

be hallowed. The chief end of man is to glorify God and therefore to enjoy Him forever. There is nothing selfish in the Divine insistence that God be glorified. To glorify God is not to add to His glory but to make it known. In the nature of things the glory of an infinite and perfect God cannot be increased, but that glory can be more widely recognized. It is for the good of humanity that that glory be known, just as it is desirable that the sun cast its benign rays on the earth. Whatever scatters the fogs or rolls away the night so that warmth and light start the vegetation and give new vigor to life is a blessing. So God needs to be known to the universe, and to this end the works of nature, the written word, the events of history, and especially the coming of Christ, all conjoin. If Christ's worthiness should be made known, the Father would be seen in Him, and a blessing would come.

Manifestly the glory of God as revealed by the Son is not any external splendor. It does not consist in an immense retinue of angels, nor in terrific exhibitions of spiritual power, nor in dazzling and inapproachable brilliancy of appearance. It consists rather in the character which Christ exhibits, in the Divine love shown in suffering for man, in His self-sacrifice, in His sweetness, dignity and grace.

And what is the great blessing to humanity of knowing God as revealed in His Son? Why this,—that thus is secured eternal life. Spiritual death has come by separation from God. We lose all vitality and power by alienation from Him, exactly as a plant grows pale and dies in the darkness. A world in rebellion against God is dead in sin, but as these rebellious subjects become reconciled to their Sovereign and happy in doing His will, the communion with God thus established is their life. Thus Christ's prayer for Himself is absolutely unselfish. It is a prayer that His character may be manifested in order that thus it may be known how good and great God is and so men may be saved. Here then is a prayer for all men, for a world in rebellion.

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR CHRISTIANS.

But Christ prays more directly for His followers. He is surrounded by His disciples, a little band soon to be left alone among fierce persecutors. He is praying with them and naturally prays for them. And as He prays He widens the scope of His prayer and takes into His petition the need of the millions in succeeding generations who shall be led by the influence of Christians themselves. There are four things which He desires for Christians.

The first is *that they may be under God's care and so be kept from sin*. Christ had watched over them hitherto. They had been to school to Him, had called Him Master, had been recognized as His disciples, had been wonderfully developed in character. His teachings had lifted them up into a new sphere of thought and action. But now that He must leave them they would be peculiarly subject to the attacks of the Evil One. This shrewd and persistent adversary would beset them at every point. To do their work they must remain in the world and be brought in contact with temptation in innumerable forms. In their distress they might flee to hermits' caves or to monastic cells, but this was not what Christ planned for them. They must be men and meet the duties of the hour; God grant that they do not yield to the great temptation of the church and become worldly.

Christ's second desire for Christians is *that they may be consecrated to their work*. "Sanctify them through thy truth," "and for their sakes I sanctify Myself." The word "sanctify," to be used of Christ, must mean primarily to set apart for holy uses. In order that Christians may be thus used in religious service they must be made worthy. Thus they are to be both consecrated and sanctified. In all this Christ is their example and standard. He came to earth for man. He gave Himself up to suffering and death that He might do a work for the blessing of humanity. We cannot be His followers and not sympathize with His aims and share in His self-denials. So Christ prays that we may be made willing to take up such a life.

A third petition in behalf of Christians is *for their unity*. Christ prays that they may be one. What sort of unity among Christians does He desire? Such a unity as exists between the Father and Son, or as is

secured when all are united in God. Here is not an organic union surely. It is not a unity secured by identity of creed or of an all-embracing organization. It is a unity of sympathy and purpose. The Son and the Father are in the closest relation of love; they have a common purpose; they act as one. Such community of interests exist among Christians and a similar identity of purpose should control them. A like condition is sure to exist if this union is brought about by a common relation to God. Christ desires that Christians be one in Him and His Father. If we are in Christ we must be alike. No man can say of God "all my springs are in thee" and not be one with his brother who is also united to God.

The fourth petition of Christ is *that Christians may be with Him and recognize His worth*. Companionship, comprehension, sympathy—these are the things Christ desires of His followers. He loves them, would seek to make them understand the character of God as revealed in Christ, and would keep them at His side. He would fold us to His heart and share with us His inmost thought. He prays that we may be bound to Him, receive His instruction and ever live in Him. These, then, are Christ's desires for us—protection, consecration, unity and communion.

Things That Did Not Happen.

What is a shield? It is a very peculiar part of God's armor. It is not a strength in calamity; it is something which prevents calamity from coming. My strength is my power to bear, but my shield is my escape from bearing. My strength lifts me when the blow falls; my shield catches the blow before it falls. My strength supports what is; my shield wards off what might have been. I have often praised God for the strength, but I have seldom anointed the shield. I have recognized a thousand times His songs in the night, but I have not sufficiently thanked Him that the night itself has not been deeper. We are told that there are "ships that pass in the night"—golden opportunities that have been lost in the darkness. And doubtless there have been such. But I think the large majority of the ships that pass in the night are not ships of gold. I am convinced that the vast proportion of the opportunities that escape us in the darkness are opportunities not of gain, but of loss. There is not one sea, however troubled, in which I have not discovered a ship that passed in the night—a ship that was bearing trouble greater still. I have read that in Gethsemane the Son of man received strength at the end; yes, but He received a shield at the beginning. "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" In the midst of His sea He saw a ship of trouble that had passed in the night. This cup might have come without His Father; it might have been an accident, a chance, a contingency. He had been shielded from that, and He anointed the shield. He forgot the thought of the present sea in the thought of the ship that had passed by. He accepted the night for the sake of its one star; He took the cup from His Father.

O Thou divine Man, let me anoint the shield with Thee. Let me mark the blows that have not fallen; let me count the ships that have not come. When I am oppressed and weary I would always hear a voice saying, "You have not yet resisted unto blood." I am always forgetting the manna when I review my wilderness, I see not the bright light in the cloud, nor the shade that might have been deeper. Teach me to anoint my shield. Tell me of the arrows that were broken before they fell. Show me the pitfalls that my feet passed by. Light me to the darkness which my eye did not meet. Let me see the disappearing sail of the sorrow that has missed me.

The Day of Judgment.

Ask yourself of any habit that belongs to your own personal life, and bring it face to face with Jesus Christ and see if it is not judged. Judgment day that is far away, that is off in the dim distance when this world is done—it shall come, no doubt. I know none of us can know much with regard to it, except that it is sure. But the judgment day that is here now is Christ; the judgment day that is right close to your life and rebukes you, if you will let it rebuke you, every time you sin; the judgment day that is here and praises you and bids you be of good courage when you do a thing that men disown and despise, is Christ.