

meeting with what shall seem to us miracles, with processes beyond our comprehension and results beyond our calculation. God's commonplaces are our marvels, and our marvels are God's commonplace.

If only we can take this as a living truth into our souls, it will many a time change our outlook and put new life into our religion. We make our own minds, our own powers, our own experiences the measure of all things, and decline to entertain any expectation of what might transcend them. We limit God's to-morrow by our own to-day. We fall into an almost cynical habit of assuming that the growth of good must be slow, very slow, if it advance at all, and of guarding ourselves against disappointment by expecting little—certainly, nothing marvellous. We greatly need to be delivered from the dull, dead inexpectancy which comes down like a blighting frost upon our Christian life, and reduces our Christian work to a monotonous and sometimes mechanical routine. We ought to expect God to astonish us (paradox though it be to say so) by the outstretching of His holy arm.

Another cause of inexpectancy is that we think more of our own working than of God's. Our own efforts we know. How fitful and often half-hearted they are! How poor and weak a thing our own striving after a purer and higher life! And knowing our own limitations and not remembering God's limitlessness, we settle down to small expectations. We have no strong, serious expectation of ever being very much better Christians than we are. We have no higher aspiration than to live a decent, average life; this, we believe, is within the compass of our powers. But any call to enthusiasm, to devoutness, to generous self-devotion sounds unreal in our ears. We cannot readily picture ourselves in that character. It would be marvellous in our eyes; and we forget to ask whether it would be marvellous also in God's eyes.

But is He not a God that doeth wonders? Is not this His character, His history? If it were said to the Christian minister, "God will use you to lead many souls to Christ and to cheer and strengthen many in fighting

the good fight"; if it were said to the Sunday School teacher, "God will richly bless your faithful work to the children in your class"; if it were said to the church of Christ, "God is about to pour upon you a grand heavenly baptism that will make you glow and shine with new life", should it be said that this were too marvellous? Is it not just these marvellous things we should constantly expect God to do?

Let us grasp the truth that our marvels are God's commonplace, and it will give new life to prayer and service. To live in expectation that the greatest difficulties may be wonderfully overcome, the worst sinners wonderfully converted, the greatest evils wonderfully put down, God's kingdom wonderfully advanced,—this would put an altogether new force and joy into our souls. As regards our personal lives, to cherish habitually the belief that God may do astonishing things for us, that He will open a way for us out of our perplexities where none is visible, that some new morning of joy may be about to dawn on our night, some new spring time of fresh impulse visit our lives:—how thus to hope in God would raise us above present care, toil and sorrow! We are saved by hope. We cannot hope too much when we hope in God. Nothing can be too good to be true. What is wonderful in our eyes is not wonderful in His.

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The Sleeping Christ

It was a strange contrast between the raging of the storm that convulsed the waters of the Galilean sea, and the calm of the Saviour in the frail fishing-boat,—asleep.

The picture reveals Christ's attitude towards God. He trusted the Father. He knew the might of the hand that controlled wind and wave, and the love of the heart behind the hand. Nature's forces might come in threatening guise, but He knew that, because they were sent of God, they were working out a purpose that was only good. His was the sleep of perfect fearlessness born of perfect faith.

We see also, in the picture, Christ's attitude towards His disciples. They must