

WHAT IT IS TO COME TO CHRIST! BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

An old truth is always new to the person who has a new want of it. The oldest of Gospel invitations is "Come unto Me"; but upon a darkened soul crying for light, it rises with as fresh a radiance as the good old sun did when he opened the eye of day this very morning. "I have heard this sentence repeated ever since I was a child," says one of my readers; "now tell me just what it is to come to Christ? Tell me how I shall come?"

To this reasonable question let me offer as plain a reply as I can shape. When our Lord was on earth, many people came to Jesus, from curiosity or some inferior motive, but they brought only their bodies, and not their hearts; they took away no blessing. You probably went to some church last Sabbath; that was only a place, however sacred; the inspired words you listened to were still only words—they cannot save the soul. You read your Bible, and cannot do it too thoroughly; still it is only a heaven-made cup. You cannot drink the cup, you want the life-giving water. You accept Christianity as a beautiful system of religion, worthy of its Author, and may often wish that you possessed it as a rule of faith and conduct. Still it is only a system, and you cannot be saved by a system of truth any more than you can be cured of a fever by your physician's prescriptions without taking his medicine. Nothing can save you but a Person, and the only person in the wide universe who can do it, is He who keeps saying to you, Come unto Me. Are you sure that your eye is fixed on Him?

"I have been to about every church in this town," said a sadly perplexed woman to her pastor, "but the little comfort I get soon goes away again, and leaves me as bad as before." "Do you read your Bible at home?" "Yes," she replied, "I am always reading the Bible; sometimes it helps me, but I soon get as wretched as ever." "Have you prayed for peace?" "O, sir, I am praying for peace every day; I get a little peace after praying, but I soon lose it. I am a miserable woman." The pastor was a skilful handler of troubled souls, and he inquired of her—"Now when you went to church, or read your Bible, or prayed, did you rely on these things to give you peace?" she acknow-

ledged that she did. "To whom did you pray?" With some surprise she said, "Of course I prayed to God, sir. To who else should I pray?" The minister opened his New Testament to the eleventh chapter of Matthew, and bade her read this verse, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest?" Now, madam, have you gone right to Jesus for rest?" The woman looked amazed, and the tears came in her eyes. Everything and everybody else—church, Bible, prayers, and minister seemed to vanish away, and there remained no one to her but *Jesus only*. She gave her heart to Jesus on the spot, and from that moment she began to live; for he that hath the Son hath life. Up to that hour the bewildered woman had been dead in sin; when Christ came into her soul, pardon, peace, and divine power came. The process through which she passed was just as supernatural, just as much a divine work as when the corpse of Jairus's daughter rose up, at the touch of Christ, and began to speak.

My friend, do you enquire if it was that woman's direct act of yielding herself to Jesus Christ, that gave her immediate peace, and made her a different person ever afterwards? No, not exactly that. The yielding was only her act, the faith was only an exercise of her heart. *Jesus did the changing, saving work.* When Bartimeus flung away his garment, and arose and came to the Saviour, those steps did not open his eyes. Christ opened his eyes. The utmost that his faith could do, was to put him into Christ's hands for healing. All that faith can effect for you is to put you into connection with Christ, as the atoner for your guilt, the purifier of your heart, the giver of eternal life. He says "Come unto Me;" your heart must assent, and do the coming.

You must put yourself in connection with Christ by faith, but that faith will act in two methods—prayer and practice. The first of these is indispensable. As Christ does not walk your streets in physical form, you can only approach Him by prayer. Unless honest prayer, it is worthless. Honestly, humbly, earnestly ask Him to pardon your sins. Ask Him to cleanse your polluted heart; for His promise is "My blood cleanseth from all sin." He loves to have you quote his promises. Invite Jesus to enter your soul and dwell there; for as many as receive Him into