

Look and Live

The Christian is not to live for this present life. We are to look to Jesus, who through an ignominious death made a way for our escape. We must every one of us lay hold of the hope that is set before us in the gospel, if we would have everlasting life. You should ask yourself, "How much am I willing to sacrifice for the truth's sake?" Before you answer this question, I would direct you to the life and sacrifice of Jesus for you. As you see him whom your sins have pierced, lifted upon the cross of Calvary, you will in contrition of soul lay all at his feet. When we remember how much our salvation has cost, we may be sure that eternal life is worth everything. The enemy is determined that we shall not come into possession of this precious boon. We are traveling through an enemy's land, and we must keep on the whole armor of righteousness, that we may fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

Satan will come in many ways to tempt the soul away from Christ. He will first tell you that you are good enough of yourself; that you do not need a work of reformation wrought for you. He will suggest to you that you have made but few mistakes in your life, and that these will be overbalanced by the good you have done. If you have lived such a life as he would make you believe you have, it would be like a chain with unsound links in it, wholly worthless. One sin unrepented of is enough to close the gates of heaven against you. It was because man could not be saved with one stain of sin upon him, that Jesus came to die on Calvary's cross. Your only hope is to look to Christ and live. He came to save to the uttermost all who came unto him; and he is fully able to do all that he has undertaken to do for you. He will lift us up from the degradation into which we have fallen because of sin.

We should exercise living faith in Christ. When our hopes of life seem to be slipping away, Jesus is ready to put his everlasting arms beneath us, and to draw us to his heart, and to comfort, encourage, and bless us. As soon as you surrender wholly to Christ, he will accept you. Christ has said that it was his will that your joy should be full. Why should you not have fullness of joy, when through Christ you have the prospect of eternal life at his coming? Why should we not every day show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? He wants us to grow better in his love every day. As we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning. The sun rises in dimness; but as it begins to climb the heavens, its rays become more and more bright.

Thus it is with the Christian in his life. He catches the bright beams of light from Christ, and by trusting in him he becomes better acquainted with his Saviour. It is a difficult matter for human nature to have perfect confidence in divine power, but the Lord will strengthen our faith, and we may have a precious experience in the knowledge of Jesus. We do not have the simplicity we should have in coming to our heavenly Father. We are sinners, but Christ has died for us, and it is our privilege to place ourselves upon the platform of his promises. If we have the love of Jesus in our hearts, we shall express it in our actions toward others. We shall proclaim to those who are out of Christ the beauty of faith and religion. It is not our place to inquire whether we shall have trials if we walk in the path of obedience; we are to search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and to accept it whatever may be its cost.

Christ prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth. It is not error but the truth of God that sanctifies the soul. When we follow in the humble path of obedience, we leave a bright track heavenward for others to walk in. It is our privilege to have a deeper experience in the things of God. Will you review your past life, will you see where your defects and mistakes have been, and when you see that they are many, will you remember that Jesus lives to make intercession for you, and not sink down in discouragement? Jesus pleads his blood before the Father, and says, "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions as a thick cloud." Let this be the language of your heart: "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Do not even for a moment distrust your Saviour's power to save you. Fall in your helplessness at the foot of the cross; today believe the promise of God. Jesus loves us with a love that is infinite. Oh, what love, what matchless love, he has shown for the children of men! Jesus does not desire you to wait to make yourself better; he desires you to take him today as your Saviour. This very day say: "He is mine, and I am his. I will give my soul into his keeping, and he will keep that which I have committed to his trust against that day. Through faith he will give me victory over the temptations of the enemy. I shall see of his salvation. I shall triumph in God." Do you not think that such language as this will drive back the enemy from the tempted soul? Satan tries to interpose himself between us and Christ, but we must drive him back by talking faith, and by exalting the power of Jesus to save us. Shall we not take steps in advance without delay? Shall we not show that we are not afraid to trust our Saviour in the darkness as well as in the light? I have been tested on this point. One loved one after another has been torn from me by death, and it has seemed as though it would crush me; but in these hours Jesus has seemed to say to me: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The peace that Jesus gives is not the peace of the world. In my sorest trials, when I could not understand why they had come upon me, the only course I could take was to believe that Jesus doeth all things well. After the death of him who had stood by my side for

thirty-six years, I was in great distress, in such anguish that it seemed that I would die; but I had to fight the fight of faith. While Satan suggested temptations, and sought to make me distrust God, I would continually say, "He knows what is best for me, and I will trust him."

We should not think that Jesus has forsaken us when clouds and darkness come upon our souls. He is a pitying, loving Redeemer. He does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. He is not willing that any of us should perish, but that all should have eternal life; but he wants us to follow him as the sheep follow the shepherd; and by and by he will lead us to living waters, and wipe away all tears from our eyes.

Jesus loves you, and when trials come upon your soul, as they surely will, you must be often found with God in prayer. The enemy may tell you that God will not hear you; but you must rest in his promise that he will hear the prayer of the contrite soul. Keep your petitions continually ascending to Jesus, and believe that he hears you, and he will hear you and deliver you from every trial and temptation. The apostle says: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."