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The Real Jesus.

THE Greeks come to Philip, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." Philip and Andrew tell Jesus of their desire. He does not say, "Bring the

Greeks along, that they may see me," but he answers, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground; and die it abideth alone."

In other words, if the Greeks had seen Jesus as he then was, they would have seen the real Jesus at all; they would have seen the perfect man according to the flesh, truly divine, but only the one of whom Paul afterwards said, "I will know him no more after the flesh."

The real Jesus can be seen only as he is seen in the process of dying; until we behold the Lamb of God, we have not really seen Jesus.

A grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying is a true picture of the real Jesus, and this gives us the process and principle of Christian growth.

MORTIFICATION.

After the grain of wheat has fallen into the ground, the life in it hastens its death. It was the life in Christ (only another word for love), which prompted him to die. He gave himself a willing sacrifice. It was death through life.

So, in every Christian, there is a process of mortification by means of the Christ-life which he receives at the new birth. We must mortify the deeds of the body, crucify the works of the flesh.

Paul said, "I die daily," and in proportion as we live in Christ we die to sin, self and the world. Death means failure; physical death a failure of the body.

After the grain of wheat has fallen into the ground and dies, it is worthless. A week after a hundred bushels have been sown, if you were to dig it up, you could not sell it for five cents, but the failure is in order to success; it must fail, that it may bring forth a harvest.

So every Christian must fail in himself before he can succeed in God; he must truly die to his own strength, mental, moral or spiritual, in order that Jesus, who is the real life, may live in him. Such failure like the death of the wheat, is prophetic of success, and, until we have failed thus, we shall never truly succeed.

APPROPRIATION.

As soon as the wheat begins to die, because it has begun to live, it appropriates every thing within reach for which it has a taste; it takes in the sunlight, heat, air, moisture, earth; while it rejects foreign substances for which it has no taste.

Whatever else the new birth may be, it is certainly the imparting of a new taste. "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." This taste may be cultivated or vitiated.

The Israelites in the wilderness did not like the manna; they said it was light food. Now, I believe that manna was the best dish this world ever saw. God made it and he knew how to make a good thing. It was a whole bill of fare in one dish, nutritious and wholesome. Just what the Israelites needed in the open air journey. Nevertheless they had no taste for it.

The trouble with them was that down in Egypt their taste had been vitiated.

By eating leeks, garlic and onions. When a man likes onions he is certain not to like manna.

When one of my members absents himself from prayer meeting and ceases to take delight in Christian worship and work, I take it for granted that he had been to Egypt and had a square meal of onions and of all the distasteful dishes that can be imagined a mixture of manna and onions is the worst.

An Egyptian dog would hardly eat it, and yet that is the kind of fare with which some Christians are vitiating their tastes. Instead of keep-

ing to the manna of God's word and work which really satisfies the soul, they would mix with it the onions of worldly indulgence, and the result is that their experience is insipid and joyless.

The Christ-life in us gives us taste for what is Christly, and it should be our constant care to cultivate this taste so that it may appropriate to the fullest extent the light of God's word.

ASSIMILATION.

The dying grain not only takes in light, heat, air, water and earth, but it makes all these a part of itself. It weaves them into the very texture of its being.

So every Christian should not only appropriate the truth but live the truth; he should be like Christ, incarnate truth. The Christ-life within him makes truth into character.

TRANSFORMATION.

As the grain of wheat dies appropriating and assimilating everything for which it has taste, there goes on a process of transformation. The golden harvest field is transformed earth, light, heat, air and water.

"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." As we mortify the bad, appropriate and assimilate the good, we are transfigured into the image of Christ.

MULTIPLICATION.

As a result of its death with the life that appropriates, assimilates, and transforms, the grain of wheat is multiplied. "Some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold."

A farmer reeks a bushel of wheat with great care for many years. It is good wheat and he doesn't want to injure it, so he protects it from wind and weather, but it does not increase in weight or quantity—some seeds have been preserved in the catacombs of Egypt for thousands of years.

But another farmer takes a bushel of wheat into the field and sows it broadcast, then harrows it in, and after a few days his wheat, in the process of dying and living, is worthless; but he is the wise farmer; he waits until the harvest and then he receives it back manyfold. He loves his wheat that he may gain it in larger measure. Every grain of it has laid down its life that it may live in a hundred other grains.

It is the mission of every Christian to multiply himself by winning another to Christ. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom." No child of God should be willing to abide alone.

GLORIFICATION.

The harvest is the glory of the seed sowing. The yellow grains in the autumn is the golden crown of spring and summer. "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit."

Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. The vine bears fruit only through the branches. The glory of God can shine only through our fruitfulness. In praying that we may glorify God, as we so often pray, we are simply asking for the privilege of yielding a harvest of souls.

The mortification of the flesh, the appropriation and assimilation of truth, the transformation of character and the multiplication of converts are all the glorification of Christ in fruitbearing.

The multiplication of Christians comes through self-sacrifice, Jesus, by his death on the cross, has multiplied himself a millionfold, and every one who manifests the spirit of Christ on Calvary cannot fail to win others to trust and love him.

A young man of the name of Westrup went as a missionary to Mexico, and was murdered while on a journey, and his body thrown upon a cactus plant to decay in the sun. A student in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, hearing of this, wrote to the missionary secretary, saying that he did not have much strength of mind or body, but all that he had he would like to give to the cause, and if God wanted some one

to go to Mexico and take Westrup's place, he was ready to go, though it might be to give his life for Christ.

This, through the death of Westrup, W. D. Powell was led to Mexico. If Westrup had gone to Mexico and spent his time in self-seeking, no one would have desired to be like him or to take his place. There is nothing in this world more beautiful than self-sacrifice.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

The externals of the crucifixion, its blood, broken flesh, agony, dying and repulsive, just as the externals of the battle of Bunker Hill, with its blood and torn flesh, agony and dying, are repulsive, but a grateful nation has erected a granite monument on the spot where the repulsive battle took place. Beneath the repulsion there is the attraction of self-sacrifice. The men who died there gave their lives for others, and we forget the external repulsion while we gaze at the beauty of patriotic self-sacrifice which the monument commemorates.

If you walk Broadway, near the Post-office, in New York City, you come in view of a bronze statue; the arms are pinioned, the feet are tied, the shirt collar is thrown open and as you look into the handsome, sad face, you are reminded of an execution when a human being was hanged and there is nothing attractive in the thought; but read on the pedestal, "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country—Nathan Hale." and now you forget the repulsion of the hanging while you gaze at the beautiful picture of patriotic loyalty unto death.

THE GLORY OF THE AGE.

Christ on the cross is the glory of this age, as Christ on the throne will be the glory of the age to come. "God forbid," says Paul, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Time was when I urged people to go beyond the cross. I shall never use that expression again. In heaven itself they do not get beyond the cross. "The Lamb as it has been slain," is in the midst of the throne, and the redeemed saints sing "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." We do not go beyond or leave behind what we take up. It is our glorious privilege to believe in the risen Lord and to walk with him day by day, but even that risen Lord carries in his hands, feet and side the marks of the cross.

Amid the glory of the Transfiguration, Moses, Elijah and Jesus talked together of his death. Paul preached at Athens, "Jesus and the resurrection."

"Jesus" means a suffering Saviour. The death of Christ and his resurrection are married in Scripture, "and what God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

A CHEERING HOPE.

My heart is cheered by the blessed hope of Christ's second coming. I am not looking for death nor desiring it. It is probable that I shall die in body, and, if death comes, I will take it as a dose, just as I crossed the Atlantic from Liverpool to New York, paying for the privilege though I knew that I would be sick most of the time, because on this side were home and loved ones whom I was anxious to see.

On the other side of the waters of death are many who will welcome me, and I am willing to die, if it be God's will, that I may be with Christ and those I love. Nevertheless, I am not looking for death; I am looking up into the sky for the coming King. While I am looking up I may fall into a grave, but, like Dr. Gordon, I will shout "Victory" as I fall.

While, however, I am looking for the coming of Christ, I would not allow the glory of that coming to make me forget the glory of his cross.

Cheerfulness throws sunlight in all the paths of life.