

Living Water—Issue No 6

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THE SEEKING SAVIOUR AND THE SIN HATING SAVIOUR

The Seeking Saviour

“... for the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.”

Luke 19:10

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus should be freshly touched by these precious words, “The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.” Thank God He came to seek me, thank God He came to seek you and that He went to the cross to save us. To save us from eternal loss, save us from an eternity of misery and to save us now from the present evil world by His power.

Let us think about the seeking Saviour. He who is the I AM, who was loved before the foundation of the world and “who did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God”, stooped into this world. It says in Isaiah 35:4 “He will come himself and save you.” God came Himself in the Person of Jesus to save us and Jesus was in this world as the seeking Saviour. There were thirty years when He was personally in the enjoyment of communion with His God and Father, but as anointed by God at the commencement of His public service, He stepped out seeking those who were lost. It is wonderful to think of Jesus seeking us! There are many references in the Bible to people seeking God but here we have this precious reference to Jesus seeking us. It is a wonderful thing that the Son of God should seek me. He loved me, He gave Himself for me. Everybody who believes in Jesus can, like the apostle Paul, say these words, “the Son of God who has loved me and given Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). He sought me and He found me, thank God, and He has found many others.

Three illustrations from Luke's gospel show the Lord as the seeking Saviour. One day Jesus went across the Sea of Gennesaret and a man met Him out of the tombs, a person that nobody could bind or subdue. Jesus went there specially to seek him. Once He had found that man and shown him mercy He went away back to the other side. Think of the effort that Jesus expended to secure one soul! Every soul in this world is precious to Christ. He took the time and the trouble to confront that man in all his terrible state to win his heart. He did win his heart and we know He got a good convert because the man was found sitting and clothed and sensible at the feet of Jesus. He was then able to be left as a trustworthy person to spread the fame of Jesus in that country. The man initially had no interest in Jesus but Jesus went to seek Him.

Then in the parable in Luke 15, Jesus tells about the shepherd who had ninety-nine sheep which were safe but went after the one that was lost until He found it. What expenditure by the shepherd to gain that one sheep. Every person is precious to Christ. The scripture says, "and having found it, he lays it on His own shoulders, rejoicing". How the Lord rejoices when one soul gets saved, when one soul accepts Him as their own Saviour. Thank God if you are carried by Jesus. It is a wonderful thing to be carried by the great Shepherd, carried through this life until one day you are for ever in His presence. What a favour to know His grace and His love and His support even now.

Jesus also told of a coin that a woman had lost. She lit the lamp and sought diligently until she found it. That coin was of value but it was not in circulation and the woman searched until she found it. Believers may be out of circulation! When Jesus rose from the dead there were two disciples who were downcast and disappointed who were going away from Jerusalem, to Emmaus. Jesus draws alongside them and asks them about their problem. He, the Son of Man who came to seek and to save that which was lost, listens to them.

I lay emphasis on the seeking Saviour because that is the character of the Saviour I know. He goes after people, He loves them, He cares for them and He is prepared to spend time with them in order to win them and secure them as vessels for the praise of God. At the end of Luke's gospel there is a company of people praising and blessing God. That is what God seeks. The result of the seeking of Jesus is that persons are found praising and blessing God.

The Sin Hating Saviour

"The world cannot hate you, but me it hates, because I bear witness concerning it that its works are evil." (John 7:7)

The Lord Jesus was a sin hating Saviour. He came into this world where God was dishonoured, where in its moral condition the whole world lay in the wicked one (1 John 5:19). Peter rightly described Jesus as the holy One of God (John 6:69). Even one of the demons said to Jesus, "I know Thee who Thou art, the holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). There in the land of Israel at that time was the holy One of God, He who was intrinsically holy. He did no sin, He thought no sin and He was here for the pleasure of God.

He confronted evil when He was here. The devil tried to get at Him but Jesus could say "The ruler of the world comes and in Me he has nothing" (John 14:30). With Jesus there was no point of entry for Satan. There is with you and me as we sang in our hymn:

*"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to grieve the One I love."*

But with the Lord Jesus the devil had no point of entry. Jesus could truthfully say, "Which of you convinces Me of sin" (John 8:46). And, "I am altogether that which I also say unto you" (John 8:25). There was no hypocrisy with Jesus. Jesus not only taught right things but He lived according to the way that He taught. He never compromised with evil. He cared for people, He showed compassion, He sought for sinners but He never compromised with evil. He could not, for He was the holy One of God. We see this in His dealings with those who opposed Him, with sinners in need, and with His disciples.

When Jesus was here He met people who knew a great deal of the text of the Old Testament scriptures, yet they were hypocrites. He told them that they were concerned about outward appearances but had forgotten about what was inside and that they were full of wickedness within (See Matthew 23). Jesus exposed their hypocrisy. There was no hypocrisy with Him, He was true to everything that He held and everything that He was. He Himself is the Truth and in His teaching He emphasised the difference between right and wrong. There was a strong moral theme running through all the teaching of Jesus.

The Lord Jesus exposed bad teaching, as when the Pharisees and others substituted the traditional teaching of the elders for the commandment of God. Jesus stood by the commandment of God, by the truth of the Scriptures, and faced up to those people who were seeking to set aside the commandment of God on account of their traditional teaching. Let us not despise the Old Testament, or any part of the Bible. Let us value the standards that are set out there and let us learn to judge things by God's standard for differentiating between right and wrong.

The Lord's hatred of sin is also seen when in contact with sinners in need. Think of the woman at the well in John 4. He deliberately placed Himself at the well to meet her. He began with a normal conversation which encouraged the woman to open up her thoughts to Him. He was able to secure her interest in God's wonderful gift that He was prepared to offer, the gift of living water. When the woman says "Give me this water, that I may not thirst nor come here

to draw”, Jesus says “Go, call thy husband and come here.” He confronted that woman with a moral issue. He never ignored that side. Jesus was the sin hating Saviour as well as the seeking Saviour. And there He exposed her, not to anybody else, but to herself. So she was able to get right with God. She then went to others with her heart full of Christ, “Come see a man who told me all things that I had ever done, is not He the Christ?” The woman then had moral power to draw others to Jesus.

In His relations with His disciples the Lord Jesus never ignored evil. We have a lot to learn from the way the Lord dealt with His disciples. He cared for them, and when others criticized them (as they did when they plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath) He defended them, but He never glossed over any of their wrongs. Peter, who had a revelation from the Father as to the Person of Christ, after hearing Jesus talk about His suffering and being killed said, “this shall in no wise be unto thee” (Matthew 16:22) and the Lord says to him, “Get away behind me, Satan.” Think of Jesus saying that to a disciple that He loved! He protected His disciples but He never ignored evil. He was the sin hating Saviour, never let us forget that. Those of us who believe have a personal living link with Christ, as the scripture says, “he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit”, but let us never forget that the One we know as our Saviour is also the Holy One of God.

Ken Hollands

(In the next issue D.V. this address will be concluded with “The Sin Hating Believer and the Seeking Believer” .)

CERTAINTY

I am impressed with the certainty of the affairs of the believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. The scriptures read contain the words ‘shall’ or ‘shalt’ and both convey divine certainties.

Certainty of Salvation

“Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.”

(Acts 16:31)

In this scripture initial salvation is in view. "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved". That is a certainty. In God's mercy I can say that I have that certainty and I trust that all who are here today have the same certainty of the knowledge of salvation in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other Saviour; there is no other way of salvation; we simply have to accept the word of the preachers—notice that both Paul and Silas said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved".

There is no small print, no question of any uncertainties. There is a certainty today that we in this hall can all prove and need to prove because sinners away from the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ are doomed to a lost eternity; but by simple faith in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, "thou shalt be saved", and no one can take that away from you.

Some may feel that you can be saved today and lost tomorrow; I do not find that in the Bible but I do find, as this scripture indicates, the certainty of salvation in the Person of the Saviour. He has completed an eternal work to God's perfect satisfaction and glory. God is absolutely satisfied with what our Lord Jesus Christ has done and today we can, in the active faith of our hearts, simply trust, simply believe in what He has done. "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved". I want to convey to all here today the wonderful certainty of it. In a world of uncertainty, in a world of change and upheaval you can have the certainty of eternal salvation.

Certainty in Death

"And Jesus said to him, Verily I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

(Luke 23:43)

In Luke the dying malefactor had turned to the Lord Jesus Christ and said to Him, "Remember me, Lord, when thou comest in thy kingdom." It is, perhaps, the only instance in scripture of a deathbed conversion. You might have thought that a malefactor would go into eternal loss but how real it was to that man to receive such a word from Jesus, "Verily I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

This man in Luke 23 was thinking about blessing at some time in the future but the Lord Jesus said to him "*To-day* shalt thou be with me ..." and I believe Mr. W—— is enjoying paradise with the Saviour right now. I have no doubt

about that; he went to paradise immediately he was taken from his bodily condition; he is resting in the Saviour whom he loved and served for many years. Many have known our beloved brother; how steadfast, how affectionate, how protective he was of the Lord's interests, and now he is with the Saviour resting in paradise—no uncertainty, no doubt about that, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What a certainty!

Beloved hearer, if you were to die today, where would you go? I ask the question soberly, 'Where would you go?' Would it be to paradise? You can be certain of it by simply trusting in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. This dying thief looked to Jesus and said, "Remember me, Lord" and God took him that day to paradise.

I say, beloved friends, whether it is salvation or whether it is death you can be certain about these things. There are no doubts, no qualms, no fears for the believer because Jesus has taken away every qualm relating to death according to the order of man after the flesh. This man went straight to paradise; what a wonderful experience to know the certainty of being in the presence of his Lord.

Certainty of the Resurrection

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in [the] twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
(1 Corinthians 15:51,52)

This last scripture, relating to the resurrection, has a great certainty also. It is a mystery; a mystery to some here perhaps who may not realise that not only has death to be faced but also resurrection. There was an atheist who was dying and his friends came to see him and said to him, 'What is the trouble, why are you looking so fearful today, you have been such a bold person in your disbelief as to christianity. When you die that is the end.' 'No,' he said, 'I have come to it on my deathbed that what I fear is the resurrection.'

Now, beloved friends, there is no need to fear the resurrection. It says in this scripture, "for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised" there is to be a resurrection of the dead, it is in the Bible; death is not the end, "the dead *shall* be raised ... and we *shall* be changed." These are certainties; think of

the dead being raised, what a host, think of the myriads and myriads of those who have died, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed." These I understand are the dead who have believed on our Lord Jesus Christ. It says in another scripture that the unbelieving dead are not raised for another thousand years (see Revelation 20:5) but the dead who have died in Christ are going to be raised first. "*Shall be raised*", what a host, what a harvest for God and what a harvest for Christ. What it will be to be changed into conditions of incorruptibility! "For this corruptible must needs put on incorruptibility, and this mortal put on immortality." What a thing to look forward to, a time when crying and when in the kind of distress, which our brother spoke about in prayer, distance, tears and sorrows will be forever put away and we shall be in conditions of incorruptibility and immortality. It is a great hope for the believer on the Lord Jesus and it is a certain hope.

I wish to convey an impression to every heart here that by simple faith, by simple belief in the Person of the Saviour you can know the certainty of your soul's salvation. As to death, if you are taken to be with Him, you can prove the certainty of being in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as to resurrection, may the certainty of that great matter lay hold on our hearts and minds today. I believe these things bring a sense of peace and rest even in the presence of death. We feel for our beloved sorrowing brethren today and I trust that the Lord will graciously comfort, especially our beloved widowed sister in all the weakness of her present condition. But for us all, beloved brethren, may our hearts freshly rise in thanksgiving to the Saviour who has died for us and lives at God's right hand and who is coming again for us. May our hearts love Him more today. For His name's sake.

Malcolm Wallach

"... a son of man, ... there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, ... his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom [that] which shall not be destroyed."

(Daniel 7:13, 14)

THINGS WE OUGHT TO DO 3.

Conduct in God's House

"These things I write to thee, ... in order that thou mayest know how one ought to conduct oneself in God's house, which is the assembly of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth." (1 Timothy 3:14, 15)

Well, where is God's house? It is not a building. It is composed of persons, those who believe on Jesus, and because of that you are never outside of it. So you have to conduct yourself, at all times, as being in God's house. Have you an appreciation of God's house? Poor Jacob, in Genesis 28, had no appreciation of it at first. He says, "How dreadful is this place!" (Genesis 28:17) We have to come that way. Most of us, all of us I am sure, have come that way, come to a point very often against our own wills. Then Jacob had a revelation, "... and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to the heavens. And behold, angels of God ascended and descended upon it." (Genesis 28:12) That was his first impression of Bethel, the house of God. "And Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had made his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it." (Genesis 28:18). What an appreciation he had of the house of God. Have you an appreciation of the house of God? Is your appreciation growing? It is not a building of stone and lime but it exists and you have to know how to conduct yourself in God's house. You are never outside of it and there is conduct proper to it. Let us respect it; we know the dignity that belongs to the house of God which is the assembly of the living God—no dead place—the pillar and base of the truth. A pillar is something that can be seen. Do you see it? Let us answer to the truth of it, "...the assembly of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth." This is where God is free to make Himself known, where these things can be enjoyed; you have to respect it; you have to act in dignity in relation to it. It is God's house; then let us conduct ourselves as we ought in God's house.

James Strachan

*This concludes the extracts from the address at
Gardenstown, 31st December 1992*

MARKS OF THOSE LOOKING FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

“how ye turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to await his Son from the heavens, whom he raised from among the dead, Jesus, our deliverer from the coming wrath.” (1 Thessalonians 1:9,10)

We are to be found in these last days awaiting His Son from the heavens. Are you waiting? Is the expectancy of our Lord's return a burning reality in your heart? I thank God there is a deepening longing in my soul, and I trust in many souls in this room tonight, for the Lord to come and take us to be with Himself. Has the Morning Star risen in your heart? Does the brightness and the reality of the Lord's coming begin to burn afresh in your heart? Oh that it might do so. What an object to have before us, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will descend in the air. The trump of God and archangel's voice will be heard. Those that have died in the Lord will be raised first. We the living will be caught up to be with Him for ever. What a moment that will be! What a moment when we see the One that we have loved, see Him face to face? Does not your heart long for that glorious and blessed moment? The One that died for you: the One that has delivered you: the One that has brought you back to God: Himself is personally coming to fetch you, to take you to be with Himself for ever. Throughout Christendom the cry is going forth, “Behold, the bridegroom” (Matthew 25:6). Have you heard it? Or are you enmeshed in the things of this world? Are you quite happy with the things of this world, just going on the normal course of things? Oh, beloved brother and sister may the Spirit of God cause an awakening in your soul tonight. The One that we love is coming to take us to be with Himself out of this world of sin and sorrow and failure. We are going to be with Him. Everyone that has put their trust in Him will be with Him. Myriads and myriads of saints, redeemed by His own precious blood, are going to be caught up to be with Him for ever. What a triumph when the fruit of Christ's work will be caught up to be with Him.

Now what would be the effect of looking for the Lord's coming? The first thing is it would make us evangelical in outlook. We look around and we know so many persons who as far as we can see do not know our Lord Jesus Christ. If they are left here when our Lord comes there will be no second opportunity for anyone that has heard the gospel and given the opportunity to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. You and I have a responsibility to those persons. We have a responsibility to tell them about the Saviour. You might say ‘I am not a preacher, I do not have the gift of the evangelist.’ but I am not talking about

that. I wish there were more evangelists and I pray that the Lord might raise up more evāngelists in these last days. One thing we can do is to tell persons about our Saviour. It should be a matter of joy to speak of the One that has done everything for us, to those with whom our God brings us into contact. There should be a burning desire in our souls that we *want* persons to be saved; we *want* persons to be blessed; we *want* persons to be delivered from the power of Satan, sin and death. We have a responsibility to speak to persons and tell them about our Saviour. Tell them what He has done for us. It is not a question of education. It is not a question of long speeches. It is a simple testimony to Jesus, the One that we love. One old sister who could not say much, used to say to persons whom she came across, 'Do you know Christ? If you do not you are going to hell.' One day we shall find how many precious souls have been saved by that sister's faithful word. The Lord does not ask us to do anything beyond the strength that He has given to us, and we have a responsibility to speak to souls about Jesus and His great love.

Another effect of looking for Him would raise the question whether I am a good steward. Everyone who has put their trust in Jesus becomes a steward for our Lord Jesus Christ. You say, 'What am I a steward of?' Well, first of all, your body, soul and spirit belong to Christ. It does not belong to you, it belongs to Christ. He has purchased it with His own precious blood shed on Calvary's tree. I belong to Jesus. I am His, His property. My body is no longer mine to do what I want and to go where I please. My mouth is no longer my property to speak as I will. I belong to Christ and my whole being, body, soul and spirit, is to be used for the furtherance of what is for the pleasure and glory of my Lord and Saviour. We often sing, 'O what a debt we owe'. The Lord never calls that debt in, but we have a moral responsibility. A sense of indebtedness to our Saviour should be in our hearts and souls and should underlie our committal to Him. There was only one Man who was totally committed to God and that was Christ. But the Lord looks to each one of us for committal to Himself. We are here to express Himself, and His will and His heart. We are not here to do our own wills.

We are also stewards of the material things the Lord has committed into our hands. They are not given to us for our own aggrandisement and the furtherance of our own interests. They have been given to us so that we might be able to serve Him, to serve His interests and cause what we have to produce increase to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I think it is well, before we do anything, to stop and think and ask the Lord whether it is going to further what is of Him

or not. If it is going to further that which is of Him then go ahead, because the Spirit of God would give you the strength and help and wisdom and skill that is needed. If it is not going to further that which is of Christ then we had better leave it. The time is short and there is a lot of work yet to be done.

We need to use our time, too. Our time is not for our own use. God has given us time that we might be stewards of our time and use it for the benefit of our Lord and Master. How perfectly He used His time. There was never a minute lost of a day in our Lord's life. Every moment was profitable to His God and His Father. What committal we see in Him. Let us feed upon that committal so that we might be formed by the Spirit of God in the same character of committal that shone in all its glorious perfection in our Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). Does that find an echo in your heart? Oh that we might have the will of our Lord more before us and seek to answer to it, seek what pleases Him in the little time that is left. What a testimony we would become! We would become more and more like our Saviour. "The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." (Acts 11:26). What does that mean? It meant that persons recognised what was of Christ in the disciples in Antioch and they put a name across it—christians. Would it not be fine if the persons whom you and I have to do with day by day can put Christ's name across us because they see something of our Master shining in the way we speak, the spirit we manifest and in the way we do things—a way that is different from the way the world does things. They should see a different Man shining in us, the Man Christ Jesus.

May the reality of our Lord's coming thus be a burning reality in everyone of our hearts and souls. Let us turn away from that which is worthless, from that which is unprofitable. Let us turn and commit ourselves to our Lord Jesus Christ. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your intelligent service." (Romans 12:1). Let us present these bodies a living sacrifice acceptable to our God and Father and let us be found here dependent upon what He would provide to sustain, help and keep us through this difficult time until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to take us to be with Himself. He *is* coming; He could come at any moment. So let us be ready and waiting. Let us leave nothing undone that we should have done. Let us leave nothing behind which would mar the testimony that our Lord Jesus Christ has given to each one of us to maintain in this day in which He has set us.

DIVINE SYMPATHY

Jesus, my sorrow lies too deep
For human ministry;
It knows not how to tell itself
To any but to Thee.

Thou dost remember still, amid
The glories of God's throne,
The sorrows of mortality,
For they were once Thine own.

Yes, for as if Thou would'st be God,
E'en in Thy misery,
There's been no sorrow but Thine own
Untouch'd by sympathy.

Jesus, my fainting spirit brings
Its fearfulness to Thee,
Thine eye at least can penetrate
The clouded mystery.

And is it not enough, enough,
This holy sympathy?
There is no sorrow e'er so deep
But I may bring to Thee.

1823

Lady Powerscourt
See page 16

MY SHEPHERD
Psalm 23

I shall not want, for Jesus is my Shepherd;
In pastures green He maketh me to lie;
He leadeth me beside the silent waters,
And there He doth my every need supply.

My soul He doth restore, and when I'm straying
He follows me o'er plain and rocky steep,
Again in paths of righteousness to lead me
For His Name's sake—His poor and wand'ring sheep.

And though I walk within the vale and shadow
Of death, I will not fear, for Thou art near;
Thy rod and staff my ever-present comfort,
Thy hand my strength, Thy whispered word my cheer.

Before my foes Thou hast prepared a table,
Abundant fatness yielding by the way;
My head with oil Thou constantly anointest,
So that my cup runs over day by day.

Thy goodness and Thy mercy, like two angels
Have followed me through life—I know them well.
And when my journey's ended, then my Shepherd
Shall bear me to His house, with Him to dwell.

c. 1930

Miss A Ross

CONFIDENCE IN GOD

(An extract from the letters of Lady Powerscourt)

Introduction

Lady Powerscourt's letters were edited by Robert Daly and published in 1838, just two years after she had died at the age of thirty six. The letters are long out of print and second-hand copies are difficult to obtain. In this issue we begin what it is hoped will be a series of extracts from the letters. Apart from some minor changes and alterations to the punctuation to aid readability the letters are given as originally published.

Theodosia Anne Howard was converted at the age of nineteen, probably through the ministry of Robert Daly, then Rector of Powerscourt. In June 1822 she married Richard Wingfield, 5th Viscount Powerscourt, but was widowed in August the following year when she was only twenty three. Her letters are full of the comfort, encouragement and hope which she found in Christ and the way she had come to depend on Him for everything. A very beautiful expression of dependence which appears in several of her published letters is, "With what confidence we may lay ourselves back in His arms and say, 'undertake for me'".

The letter which starts this series deals particularly with comfort for widows being written only six months after her own husband was taken to be with the Lord. It was also a period of political agitation in Ireland when Daniel O'Connell was exerting considerable influence. This probably explains the references in the letter below to "rebellions and revolutions".

February 18, 1824

... It needs a great stretch of faith sometimes, when the enemy comes in like a flood, to believe that God is as much at peace with me through Christ as with those already above; that Abraham, now in glory, is not safer than I am. Is that presumption, do you think? What a precious name, a strong tower, into which, if we run, we shall be safe! Were I left to myself, I should run from it. I should not trust myself to His word, but seek to save myself from danger. But almighty love arrests me, pulls me in; and then rewards me for coming.

How much there is in those words, "are safe",—to think we are safe from everything! No evil shall ever touch us at the end, or evil on the way. All [is] paved with love; "all things work together for good". I have got the promise of all others that I want; "let thy widows trust in me". I once wished there was a richer, sweeter promise to widows; but I believe [we need] to be brought into different circumstances in order to feel the force of the different promises. For the Lord knew that none so suited widows as these few words.

In looking round the wide world, so filled with wickedness, and seeing one has to pass through it alone, one would fear, every step one took, so unprotected and forlorn, [but] for this promise. With this, "when I am weak, then am I strong." It is not like Him to invite us to trust in Him and then let any evil come nigh us. If His everlasting arms are underneath, I "shall dwell in safety alone". Let there be rebellions, revolutions, persecutions, earthquakes, anything, everything, "let thy widows trust in me" should be enough. I know my "tabernacle shall be in peace". Sweet to think that the eye of the Lord is upon us, to deliver our soul from death ... "the LORD is thy keeper".

Then unbelief jumps up and says, 'How do you know all this is for you?' Then I do not know what to say, [except] 'my Master told me so'. His Spirit witnesses with my spirit. He has given me the earnest of the Spirit. To those who believe He is precious, and I think He is precious to me. ... Oh that I could keep close to Him! I want to be fixed on the rock. My grief is, that the waves of sin and the world give me so many shoves off it.

Will you not pray for me, for I greatly need it; and will you not write to me, and exhort me with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord; and tell me if you think me presumptuous, or growing wrong in any way? That old serpent is so cunning. Will you forgive me for speaking so much of myself, but speaking of what He can do for me magnifies the power of His grace, more than if I were to speak of it with regard to any one else upon earth.

Yours, with christian affection,

T. A. Powerscourt

INDIVIDUALITY

We cannot be apostles, but we can be men of God, and for this we need to be more individual. It is not sufficient to maintain in a collective way what is orthodox. I think we have, in the present time, in the ruin all around, to be to a large extent individual. We shall not be any real help if we are not this, for we shall be looking for support from others. If we are not strong individually there is not much power in our fellowship. (8/31) Rotherham, 1894

There are two ways in which the christian can be viewed: namely, as in Ephesians, in an abstract way in relation to what is collective, or as in Philippians, where he is viewed individually and as running a race. The church does not run a race, but each individual christian is here in the faith, and running a race from one point to another, from earth to heaven. (19/441)

The thought of the kingdom is that it is the sphere and scene where the Lord has sway. Each one is responsible to the Lord, therefore we do not attempt to lord it over one another's conscience. Conscience refers to the Lord.... If a man has a morbid conscience, and is highly scrupulous about trifling matters, it only proves that he is not fully in the light of the Lord. If a man is in the light of the Lord he has the Lord before him; and if a man is legal you must seek to bring him more into the light. The apostle's great anxiety is to preserve individual responsibility to the Lord; the Lord is the christian's judge, and therefore conscience must refer to the Lord. (20/131) London, 1896

You must stick to your individuality, and not make too much of the company. We seek to walk together, but we ought to resist the idea of forming a community of any kind. (19/472) Peckham, 1903

In a day of evil it is of the utmost importance to prove all things and not accept the dictum of anybody. (12/421) Plainfield, 1898

There is no good in making much of anything collective at the present time, for we are in the day of the church's ruin, and in such a moment everything must depend upon individual fidelity, so that each one of us has to look to himself or herself. (15/338) 1901

And while we seek to walk together we do not keep our elbows out and hold one another at a distance; but at the same time we want to be careful to maintain

individuality. In the dark days of the churches it is, "He that hath an ear, let him hear....." (Revelation 3:22) (17/156) Chicago, 1902

In connection with the thought of the good Shepherd I desire to press what is of great importance, and that is the individual knowledge of Christ. We cannot know Christ collectively, it must be individual. We cannot live on meetings, formalities, ministry; He knows each one individually, and would have one know Him individually. In the present day nothing can be more vitally important than individual knowledge of the Shepherd. Each one of us has to see to it that we cultivate our relations with the Shepherd. Each one of us needs diligence to cultivate fidelity to the Shepherd. (19/354)

If the Spirit of God has given us any true perception of the character of what is around, that it does not answer to the test of scripture, and if we have been enabled in faith to stand apart, we must most carefully maintain the sense of individuality. We may have the privilege of walking together, if we are agreed in mind, but we have diligently to avoid the formation of any system whatever: if we do not, we simply drop back again into the error of all that is around. (2/7) Greenwich, 1902

We cannot depend on the company: it is, "he that hath an ear". So in the second epistle to Timothy the apostle looks for fidelity to Christ in the individual. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God." (2 Timothy 2:15) (16/254) Scarborough, 1902

Our path is peculiarly individual, and I would desire to see that maintained; I think a great many go on in dependence on what is to their eyes an organisation, or on meetings, or on ministry. (14/253)

Chapter 36 of 'Handing on the Torch': a collection of extracts from 'Ministry by F. E. Raven'. The back page has information on how this book may be obtained.

To the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, [be] glory, majesty, might, and authority, from before the whole age, and now, and to all the ages. Amen." (Jude 1:25)

A TESTIMONY FROM THE TITANIC

Shortly before midnight on April 14, 1912, in the waters of the Atlantic about 1,600 miles north-east of New York, there occurred one of the greatest marine disasters in all history. The giant steamship 'Titanic' the largest vessel then afloat was making her maiden trip from Liverpool to New York, when she suddenly struck the under-water shelf of an iceberg. Two hours later the ship sank sucking down all but seven hundred and six of her 2,300 passengers. In answer to frantic wireless calls the 'Carpathia' at last reached the spot and picked up survivors from rafts and lifeboats.

Four years after the 'Titanic' went down a young Scotsman rose in a meeting in Hamilton, Canada, and said, 'I am a survivor of the "Titanic".' When I was drifting along on a spar on that awful night, the tide brought Mr John Harper of Glasgow, also on a piece of wreck, near me 'Man' he said, 'are you saved?'

'No,' I said, 'I am not.' He replied, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' The waves bore him away: but strange to say, brought him back a little later and he said, 'Are you saved now?'

'No,' I said, 'I cannot honestly say that I am.' He said again, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved', and shortly after he went down. There, alone in the night and with two miles of water under me, I believed.

Extracted from the "Fisherman's Gospel Manual".

See the back page for details of this book.

"Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously"
(Hosea 14:2)

“LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED”

(John 14:1-3)

And what was it that troubled the heart of these disciples? Was it their health, their business, their family affairs? or any of the thousand and one things which often trouble us?

No, it was not exactly their circumstances which troubled them, trying though their circumstances were. They were not much concerned about what we call ‘the troubles of this life’...

The answer is already on many lips. It was because Jesus had just told them that He was going away. The thought of His absence was the cause of their sorrow. He, who was everything to them, was about to leave them. Poor, ignorant, wayward they were, and often did they grieve the Saviour’s heart by their unbelief and foolish ways, yet they really loved Him, and so when He spoke of going away they were filled with sorrow and dismay.

It has often been said that what the Lord appreciates most in His people is *affection*. Intelligence we *must* have to know His will, and intelligence we *shall* have if we keep near to Him! But what He values most in us is not intelligence, important though that may be, but personal love to Himself. If the soul has left its “first love”; “even thy works and thy labour and thine endurance” (Revelation 2:4,2) however correct, are not refreshing to His heart because He sees they are prompted by custom or by something else short of devotedness to His Person. A wife may be all that a wife should be in her attentions to her husband, but if he discerns that her services are not rendered because she loves him, they do not satisfy.

How are we to gauge the state of our affections to Christ? I think there is no truer touchstone than the hope of His return. We may be very scriptural in our mode of worship and ministry, exact in matters of discipline, and rigidly separated from religious evil and the world; and, moreover, we may be able to talk fluently about our heavenly calling and character, yet all these things, right enough in themselves, may be animated and maintained by love of orthodoxy with the heart as barren, as stern, and as cold as an iceberg! But we cannot be longing to see Jesus for the simple joy of being with Him unless our hearts are aglow with fervent love to Him. His absence makes the loving heart grow

fonder, turns the wistful eye upward and moves the Spirit-taught cry, "Amen; come Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20)

Conferences and conventions are being held continually around us (1900) to promote the doctrine of pre-millennial advent of Christ, but no amount of education in the doctrine of the Lord's coming will restore the bridal attitude proper to the assembly. What is needed is a revival in the *hearts* of saints—a revival of affection and attachment to Christ.

I have heard of a christian lady who was greatly perplexed as to why the Lord tarried so long. One night she dreamed that He appeared to her and she put the question, 'Oh Lord, how is it Thou dost not come and take Thy people home?'

'Because they do not want me' was the sad and solemn reply!

Amazed and shocked, she awoke to find that the charge was only too true.

Alas the great mass of christians do not want Jesus to return. Engulfed by worldliness, politics and selfish pursuits, they cling to earth. Their affection is not set on *things* which are above, nor on the *place* where those things are found, nor on the *Person* who is the centre of those heavenly realities. They have left their first love! "The blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) is to them only a doctrine. Those words, "He is not here" (Luke 24:6) uttered long ago to those desolate disciples at the mouth of the open sepulchre, awake no echo in their souls. Jesus is not the commanding object of their lives. They do not love Him as they once did. "The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" (Lamentations 4:2) The world esteems them as such because the fine gold has become dim. The lustre of heaven no longer illuminates their ways. They are not, in truth, a heavenly people, because their hearts are no longer in loving association with the heavenly One, whose absence they do not mourn, and whose coming again they do not look for.

What is the remedy? How is the waiting spirit to be recovered? What can kindle afresh divine affection in the soul? There is only one resource, namely, being *much in the company of Jesus!* The disciples loved Him because they daily enjoyed His love to them. They were constantly near Him, listening to His loving words, looking at His loving works. How could they be in His com-

pany—marking how attentive He was to their every requirement, how kind, considerate and good—I say, how could they be in His company and not love Him and be troubled at the prospect of His absence? And how can we be in spirit in the company of the Lord and yet not love Him? Impossible! The reason why we love Him so little is because we enjoy His company so seldom. Companionship with Jesus deepens affection toward Him, and in proportion as we love Him, we sigh for His return, and for the time when we shall see Him and be absolutely with Him and like Him for ever.

“Let not your heart be troubled”. How gently the words left the Lord’s lips and how sweetly they fell on the ears of those whom He loved! “Ye believe on God”, says He, “believe also on me”. He asks them to *trust* Him, not exactly to believe Him, but to believe on Him. They believed on God, though they saw Him not. ‘Well,’ says He, ‘believe also on Me when I am unseen; let nothing shake the confidence you have reposed in Me’ (see 1 Peter 1:8). They *had* believed in Him, but only as an *earthly* Messiah. Hence they could not understand why He must needs die, nor did they fully understand it till they trusted Him as an unseen and a heavenly Saviour who had gone to prepare a more glorious place for them in heaven than ever they could have occupied on earth.

See how He draws aside the curtain which veils the unseen and gives them a little peep into heaven.

“In my Father’s house there are many abodes”. ‘Abodes’ is a better word than ‘mansions’. The Father’s house is big enough to hold all His dear children. Like Ezekiel’s latter-day temple, which perhaps reflects it, as the earthly often portrays the heavenly, it has *many* “chambers” (see Ezekiel chapters 41 and 42) “Were it not so, I had told you”. It was as though He said, ‘I would not have deceived you, but have told you plainly if there were not room enough there for you as well as for Me’...

“I go to prepare you a place”, says He, and He has done it. Had He not died and gone up on high there would have been no place there for you and me; but by virtue of His own blood – having finished redemption’s work – He has entered heaven, and in righteousness prepared a place for all His own.

And now He would comfort our hearts by the assurance, “I am coming again”. He puts it in the present tense as though He were already on the way. Thus does He seek to keep us on the *qui vive*—on the lookout for Him. In verse

18 of our chapter He says, "I am coming to you". That refers to His *spiritual coming*, and shows that we can enjoy His presence in spirit on the road home. But in the familiar words, "I am coming again", He refers to His *personal* return, the future consummation of our hope and blessing. Then He will *receive* us unto Himself. He does not say that He will *take* us. We are now, in the safekeeping of "the Holy Spirit of God, with which ye have been sealed [secured] for the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30); but when Jesus comes we shall be gathered unto Himself.

What love and grace, what touching pathos are in those words, "That where I am ye also may be." Then it will no longer be, *There am I*—"where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)—but "*where I am*". He will no longer come down to us, but lift us up to Him.

How cheering, stimulating and morally purifying is "the blessed hope", and how the heart burns within us as He talks with us by the way about it! If the heart is right, beating with warm fresh living love to Christ, His oft-repeated assurance of His near return will fill us with the joy of anticipation, and thus with unspotted garments, girded loins, pilgrim staff, trimmed lamp, and wakeful eyes we shall be like unto men who wait for their Lord.

S.J.B. Carter

THE NAME OF JESUS

As honey to the taste, as melody in the ear, as songs of gladness in the heart, so is the name of Jesus . . . Naught but the name of Jesus can restrain the impulse of anger, repress the swelling pride, cure the wound of envy, bridle the onslaught of luxury, extinguish the flame of carnal desire—can temper avarice, and put to flight impure and ignoble thoughts. For when I name the name of Jesus, I call to mind at once a Man meek and lowly of heart, benign, pure, temperate, merciful; a Man conspicuous for every honourable and saintly quality; and also in the same Person the Almighty God—so that He both restores me to health by His example and renders me strong by His assistance. No less than this is brought to my mind by the name of Jesus whenever I hear it.

Bernard of Clairvaux

CHRIST AS FOOD—THE PASSOVER

I would say at the outset that the passover is an idea which goes right through. It is not exactly an elementary idea; it is rather a fundamental one. That is, the passover was celebrated in Egypt, it was celebrated in the wilderness, and it was celebrated in the land. The passover is something that applies to us in whatever position we are found. It was that which became strength to God's people to move out of Egypt. It was that which they had to celebrate in the wilderness, and it was that which they had to celebrate constantly in the land. Hence you will see that it is a basic idea that applies to us in whatever position we are regarded.

I think it is important to lay hold of that, for the passover represents Christ as the One who endured in an unmitigated way the judgment of God against sin. As feeding upon it, it becomes the lever in our affections by which we ourselves are maintained in the same judgment of sin as God has expressed in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. When once that is seen, you will understand how basic it is, because in whatever position we are looked at it is essential as God's people that we should be maintained in the judgment of sin. Any amount of privilege will not avail us if we go on in the allowance of that which God has judged in the cross of Christ. The fact that we are sons, the fact that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, whatever blessing and privileges may be attached to us as in the mind of God for us, it does not avail us anything if we go on with that which God has judged. The passover must be kept in every position in which we may be regarded.

The passover, strictly speaking, did not need to be repeated, but the moral import of the passover needs to be renewed and maintained, and that is seen in the feast of unleavened bread. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians in regard to the state of things that existed there, says, "our passover, Christ, has been sacrificed," (1 Corinthians 5:7). The point is not exactly what has been done for us, but that Christ our passover has been sacrificed. That has been done and therefore the only thing remaining to be done is for the feast of unleavened bread to be celebrated.

Now the feast of unleavened bread is the moral answer in us to the passover as setting out the way that Christ has borne the judgment of God against sin. So when the passover was instituted they were told to "eat none of it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roast with fire"; that was the important thing; "roast

with fire". The fire speaks of the direct action of judgment in an unmitigated way, and that is seen when we contemplate the cross for there the Lord felt the terrible character of divine judgment against sin, expressing His feelings in those words, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" In expressing His feelings thus He did not ask for any mitigation of the judgment but rather He testified to the rightness of it for He says, "And thou art holy, thou that dwellest amid the praises of Israel," (Psalm 22:3)

The judgment of God against sin is intended to be apprehended by us as we engage our minds with it, as feeding upon Christ in that way. It says they were to eat it with bitter herbs, "its head with its legs and with its inwards." It is to make it more appealing to our hearts, for the head would refer to the personal dignity of the One concerned. The legs would refer to the immaculate purity and beauty of His walk, and the inwards would speak of those inward perfections which were so delightful to God when laid bare. Yet everything came under the action of the fire, and we are to have that in our minds in order that we may obtain a right impression of what lawlessness and self-will are in the sight of God. I fear we tend to have a very weak sense sometimes of what sin is. We judge the more flagrant things but we often have a very light apprehension of what pleasing ourselves is in the sight of God. It is really the working of the will of the creature in opposition to the will of the Creator and that is why it is to be dealt with so unsparingly. The great thought is, that we, as God's redeemed people, might be delivered from every kind of lawlessness. This is presented to us as the food that lies at the basis of our spiritual prosperity; the passover was to be eaten thus, with bitter herbs. It also says, that they were to eat it with their loins girded and their shoes on their feet, and it was to be eaten in haste. It is an urgent matter and there is to be no dilatoriness about us. Then it says that none was to be left till the morning, another important thing. It was indeed the beginning of months to God's people. Months in scripture very often refer to the succession of exercises by which the desired end is reached. So it was to be continually perpetuated as a feast to Jehovah, in the form of the feast of unleavened bread. It was to be partaken of for the complete period of seven days. Paul, in giving it application to the Corinthians says, "our passover, Christ, has been sacrificed; so that let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." We are not to be characterised by anything that marked us in our unconverted days. Unleavened bread is clearly a moral condition of soul in God's people that answers to our having appropriated the lamb roast with fire. One would emphasise the importance of this basic matter which applies to us in

every position in which we may be. We may be just coming out of Egypt for the first time; for Egypt represents the world, not merely in its grossest form, nor yet in its religious form, but here simply as the scene where man is moving in self will. John in his first epistle says, "Love not the world, nor the things in the world." as though it is possible to be delivered from the world as a system and yet to bring the things of the world into the circle of light in which we move.

Alfred J Gardiner

"HE GIVES MORE GRACE"

The Holy Spirit is the source of pure and holy desires, and He dwells in us. What a comfort this is to the christian in a scene dominated by sin, conscious of the presence of the flesh with all its unholy and insubject tendencies! There is a divine person—the Comforter—who enters sympathetically into all our exercises, rebuking the flesh, but supporting and encouraging all that is of God, and interceding for us with unutterable groanings. We may well rely on Him, refer to Him and count on His grace and support.

"He gives more grace." (James 4:6). We are reminded of John's words concerning Christ, "of his fulness we all have received, and *grace upon grace*." (John 1:16). The supply is far greater than the demand. The Spirit is the Spirit of grace. Though He may be grieved, hindered and ignored, He will never leave those in whom He has come to dwell. May we learn to respond to Him more and more and to give Him greater place and liberty in our souls. He will ever direct us to Christ and to the Father, so that Christ may be glorified and the Father worshipped as the supreme Source and Object of all our hearts. So James speaks of divine persons, "our Lord Jesus Christ, Lord of glory", whose excellent name has been called upon us, and Him who is "God and the Father", "the Father of lights, with whom is no variation nor shadow of turning" (James 1:17), who has begotten us by the word of truth, who gives to all freely and reproaches not, and who draws near to us as we draw near to Him. "God sets himself against the proud, but gives grace to the lowly." (James 4:6). What lowliness becomes us in the presence of such grace!

W. M. Brown

Words of Grace and Comfort, Vol. 26, p.23

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Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall do that which I please, and it shall accomplish that for which I send it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (Isaiah 55:6-12)