

## The Lordliest

Lord of glory. They will not dare to be satisfied even inwardly. They will be foremost in hesitation to judge others. They will tremble, as well as exult, in presence of the vision of God in Christ. For the vision overawes, even when it heartens and inspires.

And thus it is likely that, when Paul enjoins "fear and trembling," his thoughts are already moving in the direction of the closing words: "For it is God that worketh in you." "Cultivate the mood of sober gravity in the working out of your salvation, not only because your obedience at its best is so imperfect, but also because God is near." His living presence is the answer to our faith. And there we reach the central mystery in the attainment of salvation, the coöperation of the two momentous factors, the Spirit of God, and the will of man. As soon as we try minutely to divide the ground between them, we lose our way. Yet the apostle speaks out of a vivid experience. Every step that we take in the conflict with evil must be our own. But it must be God's also, for our isolated strivings are sadly futile. And the conviction that the holy God has stooped to pity us, and chooses to dwell in our fellowship, may well purify our lives from every share of reckless levity, while at the same time it imparts the triumphant confidence that in the end we shall reach our goal.

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Christ's last command was the lordliest word ever spoken on this earth, the highest honor ever put on the religious worker, the greatest mission ever held up to the human mind: to make the kingdoms of the world the kingdom of God, and to unite all men as brothers by crowning them with the image of their Maker.

"Go . . . and teach all nations." The idea was substantially new, and, so, startling to the disciples. To put all other peoples on a level with themselves was more than had ever before entered into their thoughts. As yet, the restoration of Israel bounded their horizon.

Not that the Master's glorious idea was entirely strange to the prophets and psalm-

ists; for it was not. Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh and declare to that wicked alien city the will of the God of righteousness. The missionary, humanitarian spirit has a very ancient root; and the later psalmists nobly watered and tended it.

Still, not until Jesus came, and spoke, was the whole world declared to be the object of profoundest interest and solicitude to God and man. And it must be admitted, at this late date, how reluctantly and slowly men have been learning the great lesson. To the disciples, and the ancients generally, there was no such thing as the broad, human world, in the modern sense of the term. To them the known world was but their own land, and a narrow fringe lying round about. Even the remoter provinces of one's own land rested under a thick haze of geographical obscurity. People either remained at home, or indulged in very limited travel. Good common roads were few, and there were no railroads or steamships by which, in a few days, continents and oceans could be crossed. So, peoples had little intercourse with one another, and little opportunity for studying foreign blessings or foreign needs.

The prevailing idea was people against people. Mutual advantage was not a deeply rooted principle anywhere. Universal supremacy was the strong people's dream everywhere. Pride of race, and utterly selfish interests kept nations apart, split up races, and created endless divisions, and, for many a dreary century, history is mainly a record of the struggle engendered in the pursuit of world-empire at the hands of fortunate, favored races. But on all such unholy quest God wrote his judgment of fire. Sargon, the destroyer of Samaria, was murdered; Nebuchadnezzar, the destroyer of Judah, went insane; Alexander died in a drunken debauch; Caesar fell by the dagger of Brutus; Napoleon fretted to death on St. Helena. They would, and did, trample in the dust every man and every moral scruple that stood in their way, but the intoxicating vision crumbled, the sceptre fell from their hand, and the brutal scheme ended in shattered empire, and in ruin.

Over against this inhuman lust came the gracious, lordly command of Jesus. Go out