

He could dwell in mystic loneliness, refusing to mingle in the common business and duties of life. He pitched His own tent in the midst of human tabernacles—mid the din and bustle of a town—the hum of busy industry ever around Him—coming in contact with every description of character—rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, noblemen, centurions, publicans at the receipt of custom, sailors and bargemen on the Lake, rude Galilean mountaineers and shepherds, caravans crossing with motley crowds from Syria and Persia to lower Palestine and Egypt. He met them all in free, unrestrained intercourse. At one time reading to the Jews in their synagogue. At another, gathering the multitude at their spare hours by the sea-side, with suggestive nature before Him,—His pulpit a fisherman's bark,—proclaiming the great salvation. At another, seating a similar crowd on the rank grass at the head of the Lake, He would miraculously feed them with the bread which perisheth, and unfold spiritual things from the carnal type. Nor do we find Him in any way spurning the duties and delights of social fellowship. At one time He consecrates with His presence a marriage-feast at the neighbouring Cana. At another, He is guest in a Pharisee's house, eating with publicans and sinners. At another, as the Jewish Sabbath sun sinks behind Mount Tabor, to the shores and highways are lined with eager hundreds. The sick and palsied, the blind and lame, come to receive the magic touch, and listen to the Omnipotent word! Wherever He goes, His steps are tracked with mercy; misery, in every form, crouches at His feet; and gratitude bathes the wondrous Healer with its tears.

II. Thus much for His outward, public, and social life—the stirring scenes of ministry and miracle. But is the portraiture complete? Does the revelation of Human perfection end here? Turn we now to its other phase, the remaining complement in that wondrous character;—the **PRIVATE** Life of Jesus.

He had, as each of His people have, a secret, *inner* being, in conjunction with the outer and social:—the one a reflex of the other. That busy world on the one side of the Sea of Tiberias, witnessed His mighty deeds, heard His weighty words, and glowed under the sunshine of holy smiles and joyous friendships. But amid these boats flitting up and down the lake, one may ever and anon be seen (as the twilight shadows are falling) gently traversing its bosom; and when moored on the other side, a Figure, companionless and alone, is ascending the rugged steep of the mountain, un-

til the veil of night shuts Him out from view. When the lights of luxury are gleaming on the opposite shores, and the fishermen's oars are heard pursuing their nightly task, the Son of Man and Lord of Glory is seeking refreshment and repose for his soul in divine communion. With the deep solitudes of nature for His oratory, He "continues all night in prayer to God." He is left "alone," and yet "not alone," for His "God and Father are with Him."

Most beautiful union of the active and the contemplative: public duty and private devotion; ceaseless exertion, and needful spiritual cessation and repose; the outer life all given to God and man, the private inner life sedulously cared for and nurtured; night by night, and morning by morning, the sinless and spotless One fetching down heavenly supplies, as if in every respect He were "tempted as we are," requiring equal strength for duty and preparation for trial. How it links us in sympathy to this adorable Redeemer, to think that He had bodily as well as mental affinities with ourselves; that He participated with us (sin only excepted) in **ALL** our infirmities!

Do we, like Him, combine the two great elements of human character? Are our public duties, the cares, and business, and engrossments of the world, finely tempered and hallowed by a secret walk with God? Is our outer life distinguished like His by earnest diligence in our varied callings—love to God and kindness and goodwill to man throwing a softened halo round our path; beneficence, generosity, sterling honour, charity, unselfishness characterising all we do?

Is our *inner* life a feeble transcript of His? If the world were to follow us from its busy thoroughfares, would it trace us to our family altars and our closet devotions? Would it discover in our secret histories, "Sabbaths of the soul," when wearied with the toil and struggles of earth, we ascend in thought the mount of Prayer, and in these holy mental solitudes seek an audience of our Father in Heaven? Action and meditation, I repeat, are the two great components of Christian life, and the perfection of the religious character is to find the two in unison and harmony. Not like Martha of old, all bustle, energy, impulse, and finding little time for higher interests. Nor like Mary, on the other hand, wrapt in devout meditation, indifferent to the duties and shrinking from the struggles of life, but the happy intermingling of both. In one word, come and visit the *Home of Jesus*;—see the noblest of combinations, consuming zeal and childlike teachableness—untiring devotion to His fellows, hallowed converse with His God. Oh, that each