

is the unobservant merchant: while other men are advancing steadily to prominence and to fortune, he slackly allows the few remaining portals to wealth to be shut and barred and barricaded against him. And the unobservant believer loses not less in regard to spiritual things, than the careless man of the world loses in regard to temporal things. One may be privileged to tarry a very long time in the presence of Christ, and yet be no better off in the end than is the heedless shortsighted schoolboy who neglects to apply himself to his studies. Each is a mere trifler with opportunities which will one day be recognized to have been priceless, and both must equally fail to be brought into that close touch with their Master which would naturally lead them to be infused with his spirit and zeal, and informed in those truths which pertain to their present and future welfare.

Herein unquestionably lies the explanation of the fact that so many to-day who are called of Christ's name are not in truth His disciples. They have never undertaken a study of the character of our Lord,—so thorough, so patient, so sympathetic,—that they have come to know Christ. They have grasped with easy intelligence all that is written about Him in the Gospels. They have ceased to be astonished at the singular force and beauty of His teaching. They have been brought in large measure under the spell of His influence as a man. Nevertheless they have never watched Him so closely and so lovingly, as regards even merely *outward* things, as to have detected many of those individual personal peculiarities which set Him apart from all other men among whom they mingle. After all, therefore, their acquaintance with Christ has been exceedingly slight; and,—either through ignorance of this fact, or through lack of inclination to strive to know Him better,—they have hitherto been satisfied to know and to follow Him "afar off."

Christ may read the human heart at a glance, but no human glance suffices to read the divine heart. Christ's look may search through and through the very soul; but even the most earnest, ardent, penetrating human look cannot discover *all* that lies concealed in some of the most common-place events of our Lord's earthly ministry.

Christ was God as well as Man; and so not merely His deliberate words, but His most familiar actions, are fitted to instruct us. Hence as we move ever under the gaze of our fellows, and by our every movement reveal to those of them who are sufficiently keen-