

Once I had a father—noble man—he is now reaping in heaven the reward in glory of a life of singular devotion to Jesus upon earth. He was a wonder to me. He seemed to have the presence of Jesus from morning till night, and from year's end to year's end, always from my earliest recollections. I do not remember ever to have heard him make the complaint made by so many, and, alas ! made so often by me, of the absence of Jesus. His face kindled up in a moment at the mention of Jesus, and all his prayers and all his words and ways shewed that he was full in the faith of that assurance, "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world."

My case was so different that I often wondered at it.

One day, shortly before he took his triumphant departure to heaven—I was then about eighteen—I asked him, saying, "Father, how is it I frequently wander away from my Saviour, and find it hard to return ? You seem always to have him present with you. Do you never get away from him ?"

"Never, my dear child, *never* ; never so but what I can get back in one minute."

I shall never forget his words or his looks ; and I have come now to meet you here, and learn, if I may, how to live always in the faith of the presence of Jesus, as my beloved father did ?

This secret of living in the faith of an ever-present Saviour—loving, tender, watchful, faithful—is the secret learned by those of the eighth chapter class, and this is the secret of their zest in repeating the triumphant answer to the sad question, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

And this is the secret which they of the class of the seventh chapter have not learned, and therefore it is that they still sigh in their bondage, and groan under the weight of the body of death.

It is quite remarkable, however, that while these last point to the seventh of Romans as the exposition of their state and condition, they always clip this graphic chapter at both ends to make it suit their experience. It opens with the beautiful representation of the matrimonial relation as that between Christ and his followers, and closes with the exultant note of deliverance from the very state of bondage to which these sighing ones point as their own.

A moment's thought should make them see that they are not honouring the Bridegroom Deliverer when they point to this hopeless bondage ; this struggling, sighing, groaning condition ; this slavery to sin ; this wedded state with a Body of Death as the Bridegroom—as the state and condition to which he has introduced them. A poor Bridegroom, surely, he must be, who holds his bride as a slave, sighing and groaning for liberty, and crying out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?"

And a poor bride must she be, whose heart goes abroad for its pleasures away from the embraces of her groom ; so fascinated by the contraband delights of the world, that even when she would be true to her home and her spouse, she is always haunted by thoughts and desires after others !