.

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matthew 13:41-43.

"As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Matthew 25:31.

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:36.

“Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he.” John 8:28.

Jesus knew of His coming crucifixion, death, and resurrection. He spoke of this to His disciples on several occasions.

“And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.” Matthew 17: 22, 23.

When the time drew near He said: “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.” John 12:23, 24.

On one or two occasions Jesus drew His disciples out on this question. In the early part of His ministry He asked them, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” When they answered, “Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets,” He then pressed them for an answer. “But whom say ye that I am?”

Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Christ did not deny this statement, but rather said, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 16:13-17.

On a later occasion He spoke to the Pharisees and said, “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?” And as He entangled them in their answer He left the impression that as David spoke of Him as Lord, so He believed Himself to be. (Matthew 22:41-45.)

At one time when the Jews took up stones to stone Him, He said to them, “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God.” John 10:36.

Not until His mission was almost fulfilled did He answer directly the question “Are you the Son of God?”

On the day of His trial, as He stood before the council of chief priests and scribes, He was asked the question, “Are you the Christ?” As He evaded this question and told them that it would hardly be of any use to reply to it, they again pressed Him with the question, “Art thou then the Son of God?” To this He simply replied, “Ye say that I am,” meaning, “Ye say it because I am.” To this the high priest said, “What need we any further witness? For we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.” Luke 22:71.

And as He hung on the cross His persecutors cried, “He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.” Matthew 27:43.

And as some of those that stood about the cross looked upon His holy face and remembered the works that He had done and the accusations that had been made against Him, they solemnly said, “Truly this was the Son of God.” Verse 54.

Yes, Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. And now He is sitting at the right hand of God as our intercessor and blessed Savior.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

“We Have This Treasure”

JESUS is a treasure beyond human calculation. Without Him the richest man is poor. Paul wrote of “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” And he confidently assures us, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels.” How little we are aware of this marvelous truth. What a pity that this is so. For to be aware of this treasure is to have it. As the Scriptures say, “According to your faith be it unto you.”

This is not a treasure that can be deposited in a bank for safe keeping, but for those who have it there is a greater sense of security and far more joy than earthly riches can give. This treasure is hidden within our hearts. Now and then we go to some strong box in a bank or in our homes to look over the few things of value we may have in it—a deed to property, insurance papers, stocks and bonds, a passbook for a savings account. How little they add up to for the most of us. Do we take time to look within our hearts and note a much richer treasure deposited there—Jesus Christ the righteous, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells? (Colossians 2:9)

The Bible speaks of this treasure in many places. Jesus referred to Himself as the “pearl of great price,” the treasure hidden in the field, “the true riches.” He reminded us, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Paul wrote that “my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Thus we learn that in Christ there are riches untold and that we may have full access to them.

Would we speak of material wealth? Jesus Christ is the creator and owner of all things in heaven and earth. Could He not and would He not supply all that our needs demand?

However, these riches of which the apostle speaks are more than material. The most precious of them are spiritual. How can we describe the riches that are in Christ Jesus? Human language fails in any attempt to do so.

O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth,
Which in my Savior shine!
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings
And vie with Gabriel while he sings
In notes almost divine.

I'd sing the precious blood He spilt, My ransom from the dreadful guilt Of sin and wrath divine!
I'd sing His glorious righteousness, In which all-perfect heavenly dress My soul shall ever shine.

“I'd sing the character He bears,
And all the forms of love He wears,
Exalted on His throne;
In loftiest songs of sweetest praise,
I would to everlasting days
Make all His glories known.”

SAMUEL MEDLEY

The Bible uses many terms in an endeavor to depict the character of Christ and the riches that are hidden in Him. Here are a few of them found scattered throughout the Old and New Testaments:

“The Almighty,” “Alpha and Omega,” Revelation 1:8; “The first and the last,” verse 17; “teacher come from God,” John 3:2; “arm of the Lord,” Isaiah 51:9; “author of eternal salvation,” Hebrews 5:9; “captain of their salvation,” Hebrews 2: 10; creator, John 1:3; “desire of all nations,” Haggai 2:7; “the door,” John 10:7; “dayspring from on high,” Luke 1:78; deliverer out of Zion, Romans 11:26.

The “glory of the Lord,” Isaiah 40:5; “great high priest,” Hebrews 4:14; “heir of all things,” Hebrews 1:2; upholder of the universe, verse 3; “the way, the truth, and the life,” John 14:6; “Lord of all” Acts 10:36; “Lord of glory,” 1 Corinthians 2:8; “LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,” Jeremiah 23:6; “Prince of life,” Acts 3:15; “the light of the world,” John 8:12; the water of life, John 4:14; “the good shepherd,” John 10:11; “the bright and morning star,” Revelation 22:16; “the true vine,” John 15:1.

The righteous judge, John 5:22; the faithful advocate, 1 John 2:1; “The mighty God,” “The Prince of Peace,” the true counselor, Isaiah 9:6; the chief cornerstone, Psalm 118:22; “LORD OF LORDS THE KING OF KINGS,” Revelation 19:16; “the Son of the living God,” Matthew 16:16; “author and finisher of our faith,” Hebrews 12:2; “the bread of life,” John 6:35; “Redeemer,” Job 19:25; “Rock,” 1 Corinthians 10:4; “Savior of the world,” 1 John 4:14; “Son of man,” Matthew 8:20; “Sun of righteousness,” Malachi 4:2.

“The Word of God,” Revelation 19:13; the One “altogether lovely,” Song of Solomon 5:16; the sure Foundation, 1 Corinthians 3:11; the hidden treasure, Matthew 13:44; “pearl of great price,” verse 46; the Great Physician, Matthew 4:23; “rose of Sharon,” “lily of the valleys,” Song of Solomon 2:1; “unspeakable gift,” 2 Corinthians 9:15; “a friend that sticks closer than a brother,” Proverbs 18:24; “the resurrection, and the life,” John 11:25. And many others that might be added.

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels.” Ancient kings used to put their jewels in earthen jars. One could not tell by the appearance of the jar the value of its contents. Just an ordinary vessel, both fragile and unlovely, often contained the most valuable treasure.

The most precious treasure in the universe was hidden in the most fragile and unlovely vessel that could be found-human flesh. How could God run such a risk? He did it that man might find this treasure and thereby obtain eternal salvation.

We read that Christ “made himself of no reputation- and---was made in the likeness of men.” Philippians 1:7. Isaiah wrote that the Messiah would have “no beauty that we should desire him,” that He would grow up “as a root out of a dry ground,” and would be “despised and rejected of men.” Isaiah 53:2, 3.

In the Gospel of John we read that Jesus “came unto his own, and his own received him not,” and that of Him it was said, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Priests, rulers, and people in their search for the heavenly riches passed Him by, not knowing that One of such lowly birth was the depository of priceless wealth.

Not until this vessel was broken on Calvary was the wealth that it contained fully revealed. In His death and resurrection Christ's true glory appeared. Since then, as men have thought upon the life and sacrifice of Jesus, they have been awed by the majesty of His person.

Never did earthen vessel contain such marvelous riches. We are reminded of this in each communion service as we hear the words read, “This is my body, which is broken for you.”

But the greatest wonder of all is, as Paul tells us, “we have this treasure in earthen vessels.” How marvelous the thought that this inestimable treasure of heaven has been deposited with us. Do we cherish this heavenly treasure, this pearl of great price, as we ought? We are told that if pearls are to keep their beauty and luster, they must be worn frequently. So, too, if we would know the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ, we must continually have conscious contact with Him.

In saying that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, Paul no doubt was thinking of the story of Gideon and his earthen pitchers. Although the lights within the pitchers must have sent forth a certain glow, yet the full glory of these lights was not seen until the pitchers were broken.

Christ said, “I am the light of the world.” And of us He said, “Ye are the light of the world.” He meant that we are the bearers of the light He gives. Then He adds: “A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16.

We are the vessels that contain the light, but this light must not remain hidden within us. It must be shed abroad if we would win the victory. This cannot be done until the vessel is broken. This treasure has not been deposited with us for our own pleasure or glory, but as we share it with others we will have it in greater fullness ourselves. This can only be done as self is forgotten and Christ occupies chief place in our lives.

With Paul we must say, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20.

“Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted;
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard;
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action,
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.”

This experience will come when we pray as did the psalmist, -Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Verse 17.

Yes, the human vessel must be broken before it can reveal the true riches. Then let us not shun the experiences that bring this about. Let us learn to say with Paul: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.” “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:8-10, 16-18.

Thank God for this precious gift. May we cherish it more and more.

Someday We'll See Him

THE hour of Jesus' departure had come, but the little group of disciples who were gathered about Him on Olivet were not aware of it. Their souls had been revived since the terrible scenes of Calvary. Their risen Lord had been with them for forty days, and they longed to be with Him forever.

Even now they hoped He would quickly establish His kingdom and make them His statesmen so they could be nearest to Him. One ventured to ask, "Lord, will thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1:6.

How little they knew the times and the seasons of God's appointment. How frightened and discouraged they would have been if Jesus had revealed all the bitterness, the trial, and the conflict that the followers of Christ must endure before that glorious event should take place.

The Lord was gracious enough not to pull aside the curtain, but He did tell them of the work to be done before His kingdom could be established. He said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Verse 8.

He had already told them in reply to their question as to the sign of His coming and the end of the world that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

So they must go forth and spread the good news of salvation before their hope would be fulfilled. While the disciples spoke of these things with Jesus, "he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1:9.

They were astounded at the sight. How mysterious it was! What did it mean? For the moment they forgot that Jesus had told them that He must go away and that "whither I go, ye cannot come." Forgotten too was the wonderful promise that He had made to them: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3.

They stood there growing troubled in heart, until suddenly they saw two angels standing beside them, and they heard them say, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

Now they remembered how the Lord had said, "I will come again." They were saddened no longer. They must be up and doing, to help all they could to hasten His return. Henceforth, this was the hope uppermost in their minds.

In obedience to Christ's commandment they waited in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was to equip them for this work. Thereafter they went forth with great zeal, bearing witness to the things they had seen and heard. The theme of Christ's return was kept before the early believers.

Soon after Pentecost, Peter openly declared this blessed truth as he called upon the people to turn to Christ. "Repent ye therefore," he said, "and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19-21.

In his epistles Peter wrote of "the end of all things" (1 Peter 4:7), the judgment of the wicked (2 Peter 14), and "the promise of his coming" (2 Peter 3:4). He gave a vivid picture of "the day of the Lord," the destruction of the world, and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth "according to his promise." (Verses 9-11) And then he counseled, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." Verse 14.

John too was among the preachers of the second coming of Christ. He was with Peter when he spoke of the restitution of all things at the coming of Christ. He wrote in his epistle of the glorious event, and that when Christ shall appear those who love Him "shall be like him." 1 John 3:1, 2. And then he added, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure." Verse 3.

John's Gospel account records the exact promise of Christ, "I will come again." John 14:1 The book of Revelation, which John wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and at the direction of Christ Himself, is filled with prophecies concerning Christ's second coming.

James, who was another apostle who participated in the acts of the early church, wrote of these things. He wrote of certain signs of the last days as recorded in James 5. He then offered these admonitions: “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” Verse 7. “Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.” Verse 8.

Last, there is the apostle Paul, who wrote much about what he called, in his Epistle to Titus, “that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13.

To the Romans, Paul wrote of “the earnest expectation of the creature” that “waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Romans 8:19.

In writing to the Corinthian church about the communion service, he said, “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.” 1 Corinthians 11:26. He discussed the importance of the resurrection of the body that shall take place at the coming of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15) And he wrote of the coming judgment (2 Corinthians 5: 10), which he spoke of to the Athenians (Acts 17:31) and to Felix, the governor (Acts 24:25).

In the Epistle to the Galatians he lists those things that prevent one from inheriting the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21), and he wrote that Christ gave Himself for our sins “that he might deliver us from this present evil world” (Galatians 1:4).

To the Ephesians he wrote of the “dispensation of the fullness of times” when God would “gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.” Ephesians 1:10.

To the Philippians he spoke of how God would continue the good work of grace in their lives “until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6), and how he prays that they may be without offense until “the day of Christ” (verse 10).

Writing to the Colossians, he said, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:4. To the Thessalonian church he wrote even more specifically of Christ's coming. He spoke of how they had turned from idols to serve the living God “and to wait for his Son from heaven.” 1 Thessalonians 1:10. And he prayed that their hearts might be “unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.” 1 Thessalonians 3:13.

He then described in great detail what will take place at Christ's coming. Of this he said: “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. Then he adds, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” Verse 18.

He tells them that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief. (1 Thessalonians 5:2.) In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul corrects the then-common view that Christ would return in their day and states what must first take place before Christ can come. (2 Thessalonians 11-10)

To Timothy, Paul wrote of “the latter times” (1 Timothy 4:1), and “the last days” (2 Timothy 3:1). He referred to “that day” (2 Timothy 1: 12), meaning the coming of Christ. At last he wrote those words which express the hope that dominated his life:

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

And finally in the Epistle to the Hebrews he writes this challenging word:

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:35-37.

Thus in the witness of the apostles the glorious truth of the second coming of Christ had a commanding place. It was the hope that inspired them in their work and that they used to comfort the believers.

As the dark clouds of persecution gathered about the little church, this hope became the beacon that quickened their faith.

Throughout the Christian Era all those who have learned to love their Lord have looked forward to the time when they would see Him face to face.

And in this our day should we not be living in blessed anticipation of this glorious event? This is the time of His coming to which all prophecies point.

Yes, this same Jesus who traveled the dusty roads of Galilee to bless the multitudes, who sat beside the well of Samaria to speak a word of courage to a wayward sinner, and who often visited the little home in Bethany and brought joy to the hearts of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, is coming again.

Yes, the One who bore our sins upon the cruel cross and died that we might live is coming soon!

Someday we'll see Him. Blessed hope! We'll see Him riding down from glory in all His majesty and beauty. We'll see His winsome smile, feel the tender touch of His nail-pierced hands, and walk with Him in glory. Happy prospect! Hasten on glad day!

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, said the Lord.” Zechariah 2:10.

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out your enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shall not see evil any more.” Zephaniah 3:14, 15.

“O for a thousand tongues, to sing
My great Redeemer's praise! The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace.”

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