

THE RIGHT POSTURE TOWARD CHRIST.

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There is a vast amount of precious gospel to be gathered from those passages which describe various persons as sitting "at the feet of Jesus." Nearly all of them are to be found in the narrative of the Evangelist Luke; they present a series of most instructive object-lessons. The core of Christianity then, as now, consisted in contact with Jesus Christ.

(1) The first figure we contemplate is that of the sinful woman who bent weeping at His feet as He sat at the table of Pharisee Simon. Here is the posture of true *Penitence*. Remorse ends often in despair; but Christian penitence has a sweet apprehension of mercy in a loving Saviour. Confession of guilt, with a forsaking of sin, always brings pardon. When we take that contrite woman's place, heart-sick of sin, if we listen attentively, we will hear the comforting words "thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

(2) A place at the feet of Jesus is also the posture of sincere *Humility*. Self-conceit is every one's besetting sin. When it overmasters us, we are so sure that we are right, that we are never willing to be set right. When it becomes stubborn self-assertion and self-excusing before God, it is a long step towards perdition. There is no salvation for the man who has built his own raft, and tries to float on it into heaven. The difference between the Pharisee and the Publican was that while both were sinners, only one of them realized the fact. When that fact is realized, and self-conceit grounds its arms at the feet of Jesus, and sues for mercy, then the conflict ends in the victory of grace. For the decisive battle for every one's salvation is fought out just at that very spot—the feet of the Crucified Saviour. When pride, or self-will, or covetousness, or fatal sin of any kind, submits to Christ, the question is settled. Conversion takes place right there. This humble self-submission never degrades us; he that thus humbly himself shall be exalted. Whoever would go into heaven, must go there on his knees.

(3) Beautifully are we taught what is the proper posture of *Prayer* by such examples as that of Abraham, who fell on his face, and then God talked with him;

and those of Jairus and the Syro-Phenician mother who fell at the feet of Christ. Prayer is the soul's converse with God; it never should assume the slightest air of demand or dictation. It is supplication—the more humble, childlike, and submissive, the better. Its right posture is at the feet of the Divine Giver; its richest blessing often is in its influence upon ourselves. When you or I can rise up from the feet of Jesus, satisfied entirely to let Him have His own way, then our prayer has brought a supreme blessing. The more fully that we can get into heart-harmony with God, the more of Him shall we possess; and what else can compare with this? If we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desire of our hearts. One prayer is sure of an answer, and that is the trusting prayer of a true penitent; the Master himself has given the assurance—"him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

(4) The fourth scene from this book of Luke presents the posture of *Docility*. There at the feet of her condescending Teacher sits the loving Mary in the Bethany home. She has done her part in the household preparations, and then, impatient for something which Christ can give to her, she hastens to take her seat as a lowly listener and a loving learner. The supper she hungers after is *soul food*. The very word "disciple" signifies a learner; he is the wisest Christian who is the most teachable. The term-time in Christ's school is short; some of the lessons cut deep; but when we draw up close to the Master, He rewards us with the gracious word "thou hast chosen the good part, which shall never be taken from thee."

(5) This brings us on to the posture of joyful *Gratitude*. Look at that healed leper with smooth skin and clean tongue, who is prostrate before his deliverer, not whispering, but shouting out his thanks. As he lies there overwhelmed with gratitude, he puts to shame thousands of discontented, growling Christians. One of the most abominable sins of which any pardoned, converted, adopted heir of heaven can be guilty of, is that of grumbling ingratitude. Brethren, we apply the microscope to our troubles, and make them as big as possible, and then minimize our mercies. Having Christ, who should dare to complain?

Instead of whining complaints and grumbling disquietudes, let us imitate that