

Transformed By Grace



The reconciliation of man to God could be accomplished only through a mediator who was equal with God, possessed of attributes that would dignify, and declare him worthy to treat with the infinite God in man's behalf, and also represent God to a fallen world. Man's substitute and surety must have man's nature, a connection with the human family whom he was to represent, and, as God's ambassador, he must partake of the divine nature, have a connection with the Infinite, in order to manifest God to the world, and be a mediator between God and man.

These qualifications were found alone in Christ. Clothing His divinity with humanity, He came to earth to be called the Son of man and the Son of God. He was the surety for man, the ambassador for God--the surety for man to satisfy by His righteousness in man's behalf the demands of the law, and the representative of God to make manifest His character to a fallen race.

The world's Redeemer possessed the power to draw men to Himself, to quiet their fears, to dispel their gloom, to inspire them with hope and courage, to enable them to believe in the willingness of God to receive them through the merits of the divine Substitute. As subjects of the love of God we ever should be grateful that we have a mediator, an advocate, an intercessor in the heavenly courts, who pleads in our behalf before the Father.

We have everything we could ask to inspire us with faith and trust in God. In earthly courts, when a king would make his greatest pledge to assure men of his truth, he gives his child as a hostage, to be redeemed on the fulfillment of his promise; and behold what a pledge of the Father's faithfulness; for when He would assure men of the immutability of His council, He gave His only-begotten Son to come to earth, to take the nature of man, not only for the brief years of life, but to retain his nature in the heavenly courts, an everlasting pledge of the faithfulness of God. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and love of God! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1).

Through faith in Christ we become members of the royal family, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. In Christ we are one. As we come in sight of Calvary, and view the royal Sufferer who in man's nature bore the curse of the law in his behalf, all national distinctions, all sectarian differences are obliterated; all honor of rank, all pride of caste is lost.

The light shining from the throne of God upon the cross of Calvary forever puts an end to man-made separations between class and race. Men of every class become members of one family, children of the heavenly King, not through earthly power, but through the love of God who gave Jesus to a life of poverty, affliction, and humiliation, to a death of shame and agony, that He might bring many sons and daughters unto glory.

It is not the position, not the finite wisdom, not the qualifications, not the endowments of any person that makes him rank high in the esteem of God. The intellect, the reason, the talents of men, are the gifts of God to be employed to His glory, for the upbuilding of His eternal kingdom. It is the spiritual and moral character that is of value in the sight of Heaven, and that will survive the grave and be made glorious with immortality for the endless ages of eternity. Worldly royalty so highly honored by men will never come forth from the sepulcher into which it enters. Riches, honor, the wisdom of men that have served the purposes of the enemy, can bring to their possessors no inheritance, no honor, no position of trust in the world which is to come. Only those who have appreciated the grace of Christ, which has made them heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus, will rise from the grave bearing the image of their Redeemer.

All who are found worthy to be counted as the members of the family of God in heaven, will recognize one another as sons and daughters of God. They will realize that they all receive their strength and pardon from the same source, even from Jesus Christ who was crucified for their sins. They know that they are to wash their robes of character in His blood, to find acceptance with the Father in His name, if they would be in the bright assembly of the saints, clothed in the white robes of righteousness.

One in Christ

Then as the children of God are one in Christ, how does Jesus look upon caste, upon society distinctions, upon the division of man from his fellow man, because of color, race, position, wealth, birth, or attainments? The secret of unity is found in the equality of believers in Christ. The reason for all division, discord, and difference is found in separation from Christ. Christ is the center to which all should be attracted; for the nearer we approach the center, the closer we shall come together in feeling, in sympathy, in love, growing into the character and image of Jesus. With God there is no respect of persons.

Jesus knew the worthlessness of earthly pomp, and He gave no attention to its display. In His dignity of soul, His elevation of character, His nobility of principle, He was far above the vain fashions of the world. Although the prophet describes Him as "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3), He might have been esteemed as the highest among the noble of the earth. The best circles of human society would have courted Him, had He condescended to accept their favor, but He desired not the applause of men, but moved independent of all human influence. Wealth, position, worldly rank in all its varieties and distinctions of human greatness, were all but so many degrees of littleness to Him who had left the honor and glory of heaven, and who possessed no earthly splendor, indulged in no luxury, and displayed no adornment but humility.

The lowly, those bound with poverty, pressed with care, burdened with toil, could find no reason in His life and example which would lead them to think that Jesus was not acquainted with their trials, knew not the pressure of their circumstances, and could not sympathize with them in their want and sorrow. The lowliness of His humble, daily life was in harmony with His lowly birth and circumstances. The Son of the infinite God, the Lord of life and glory, descended in humiliation to the life of the lowliest, that no one might feel himself excluded from His presence. He made Himself accessible to all. He

did not select a favored few with whom to associate and ignore all others. It grieves the Spirit of God when conservatism shuts man away from his fellow man, especially when it is found among those who profess to be His children.

Christ came to give to the world an example of what perfect humanity might be when united with divinity. He presented to the world a new phase of greatness in His exhibition of mercy, compassion, and love. He gave to men a new interpretation of God. As head of humanity, He taught men lessons in the science of divine government, whereby He revealed the righteousness of the reconciliation of mercy and justice. The reconciliation of mercy and justice did not involve any compromise with sin, or ignore any claim of justice; but by giving to each divine attribute its ordained place, mercy could be exercised in the punishment of sinful, impenitent man without destroying its clemency or forfeiting its compassionate character, and justice could be exercised in forgiving the repenting transgressor without violating its integrity.

Christ Our High Priest

All this could be, because Christ laid hold of the nature of man, and partook of the divine attributes, and planted His cross between humanity and divinity, bridging the gulf that separated the sinner from God.

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:16-18).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).



"For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in

another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:1-9).

Jesus came to bring moral power to combine with human effort, and in no case are His followers to allow themselves to lose sight of Christ, who is their example in all things.

He said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17: 19). Jesus presents the truth before His children that they may look upon it, and by beholding it, may become changed, being transformed by His grace from transgression to obedience, from impurity to purity, from sin to heart-holiness and righteousness of life.

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We are to live only one day at a time. We do not have to do the work of a life-time in a few hours. We need not look into the future with anxiety; for God has made it possible for us to be overcomers every day, and he will give needed grace, that we may be conquerors.

RH Mar. 26, 1889

**Awake to righteousness, and sin not
1 Corinthians 15:34**