

straight passage through the air back to the cote of its companions. So the two liberated disciples, being "let go," follow their warm and holy hearts right off to a prayer-meeting of their brethren. Christ was there, and there they longed to be likewise. Duty was there, and they obeyed its call. As soon as they could act out their secret drawings of heart, they were in the dear old company again, telling their experience, and stirring up their brethren and sisters to a fresh campaign of prayers and work.

Now from the stem of this beautiful incident let us pick off two or three practical lessons.

1. The first one is, that men usually act from the strongest motive and obey the strongest attraction. There were many selfish reasons for Peter and John to desert their colors when the first gale of persecution smote them in the face. But the purpose of their hearts was to stand by their beloved Master. They gave conscience the casting vote. So being let go, they went to their own company.

What was true of those two loyal disciples is true of every healthy, sound-hearted Christian in these days. He will gravitate towards Christ. Never do you find a genuine and effective Christian, but you find one who has enthroned the Lord Jesus in his soul. He has given to Jesus the key of his heart. Having the *will* to serve his Saviour, he is never at a loss to find the *way*. Not a Sabbath comes, but it sees him on his way to the house of God, however hot the rays of the sun, or however furious the rain-beat on the pavement. His heart so aches for the poor children of his mission-school, that a headache is no excuse to keep him at home on the sofa. When the prayer-meeting night comes, it finds him perhaps thoroughly tired out. But the brotherhood are waiting for him, and looking for him too. Christ expects him at that prayer-meeting. So he rouses up his tired limbs, excuses himself to the neighbor who came in to talk about politics or the money-market, and hastens away to the spot where

"Jesus sheds,

The oil of gladness on our heads."

Does an ardent lover ever find the night too dark, too cold, or too stormy, to hinder him from seeking the company of her in whom his soul delighteth?

A heart-service of Jesus is pure luxury. Even the wholesome severities of duty become pleasant. Following Christ is none the less enjoyable because it involves some self-denial and some headwinds of opposition, or because it requires him to hold on to the old coat or the old carpets, in order to have a few spare dollars for his Lord's treasury. Not of constraint, but willingly does he bear a cross to honor the Saviour he loves. "Let go," he goes towards Jesus.

Thrust your penknife into a compass and you deflect the needle. But as soon as you let it go, it trembles back towards the North pole. You can trust that needle. And you can trust the man or woman who supremely loves the Lord Jesus. And if when free to act, you do not yourself so act as to please Christ, you ought to doubt whether you are truly converted. Being let go, you *will* go to your company—where Christ is, if you are a true Christian; but where the world is, if you are a false professor or a backslider.

2. Here is a test of backsliding. It lies in the heart. And when I detect a young man seeking the company of the card-players, the ball-goers, or the wine-bibbers, instead of the prayer-meeting, I get a key to his heart. He has lost his first love. He really prefers the dance, or the dice-box, or the decenter, to the Lord that bought him. The French soldiers who were set down to resist Napoleon on his landing from Elba, deserted to him just as soon as they saw their old commander. And the Christian professor whose heart is with the world, never can be trusted. Being let go, he deserts to the world *openly*. A sound heart can be trusted anywhere. Then what perpetual need of that fervent prayer, "O God, create in me the *clean heart*; renew the right spirit within me!"

3. This principle of affinity reaches our into the eternal world. Judas, being let go by death, goeth to "his own place." So will you, dear reader, if you are out of Christ. You would be wretched in a heaven of holiness. If you love Jesus, then too is it true, that when death releases you from the clay prison-house, your glorified spirit being "let go," will wing its way to its "own company" in paradise. The living soul will find its living Saviour!