

That wounded hand has broken the bands of death, has opened the gates of heaven, and the suffering Saviour, the Man of Sorrows, the One who emptied Himself, has passed into the glory beyond, is now exalted above all principalities and powers, and is re-enthroned with His Father.

And we, we almost feel, as if we were left in the dark; yet we must not stand gazing up into heaven, but, with one supreme purpose, turn our faces towards an unbelieving world, and by the daily manifestation of an indwelling Christ, constrain men to acknowledge that the Man of Nazareth is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world.

Can we do it? Can we even try to reproduce that life in our own? If we have been bought with a price, if we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, should we not regard ourselves as shut up to this one course? Should we not encourage one another with, "Consider your calling, brethren, and count the cost all joy, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord?"

There is that life lived, which is like a line of white light, to which we may revert, from which we may draw lessons; and we may lay the crooked paths, which our feet make, by the straight ones, for comparison and profit. The principles that produced such perfection here, we may incorporate into our own. They were potent for good then, they have not lost their power now; neither have the hearts of men changed.

Furthermore, when the gates of heaven were flung wide to receive back the eternal One, the Holy Spirit of God came down to earth, and He does not speak for Himself, but He shows us the things which pertain to Christ, and He will lead the willing mind into true copying. With such an attractive, and such a perfect pattern, with such a faithful, ever-present helper, we surely should, in some measure, at least, reflect the image of the Heavenly. None of the elements of success are lacking here; but to the fact, that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, may, perhaps, be attributed the many apparent total or partial failures, that meet us on every hand. If the children of God, have been chosen out of the world, and the One who chose them, could say of them, "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world," then their lineage should be sufficiently distinctive to win the world's hearty, though, possibly, unwilling endorsement. Of a surety the wheat and the tares will grow together, but the wheat, though, a poor quality it may be, should always be recognizable as wheat, and maintain a separate existence from the tares.

The picture that won the heart of our artist, impressed him greatly, as a comprehensive whole. But when he came to study, to copy, he considered position, outline, form, color, expression. To Christ, our exemplar, we have yielded the best, which our poor hearts can give of adoration and devotion. But if actual growth in

His likeness is seriously contemplated, if it is our daily effort to be more like Him to-day than yesterday, and more like Him to-morrow than to-day, we must study His character more carefully and in detail.

As we glance at this central figure of the universe, we see that He sustains the ordinary relations of private and public life. He was son, brother, friend. He yields deference and filial obedience to His parents. He is the oldest son and brother, and as such, works diligently and faithfully, as a contributor to the maintenance of the family. His hands were hardened by the work of a poor man, whose daily labor supplied His own and the recurring wants of others. We also read, that He grew in favor with other men. Not many words, but they speak much. They mean that He possessed the sterling, manly qualities which men respect and love. He must have had an ever-growing consciousness of His divine origin, and the stupendous nature of His mission, and He must have been clothed with a very gracious humility, that no suggestion of the same crept into His private life. After years proved that any such claims only needed reality to produce proportionate alienation.

A manifestation of this kind in the home circle, might have been covered by the love that was His there, but it would not have passed the public mind unchallenged. His growing in favor with men proves how well He kept His secret, till the time for action came. In the Jewish society of Nazareth He was wise and discreet, to an eminent degree, else later on, when men thirsted for something with which to accuse Him, some, at least, fancied trifle, would have served as a foundation to build upon. How our communities and homes would be sweetened if the village and home life of Jesus of Nazareth, simply as such, before He became the acknowledged Christ of God, were there studied and mirrored.

We scarcely need a thought to show us how far we and all the world have strayed from this pattern of Christ-likeness. Still, it is a subject that can bear much thought with profit to the thinker, and no one will ever attain much likeness to Jesus in this regard, without many struggles and many failures.

But He is more than Jesus of Nazareth; He is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, whose mercy endureth to all generations, and with His help all the efforts of His weak, erring children will not end in failure.

But there is a stir in Palestine. The echo of a strong voice is lifted up on the banks of the Jordan, calling men to repentance, has reached His quiet village home, and to Him it is the call of God. Was His human nature ready? Ready for what? Did He feel or think as a man, as He put by for the last time the tools with which He had worked, and laid aside forever the emblems of His private citizenship?

He must have known how the step He was now taking would cause Him to be treated at Nazareth, at no distant