

SELF OR JESUS CHRIST.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

The continual conflict with every Christian is between self and Jesus Christ. Self is the old owner who does not like to be dislodged, and disputes the right of Jesus to be enthroned in the heart. Self sets up its own will and tries to have its own way. Self has abundant uses for the purse, and "cannot afford" to give money away that might buy a fine equipage and rare pictures, and other creature-comforts that make life agreeable. It keeps a sharp eye on the cheque-book, to see that too much is not bestowed on objects of charity, and it whispers artfully, "remember how our expenses are increasing and charity begins at home." Self watches the weather on Sunday morning—the one day in all the week when *health* is of paramount importance—and hesitates about the risk of wet feet or sitting in damp clothing. Self comes home late and mutters, "I am too tired for prayer-meeting to-night"; although it is never too tired for a party, a concert or the opera. And so smooth-tongued self has an oily plea always ready; and if Christ's sentinel, a living conscience, is not there to challenge and silence the cunning seducer, self carries the day.

But the slighted and defrauded Saviour seemeth to say—what meaneth all this? Did I not die to redeem thee? Did I not purchase thy salvation with My precious blood? "Thou art Mine." All thy possessions are but loans for which thou must give account. Thou art not thine own; *thou art Mine!* I will put thee where it seemeth best to Me, and where it is most for thy soul's good; it may be on a bed of sickness, or in straitened quarters, or under a cloud of disappointment, or in a house of mourning. Thou art My child and I appoint thee lessons; thou art My vine, and I may use the pruning-knife if it will make the clusters more abundant. Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of eternal life!

What a different idea of life this gives us! Nothing else will put down and keep down the accursed spirit of selfishness, but the constant sense of Christ's ownership of us. "Oh, honorable Jesus," exclaimed that king of Christians, John Bunyan, "Oh, thou loving Jesus! Thou hast wrested me from my old master the Devil. Thou deservest to have me, for Thou hast bought me with Thy blood; Thou deservest to have all of me. Thou hast paid for me ten thousand times more than I am worth; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed me with Thy blood; Thou hast saved me from death and hell."

When Jesus Christ says to you or me "thou art *mine*," that establishes a clear right to the whole of us. Our tongues must speak for Him, and our hands work for Him. If our brain forges a good thought, His image must be stamped on it. Our influence be-

longs to Jesus; how dare we surrender it to the demands of Fashion? Christ redeemed us to be a "peculiar people"—peculiar in hating sin, peculiar in standing for the right, peculiar in doing business squarely, peculiar in giving generously of our substance, peculiar in obeying only one Master, peculiar in seeking to save souls, and peculiar in having well-springs of joy that never run dry. The more that we live as if Jesus Christ owned us the more people we will draw to Christ. A half-way Christian never makes any converts. Consecration to Jesus is the first step to conversions to Jesus.

There is a very sweet and soul-cheering side to this truth of Christ's ownership of us. If we are Christ's, then He is pledged to take care of us. No one shall pluck us out of His hands. He will give us bread to eat that the world knoweth not of, and draughts from a well that never fails. If our income of money is small, then the incoming of our King into our souls makes us rich. A hard bed lies softer, when conscience smiles, and Jesus Christ makes His love to be our pillow. By-and-bye when death comes with spade and pall and the narrow house, then He who hath redeemed us will draw our deathless spirit closely to Himself and say—"Fear not! *Thou art mine!* Where I am, thou shalt be with me and for evermore!.."

"ROUNDERS."

There are not a few in our day who flit from church to church; who go wherever they can hear the last new preacher or the last new soprano; who crowd the aisles of one church or one Sunday, of another church on the next Sunday, and are possibly on their bicycles or reading the last sensational Sunday newspaper at home on the third Sunday. If they are not given the best seats in the sanctuary they grumble at the inhospitality of the churches; if a contribution box is passed they drop a penny in, and wonder that the churches are always begging; and they go away from the church flattering themselves that they have rendered a distinguished service to the church and its preacher by honoring the one with their presence and the other with their attention. Such Christians grow as little as a plant that should be transplanted into a new pot every week. The soul is not like the aerial moss which thrives on the moisture in the air, and grows as it travels on the wings of the wind. It must be rooted if it is to build up.—*Presbyterian Banner.*

Silence is sometimes more significant and sublime than the most noble and most expressive eloquence, and is on many occasions the indication of a great mind.—*Addison.*