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*Grace Noll Crowell*



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COME SEE A MAN

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## FOREWORD

I pray that my simple interpretations through these pictures of the Christ may reveal him more clearly to those who come, even as did the ones of old, voicing a universal cry: "Sir, we would see Jesus."

It is to such as these I dedicate this book.

GRACE NOLL CROWELL



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 *Come See a Man* 

Out of the glory which he had with the Father  
The Christ came down:  
An infant born in a lowly stable  
In a humble town.  
He grew to manhood—a marvelous manhood!  
Since time began  
There is no other, there is none like him—  
Come see that man.

Tall he was through the passing ages;  
Clean he has been  
As the wind that blows from the upper spaces.  
No marring sin  
Has touched the purity of his manhood,  
Nor ever can—  
He is our Way, our Light, our Saviour.  
Come see that man.

## THE INFANT CHRIST

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of  
Judaea . . .* —Matt. 2:1

BEFORE the man there ever is the child. Come see that child. He has changed the life course of countless millions. He can change ours from a drab dullness to ever increasing light and joy.

Come see him—the Christ whose outstretched arms enfold the entire earth; whose sandaled footsteps are heard on the farthest shores; and whose voice, clear and pleading, still rings back from the outposts of eternity to guide us on our way.

Here is a child, worshiped from his birth—a child before whom kings have knelt, and vast multitudes have fallen prostrate in love and adoration, grateful beyond utterance for the starlit hour when God so graciously sent a Saviour to our lost and bewildered world.

He sent a child, born as we are born: Here was divinity made human that he might better understand our needs, our desires, and our weaknesses. We can picture vividly that far-off, glorious hour—a winter night, glistening with silver frost and star dust. The inn's worn travelers asleep after their long journeys. A quiet night save for the occasional stir of a somnolent ox, or the thin bleat of a dreaming sheep. Our Lord was born

in quietude. He was a part of the majesty and silence of that star-spangled night.

He was a herald of peace in order that mankind, in desperation over wars and rumors of wars, may lay hold of him and find that certain and enduring peace. A star was his insignia, shining down like a jewel from the heavens. Its rays penetrate the farthest corners of the earth that men may behold them and walk in their steadfast light. His lifted banner bears the word "good will" that all who see it may come to learn its vital meaning.

God chose a virgin, a young woman of purity and beauty, to bear his Son for him. He sought far and found a man of sterling integrity and strength to be his child's foster father.

Christ's birth occurred in a small, humble town. A city with its absorption in things of the world would not have been a fitting place for that birth. God knows it is easier to find our Lord in quietness than among vast, clamoring throngs. Bethlehem lay close to the sweet-scented fields of earth. This little town was chosen, we may be sure, so that those who lived in isolated places could feel at ease as they came hurrying to worship him that night. He is a part of all tranquillity, and later on he found his greatest solace and strength in solitude and in communion with his Father.

He was poor in order that the poorest of earth might seek his companionship, unembarrassed by their own poverty. He drew kings to his side, for



inherently they sensed his nobility and they felt a close kinship with him. He accepted their gifts as an emblem of the stewardship that is ever required for the furtherance of his kingdom here on earth.

In these modern days we unfailingly celebrate Christmas in our somewhat barbaric fashion. We string miles of glittering tinsel, we hang highlighted baubles, we dress our outdoor shrubbery with fire flowers in his honor (and to please and possibly outdo our neighbors). Our Santa Clauses often become crude symbols of the day. Perhaps some of this may be pleasing to our Lord, but his own colors that far-off night were but two shades—black and silver—the black of the night, and the silver of a star that sifted light through the rafters upon his manger bed.

It does not take blazing colors to draw mankind to him. Later on he told us of his drawing power. He said, "And I, if I be lifted up . . . , will draw all men unto me."

On that first night his drawing power was clearly evident: He drew the shepherds from their all but sacred task of shepherding. In their excitement, they left their dependent flocks when they saw the sky rent with flashing wings and heard the glorious oratorio which flooded the earth from the suddenly opened sluice gates of heaven.

A little child drew them over the frosted hillsides, down the shadowed slopes, and into the little sleeping town. Somehow we may well be-

lieve that when they returned they found their waiting sheep safe, for a God who could so move heaven and earth, and the hearts of men that night, could and would attend to that shepherdless flock.



They drew kings from their kingdoms, and no doubt many of the village folk crowded the stable doorway in their eager witnessing of that event. Oh, the wonder of it that a child, born on a winter night long ago, was to become the light of the world—a light that penetrates the deepest jungle darkness, that pierces shrouded ignorance and stupidity, that glows through the shadows of troubled minds, until the whole wide world will at last be lit with its powerful radiance.

Strange that his only food at the time was his mother's milk, yet he himself was to become the bread of life for a hungry, starving world, and that he, upon whom more falsehoods were told than upon any living person, was to become the solid foundation of truth—truth whereby any earnest seeker may walk lifelong and not go astray.

Truly a little child shall lead them. Come, let us go together down the old, and often lost, road to find the Christ child there in his mother's arms. May we come—all the races of the earth joined as one—and kneel to worship him at his manger side. Then may we arise and "GO TELL," as he later bade us do, until every ear shall hear and every knee bow before him, for he tells us this truly is to happen.

---

Our heavenly Father, our hearts overflow with gratitude to thee for thy gift to us of the Christ child. We praise thee for making this astonishing sacrifice for our sakes. Earnestly we pray to be more worthy of thy love and care that is continually about us. Help us to walk in the footprints of our Lord, until at last we may gather in thy house as a great united family. We ever pray to thee in Jesus' name. Amen.

 *The Glory of the Lord* 

Oh, blest were the men of the fields that night  
of splendor.

Worthy they were, these keepers of the sheep,  
Awake and ever conscious of their duty,  
Knowing the danger should they fall asleep.  
And lo, above them in the starry heavens,  
A voice as clear as a trumpet shook the earth,  
Heralding the amazing, joyous tidings  
Of the blessed Christ child's birth.

And the glory of the Lord was bright about them;  
The fields were lit, and their lifted faces shone  
In the unearthly light . . . O men, O women,  
Only to those awake can God make known  
The wonder, the magnificence, of his glory,  
And to the alert alone can he reveal  
The Christ who came to a troubled earth with  
power  
To save, to bless, to heal.

## THE FORERUNNER

*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.* —John 1:6

JOHN was the forerunner of our Saviour. But the forerunner of John was a white-robed angel who stood beside a lighted altar, fragrant with incense, declaring a birth yet to be—a birth no less miraculous than that of the Christ.

Only the power of God could have given Zacharias and Elizabeth a child. Only God himself could have brought that joy and gladness to the two “well stricken in years.”

They were good; they were both righteous before God. And he, seeing their worthiness and knowing their hearts’ longing and desire, sent his angel to impart to them the news of the blessed event that awaited them.

Before that birth in Judah, in the heart of the beautiful hill country, Elizabeth received a guest one day. Her cousin, Mary of Nazareth, had come to pay her a visit. Beneath their hearts, both women were carrying life so precious, so pulsing with eternal values, that Mary, upon seeing her cousin, burst forth in rapturous song: a song so clear and high and sweet, it has sounded down to all generations like a musical benediction.

The years passed and John became a man—

a man who was conscientiously and ably fulfilling his destiny. His commission was arduous, but the prophecy declared by his father shortly after the birth of the child was being gloriously fulfilled: He was great in the sight of the Lord. He drank no strong drink. From birth he was filled with the Holy Ghost. He was turning many to the Lord their God. He was making ready for the Saviour of the world to redeem his people.

Zacharias said he should be called "the prophet of the Highest." He was to give knowledge to his people and to those who sat in darkness, to guide their feet in the ways of peace. All this was being accomplished.

John was a poor man, but he was rich in the knowledge of things eternal as God himself had revealed them unto him. He had no worldly goods. He wore a simple, coarse garment of camel's hair. His food was locusts gathered in the wilderness. He sought for wild honey in the hollows of rocks and trees, and he ate of that amber sweetness.

He was sent of God "to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." What a sacred trust! What an amazing mission was his!

He was quick to declare that he was not the Light of which he spoke. But that there was one coming who would be the true Light. John was consumed with passion for the cause for which he was sent. He was a humble ambassador, and when the Jews sent their priests to question

who he was, they demanded that he tell them the truth.

Without hesitation he answered that he was simply a "voice . . . crying in the wilderness," and his continuous cry was, and still is, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isa. 40:3).

We can imagine the confusion and the bewilderment of those pompous priests. John told them emphatically that he was not the One, that he was not even worthy to unloose the One's sandal strings. He must have aroused their curiosity although he may have accomplished little else.

Doubtless they murmured among themselves: "Who is he of whom this man speaks? We will see him for ourselves and will decide what manner of man he is."

John was a crier. His voice carried far in that tangled wilderness. It reached the outskirts and it still can be heard to the ends of the earth, emphasizing the important word "prepare." How mightily essential it is that we give heed to that word!

The title "crier" is taken from the practice of Eastern monarchs, who, when they were planning a journey through a strange desert country, sent harbingers before them to prepare the way. These men were to clear the passage and to level the land in order to remove all impediments from the royal passage.

John was doing that very thing although in a

different way. He was making plain the path so that all earth's pilgrims could more easily and surely arrive at their destination of salvation.

He suffered martyrdom because of his un-deviating purpose, his firm allegiance to the One he was proclaiming, but does his action not stand out in history as one of the great high lights of the ages? Is he not our forerunner also, pleading with us to lend our voices to his in proclaiming Christ as the Saviour of the world? It matters not what language we may speak, he would bid us cry out the good news that will turn many to the Lord their God.

In his own way John was crying to men: "Come see a man." He wanted us all to learn of him, and to go forth on the greatest mission conceived in the heart of God: the mission of saving immortal souls.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee for this first and greatest of all evangelists—this pleader with men to accept thy Son as their Saviour.

Help us to move through this wilderness of today and acquaint others, as did John, with the one perfect man of all time: Jesus Christ our Lord. In his name we pray. Amen.



❧ *Hark. A Voice* ❧

Hark! A voice still cries aloud today  
As clearly as it did when Christ first came  
And ministered along the earthly way  
To deliver all who called aloud his name.  
The wilderness about us is as great  
As that on which one held the lifted light  
Of words to warn mankind of their lost state,  
And bade them take their way out of the night.

Still any true forerunner of the Christ  
Is a voice within this wilderness of doubt,  
Giving forth a wisdom long unpriced,  
Reaching troubled mankind with a shout:  
A shout of gladness ringing out to men  
That the risen Christ is coming once again.

## THE CHRIST OF THE COMMON ROAD

*And the common people heard him gladly.*

—Mark 12:37

“AND the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Luke 2:40).

We know all too little of the life of the Christ from his birth to his active ministry among the people; but we know that he did all things well. Even in his childhood he was conscious of the mission he was to fulfill on earth: “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”

It was thus he spoke to his troubled, seeking parents when they found him calmly sitting among the learned doctors of that day in the shadowed gloom of the temple. He was “both hearing them, and asking them questions.” We can see that group—at first a bit scathing that a mere lad would have the audacity to be there among them, taking part in their weighty discussions. Then, astonished, they turned to one another, questioning, “Whose son is this? “Whence does he come?”

The Christ was ever at ease in whatever company he chanced to find himself, but it was among the common people that he moved most

often. He spoke their language and they heard him gladly.

The word "common" does not necessarily imply, as some seem to think, a lack of breeding in an individual, or sordidness and poverty in one's surroundings. It simply means "that which is usual." Christ ever dealt with the usual as he worked with men. His entire earthly life was spent among the common people, the usual run of folk, and with the ancient everyday materials of life and living.

Few have been born in a lowlier place than he. He, who could have made his entry in a king's palace, was born in a rough stable. The manger hay for his bed was doubtless quite as clean, and perhaps more fragrant, than the snowy down of a swan; but it was a harsh bed for a baby, nevertheless.

His highly and widely heralded birth occurred among oxen and sheep. He was acquainted from the first with the ways of domestic animals. No doubt that was the reason he so often used them to drive home forcibly the mighty and weighty truths of his teaching.

How often he spoke of sheep and shepherds, thus making clear his meaning to his listeners whose livelihood came from the tending of their flocks. The lowing of cattle was a familiar sound to him, born as he was with that sound in his ears.

He was a worker in wood. He knew the lumber

with which he dealt, for he walked among tall trees and learned the ones that were sound of heart and best able to withstand the hard usage that would be required of them.

He was well acquainted with the plain village folk with whom he was early associated. His food was as simple as theirs. His fire held the same warmth that theirs held. His roof also was adequate. He breathed the same clean air that they breathed and he was one of them.

He walked the common roadways of the earth. He knew the owners of every field that lay around Nazareth. He spoke often of fields later on in his ministry. In his parables he used the sowers of seeds. He spoke of vineyards that hung heavy with purple clusters, and of the men with their hired help who tended them. He moved through glinting golden grain with his disciples and he plucked the ripened kernels and ate them, as any hungry man would do.

One sees him going down a dusty country lane and suddenly spying a fig tree "afar off." He hastened toward it, even as we would today, eager to gather the sweet wild fruit that would be satisfying to a hungry, thirsty mouth.

It is disappointing, even after all these centuries, to know the fruit he sought was not there. He found only the fingerlike leaves tossing and turning in the wind upon their fruitless boughs. But the Master made use of everything for the good of mankind, and even now that fig tree

stands out in memory because of the notice he gave it.

We recall that many times he came upon the ill and the suffering ones along the way: the lepers, standing humbly aside—those hurt ones, shunned by others; the blind beseeching him piteously and insistently; and the afflicted ones who could “in no way lift themselves,” all looking hopefully toward him. And this blessed Commoner made himself as one with them, so a part of their serious handicaps that he paused to touch each one with his healing fingers, thus bringing leaping, lasting joy to their hitherto burdened hearts.

It is good to think of him traveling slowly along the road that led to the little city of Nain. There he came upon a funeral procession. The only son of a widow had died, and the mother, weeping wildly, could not be comforted although the kindly neighbors were offering her their tenderest sympathy.

The great, loving heart of the Master was moved with compassion for the mourning woman. He stepped to the bier and bade the young man arise, and the rejoicing that day on the common road of grief was like the lifting of a great hallelujah chorus.

Surely he is one with all sorrowing humanity; one with all pilgrims rejoicing on their way after their loads have been lifted by his miracle-working. Truly our Lord knows well the earthly

roads. He traveled them so often. He liked being out of doors. He would leave a house to seek a meadow or a hill. The day he served the thousands was one of those days when he left the town and came to a "place of much grass." How he must have loved it! How that rhythmic sweep and lift of the silver grasses must have soothed his tired nerves! Its cleanness was close akin to his own purity of heart; it was like running music to his ears that were so often filled with the cries of the sufferers.

We are the common people today—a title of which we need not be ashamed. We walk the common roads of earth and he still walks and talks with us along the way, if we are but receptive to his presence.

He is one of us. Although he now dwells in marble palaces, he does not forget the ways of earth, nor the throngs that are still taking their way thereon—some that are rejoicing in the consciousness of his presence, some heavily oppressed by the cares of the world, but this we know, there is One who loves us with an everlasting love and he knows the way that we take. Let us keep remembering that we still have his warm companionship, and may we not forget his blessed, though unseen, presence as we journey heavenward.

**Dear heavenly Father, thou wert kind and merciful to loan us thy Son for a season that he might**

know from experience how rough are the roads that we so often must travel.

To have him fully realize our many difficulties is to bring him close with understanding sympathy and love.

For this we thank thee, as in his name we pray.  
Amen.

 *One Man* 

One man alone to change the ways of men!  
One humble man to draw the world to him!  
Never before, nor will there be again  
His like—the stars may fade, and the sun's light  
dim,  
And still no one will walk as once he walked,  
Among the lowly, healing every ill,  
And still no man will talk as once he talked  
To teach mankind to heed God's holy will.

Never a man like this—no one at all  
Moves as he moves within a circling light,  
Head-high above all others, straight and tall  
He stands, imbued with power and with might.  
He is the One, O men, who sacrificed  
His life for ours—the loving, living Christ!



## COME SEE A MAN

*Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?* —John 4:29

IT WAS high noon in Samaria. The intense heat of the sun, casting its golden shafts sharply through the branches of the olive trees, pointed out a wayside well—a well with a history.

It lay outside the village of Sychar, “near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph” long before. It was the well to which the women of the village came to draw water for their households.

In those days no man considered the drawing of water to be his work. That particular task belonged to the women. We can recall but one instance in our Bible when a man performed that menial task. Christ had told his disciples to find a man bearing a pitcher of water and to follow him. It was an occurrence so unusual they could not mistake whom they were to follow.

To this well there came a group of weary travelers. One of them was overly fatigued from the journey. He had been interrupted often on his way by the pressing throng where imploring ones called for his healing touch, demanding his attention. When he arrived at the well he rested there while his companions went on their

way to buy food for their noontime meal. A woman came out of the village, bearing a pitcher. No doubt she was a beautiful woman, and she, too, had a history. She had been much sought after by the men of Samaria. Four of them had been her husbands, and another with whom she was then living, by her own later confession, was not her husband.

Jesus observed her coming. She walked gracefully along, the huge pitcher balanced easily on her hip. As she came up to the wellside where he was sitting, he spoke to her:

“Give me to drink,” he said.

It must have seemed to the woman a curiously abrupt demand. She was startled, not only by the unusual request, but because a Jew was speaking to a Samaritan.

“How is it that you ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?” She looked at him intently to see if she could solve the mystery of his request, for the Jews and Samaritans were poles apart in their dealings at all times.

The man made a strange answer: “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”

Living water to the inhabitants of that land meant spring water—cool and sparkling and gushing from clean rocks, unpolluted by foreign substance, a delicious drink for a parched throat.

Frowning slightly in her earnest desire to

understand, the woman replied: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" She was a bit brusque with the stranger by this time.

The man made answer: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman listened intently, puzzled. Then suddenly, eagerly, she cried: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw," and no doubt she added that she was sick and tired of the daily task of being a bearer of water, and that she would be glad to be relieved of the monotonous job.

Then came the testing command: "Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

The embarrassed woman shuffled the gravel with the toe of her sandal and mumbled: "I have no husband."

The man then and there revealed his knowledge of her entire life, amazing her with that revelation. He had told her truthfully all that she had ever done, and then he taught her from the Scriptures—great, undreamed of truths which stirred her heart and left an impression that was to last throughout eternity.

She listened intently—she became excited—

so much so that she flung the empty waterpot from her, and hastening back the way she had come, she went heralding the news to any chance passer-by. She cried that she had found a prophet back at the well who had the power to tell one's entire life history. "Surely," she cried, "he is the Christ!"

She entered the village. She knocked on door after door, shouting: "Come see a man! He is out at Jacob's well. Don't miss him!" She ran along the street calling out her importunate invitation: "Come see a man!"

One can imagine the commotion engendered in the little town as the woman sped to and fro, pleading for all who would to come.

A strange evangelist she was, indeed, but she was an ardent one and an impressive one. Doubtless many were drawn irresistibly to Christ that day through her insistence. The Master must have tarried at the wellside, waiting the result of her ministry. We can hear him explaining to the throng who came, his power to give them water that would quench their thirst forever. Many must have drunk deeply from the chalice he held out for that thirst.

Can we not picture the woman after the first excitement had died down, going soberly back to her home, pondering long and earnestly the words that had been spoken to her that day. Doubtless when the man with whom she was living returned from his work at sunset, she met

him at the door, still flushed and exultant. She poured forth the vital experience of the day.

She told him of the one who had spoken with her—a man who knew her entire life—and his. A man who knew they were both guilty of a great sin. “It is time,” we can imagine her saying, “that we make a change in our living,” and perhaps she may have been able to persuade him to live uprightly from that day on.

Come see a man who has the power to save us, one who knows each detail of our lives from the day of birth to the hour of death. Come see one who has, in his touch, healing for the body and a glorious salvation for the soul.

Should we not all concentrate on that special message to our fellow men? Should not we, too, urge with earnest existence: “Come see a man”? Should we not tell of the peace of mind, the rest of soul that he is ready to give any earnest seeker after that peace—that rest?

Come see a man!—is not this cry the very substance of every true evangelist’s message? Are not these words the foundation upon which all missionaries build their edifices for Christ?

What do the ones see who accept that invitation? They see a man whose kind eyes look sorrowfully out upon a sinning world: “How often would I have gathered [thee] . . . and ye would not.” We see his hands that were pierced by man-driven nails, hands that have blessed countless children, that have healed tortured

bodies—hands that have long knocked at the doors of our hearts seeking an entrance.

We see his scarred feet—feet that have constantly gone on errands of mercy for often ungrateful mankind. We see his body that was broken for us—his whole attitude pleading for us to “come.”

Should we not accept that most important of all life’s invitations, and should we not go crying out the same unforgettable words that a woman used persuasively long ago: “Come see a man!”

**Our dear heavenly Father, thou gavest us thy Son, the man through whom we all must come in order to inherit eternal life. Grant that we come early so that no time be wasted in our endeavor to bring others to thee. Amen.**

## COME

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. —Matt. 11:28*

HERE is the most gracious invitation ever sent out to the many weary and troubled peoples of the earth. It should be the one most coveted, the one most precious.

It is engraved by the hand of God himself, and it is sent out to be accepted by all who will come. It is delivered to king and commoner alike, to the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the saint and the sinner. God's R.S.V.P. is not appended. The invitation is to be accepted at once and acknowledged in the heart.

It is an invitation to the workers of the world, to the overburdened. It is a call of mercy to the tired and weary, and to all suffering ones who so desperately need their rest. It is a promise of well-being to all who will come.

There are few, indeed, in these days of stress and strain who are not bearing burdens, few who are not tired in one way or another, and many are ill. Countless ones are carrying all but unbearable weights of sorrow and anxiety. All of this our blessed Lord longs to remove from our hearts and shoulders. Should we not accept

that invitation, which promises that removal, with alacrity and great joy?

If we do so we are assured of the rest we so much need, of the peace our souls require in order to speed happily along on our heavenward journey. One has bid us come—shall we not go?

The word “come” sounds out as clearly as a quick-struck bell, calling humanity to seek the Lord “while yet he may be found.” To seek him on his own premises, in his own living quarters. That he should care to have us come, that he should write his invitation and send it out to us as individuals, should be humbling to us. He does not bid us come in formal attire, but to come in the garments of our everyday living, dusty from our roadway travel; and worn though our ancient garments may be—thus we are bid to come.

His invitation is insistent. God help us not to weary him by ignoring this momentous invitation or by failing to come at his gracious command.

We consider the brief word “come.” We search the word of God. We find few verbs in our Bible that are reiterated as often as that one word. It is insistent in its meaning. It is a blessed demand. If we scan any complete concordance we are amazed to find column after column devoted to that simple four-letter word.

Possibly the word “go” is second in the number of times that it is employed. It, too, is a vital part of our Lord’s communication to us.



First we are to come for saving, for healing, for guidance and for wisdom, and thus equipped, we are to go that others may be drawn to that almighty source of power.

Come is a compelling word. It is a loving word uttered by a Father to his wayward and needy children. He speaks: "All things are ready: come." On a bright hillside one summer afternoon he uttered the words that still belong to all the little children of the earth: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." And woe unto anyone who would forbid a child that blessed privilege!

There is another come that echoes across the years like a trumpet blast: "Come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:21). We may be sure that if we obey the command he will not permit that cross to become too heavy for our human shoulders to bear, for he tells us: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:30). We can never know the lightness of that cross unless we take it up in his name. Shall we not obey the command?

Again he speaks, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). Who among us can possibly picture the glory that awaits all who heed that ringing call?

He tells us to "occupy till I come." Here is the word again. May we be quick to obey, for come he surely will, although in what hour, truly none can know. On and on go the com-

mands and each time we heed the admonition we draw closer to the Lord of life through obedience to his word.

We consider the word *go*. Such a little word but how vitally the Lord made use of it! How often men were told to "go forward," to "go forth," and ever in a heavenward direction. His last command given to his disciples before he ascended into heaven was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Come see a man who was, and is, so concerned for our world that his thought is continually toward us. We are to go, and thus teach others how to *come* unto him. May he bless our going.

Dear Lord, we would accept thy gracious invitation to come unto thee. Thou knowest our great need for thy promised rest, for thy proffered peace. Forgive our waywardness in the past, and help us catch and hold the vision of thy presence with the many blessings held out for our acceptance. Amen.

❧ *Christ Is the Answer* ❧

Our times are perilous—each city stands  
A target for the marksmanship of foes.  
There is no seeming peace for troubled lands,  
And for men's hearts bowed down with bitter  
woes.

There is but one sure hope—one hope alone;  
There is but One whose power has sufficed  
To meet the needs of those who make them  
known  
To the gracious, loving, understanding Christ.

Christ is the answer to our deep desire  
For the old, long-lost tranquillity of peace.  
Oh, that all hearts would burn with living fire  
As they turn to find him! May they never cease  
Their onward, upward reach until at last  
They kneel in unison, the darkness past.

## A MAN'S MAN

*Sir, we would see Jesus.—John 12:21*

JESUS was a man among men. He understood the varied moods of men, and we would see him through a man's eyes.

To do so we should concentrate upon the four Gospels of the New Testament. These are portraits reflecting the statements of men who had companioned our Lord through his earthly ministry. His disciples knew him intimately and they loved him well, and the portraits drawn of him are accurate and fadeless.

We see Jesus pictured from the viewpoints of the writers' individualities. One saw him from one angle, another from his own, in that momentous time of history; yet their gaze was so centered, so intent, that a whole picture emerges in the Gospels. The variations come from the high lights that fall upon it from slightly different angles.

When the story has been told, a man stands forth of absolute purity, unalloyed goodness, his entire being bathed in the white splendor of holiness. In these four brief accounts of our Lord's earthly pilgrimage we catch a clear picture of the Holy One: the greatest personality that ever breathed the breath of life—the one and only Saviour of mankind.

These were inspired writers, but there were other men in those days, far from being inspired, who strangely voice our Lord's praise though they had no intention of doing so.

There was Pilate who paid Jesus a backhanded tribute when he threw up his freshly washed hands and declared: "I find no fault in him." And there was Judas Iscariot who, before he ran out into the night in an agony of self-reproach, cried aloud: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

Man's opinion of our Lord in his earthly lifetime can be summed up in the brief statement spoken of him as he mingled with the learned men of the day in the temple: "And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers."

We know that rich men, learned men, poor men, sick men sought him in their need. We recall that golden afternoon in Judaea when Christ was absorbed in blessing the little children who were brought to him. A young man came running breathlessly to him and flung himself upon his knees before him, unabashed and unashamed before the gaping crowd—a handsome man, a man of proud birth, who put forth a most vital question: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He was anxious, desperately concerned, as he knelt there; and we are told that "Jesus beholding him loved him."

But alas! Christ's answer was grievous to the

one who had "great possessions," and he went away sorrowful. We think the case was sad, but the love of Christ has ever been all-enveloping and far-reaching, and there is none who can state the final outcome of that important meeting.

We think of another man on another day: Stephen, the youthful zealot in the cause of Christ. We hear his clear, earnest voice speaking in his own defense. We view with horror the atrocity of his martyrdom, and so plain is the picture that we, too, can all but see "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" to welcome his faithful follower home.

We recall Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples" of our Lord, when suddenly his eyes are blinded by a dazzling celestial light and there is a voice: the voice of the risen Christ, who had been so sorely persecuted hitherto, and who meant to put a stop to Saul's evil ways, no doubt seeing in him a magnificent power for good which he planned to use later on.

And the man, arrested in his precipitous downward flight, stopped and asked a most pertinent question of this unseen spokesman: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He listened to the answer—he heard and he obeyed. Is it not the first question that every new convert should ask? And is it not wise that we, too, obey the instructions that surely will be forthcoming?

There have been thinkers and great writers in our time who through their able years derided the fact of the divinity of Jesus, yet as they approached the dark abyss that lies between life and death, turned frantically toward him, confessing their error sorrowfully, and proclaimed the Christ for what he was, and still is: the only man who ever walked the earth sinless, yet who had power to save the sinner; the only one who has loved sinners enough to die for them.

What do men think of him today? We have it on good authority that the new Encyclopaedia Britannica gives space to some twenty thousand words in reference to Jesus, more by far than is allotted to any other man. There is more space given to him in that authoritative work than to all the atheistic writers, the agnostic scientists, the blasphemers of our Lord, put together.

In those books he stands out pre-eminently, with no denial of his divinity, no suggestion that he does not still exist. What do men of our day think of him? Every date that is penned, every coin that changes hands in our Western world acknowledges him. Our dates begin with his birth. The fact of his existence is heralded wherever men barter and trade. No legal document goes without his seal affixed; no deed changes hands without his birth date being acknowledged.

Christ once asked his followers a direct question: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" He was eager that his identity be firmly established. Peter was ready with the right an-

swer: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And, today, more and more men have heard of him, have accepted him, and are turning in worshipful reverence to the Son of God. They are finding him to be all that his followers have said he was, and knew him to be.

They find him to be holy and sinless—a man's man, one who knows all about their grave responsibilities in these days of savage competition, and who understands their longings for stability in an unstable world—one who stands ready to help them with his wise judgment.

All too often Jesus has been pictured as gentle, meek, and mild. All these he is, yet there is no trace of weakness in him. Men are not drawn to another by meekness alone. They are attracted by the "unusual," and Christ was unusual. He did unusual things. He drew the throngs on earth because of his magnetic personality. He would not compromise with sin; he was forthright in all his statements. He was honest in his dealings. He scorned hypocrisy. Every move he made commanded attention. He was a man among men, but he was a holy man.

That afternoon in the temple the money-changers were not frightened by the small knotted cord in his hand. They scurried away before those flexed muscles, those flashing eyes, before his righteous indignation. He was a strong man. He walked miles every day. He lived out of doors. He ate sparingly of simple food. We have no record of his ever being ill.



Come see that man—one altogether worthy of men's devotion. God grant he may receive that devotion more and more until the last man with failing breath turns to fall on his knees before him exclaiming: "My Lord and my God."

Our heavenly Father, thou didst send thy Son to move among mankind. May the lines of his followers increase in length until they circle the globe, and at last there be none who has not joined that innumerable company of worshipers of the one altogether worthy of worship. May the whole earth come to acknowledge him as their Lord and Saviour. In his name we pray. Amen.

❧ *What Think Ye of Christ?* ❧

Upon your answer, men, your soul's salvation  
Hangs in the balance—What think ye of him?  
The question rings from nation unto nation,  
Thundering out from ocean's rim to rim.  
“What think ye of the Christ?” What think ye  
of him?

He put the question centuries ago,  
Hungering for men to turn and serve him,  
And seek the pathway he had come to show.

Oh, white the ardent praise that should be lift-  
ing,  
And earnest be the many prayers that beat  
Their way up to the throne before the sifting  
Of the tares that tangle through the golden  
wheat.

What think ye of the Christ? On this depends  
Where we shall spend eternity, my friends.

## A WOMAN'S CHRIST

*She shall be called Woman.—Gen. 2:23*

WOMAN was created to be man's companion and his helper. She was to be his equal, but after the fall in Eden she became more or less his chattel. Too often she was merely the bearer of wood and the drawer of water in his household—and far too often unconsidered as a person.

When Jesus came, women were among his closest friends, his most ardent admirers, because of his understanding of their own peculiar make-up and because of his tender consideration of them.

They were drawn to him by their needs and by his mastery of every situation. His virility was amazing and his gentleness in his dealings with them was a constant source of wonder.

They found him a man who could turn to a man, a man's heart; to a woman, a woman's heart; and to a child, the heart of a child. They were astonished at this God-sent man and in their hearts they adored him.

They came to him whenever it was possible to come. They brought their little children that he might bless them. They sought him for healing. If they became conscience-stricken by their sins they turned to him and found ready forgiveness through his mercy.

He considered the case of widows. He was particularly concerned for them. He condemned the ones who, through greed, preyed upon these defenseless ones. He accepted the homage paid him by women. They lavished him with honors which he received graciously.

He went out of his way to heal Simon's mother-in-law, who was burning with fever. The fever left and she immediately arose and ministered unto him—truly a worthy example for us to follow today. Oh, when the fever of living runs high and hot in our veins, may he touch us also, and may we, too, have the grace to arise and be his ministers!

Perhaps the most poignant example of Christ's deep understanding of a woman in trouble was the instance of the adulterous one who was brought into his presence, drawn roughly there by mocking, self-righteous men: scribes and Pharisees, hiding their own guilt under a pretense of innocence, craving that the woman be stoned, licking their lips in anticipation of the event, and virtuously consulting Jesus as to what he thought should be done with such as she.

It must have puzzled them greatly when they saw the Lord stoop and write upon the sand at his feet. They probably drew near, striving to read the writing, wondering what on earth he was doing. He was not answering them and they were not accustomed to be thus ignored. While he continued writing, they questioned him again. At last Jesus replied in his own wise way: "He

that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

Cannot we all but see them—their flushed faces, their embarrassed, shifting glances? They must have been miserable enough knowing how their own inner lives were revealed to this man.

The words took hold, and when Jesus again returned to his writing, they scurried away, convicted by their own conscience, first one and then another until no one was left but the frightened, trembling woman who slowly approached the Lord, ready to fall at his feet and crave his forgiveness.

"Woman, . . .," he queried, "hath no man condemned thee?" She answered, "No man, Lord." Then came his blessed, unforgettable words: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Here are words of hope for any to cling to, coming as they did from the great forgiving heart of the Master.

We may be sure her old offense was never repeated. She, too, would have in her heart the desire to arise and minister unto one so good, so unbelievably merciful, and doubtless she did that very thing.

There is only one time that Jesus seemingly rebuked a woman. When we realize how tiring was the dispute forced upon him on that particular day by the gross, sensuous mob, we cannot wonder at the reproof which he gave and which the woman so much deserved.

Above the wild clamor, a voice lifted louder

and more stridently than the rest, a woman's voice: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." Evidently Christ felt her insincerity and her desire for notice, and turning to her he replied shortly:

"Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Most women would have shrunk small within themselves before such a rebuke, but Jesus knew women. This one was not the shrinking, sensitive type.

Mark the difference in his treatment of the woman who "had suffered many things of many physicians," who had spent all her living, and had grown worse under their treatment. She had followed in the outskirts of the crowd, striving to draw near to the man in its center. She thought longingly: "If I can but touch his garment's hem, I shall be made whole." She edged nearer—she reached a shaking hand toward the Lord's robe—her finger tips touched it, and like a light suddenly shining in a dark place, the old torturing misery ceased, and she knew she was healed! Oh, the blessedness of that healing!

Jesus felt the power leave him, that virtue upon which others could draw, and he said: "Who touched me?" The woman, realizing that she must make herself known, came and knelt before him and told him the truth, all of it.

Gently the Lord took her by the hand and bade her arise. A great pity was in his heart for one who had suffered so long and he, who had no daughter, called her by that loving name,

bidding her go in peace, made every whit whole of her plague.

When we consider the great number of Christian women in our Lord's service today, the faithful workers among the poor and needy, the church leaders in all denominations who help the men carry the load of responsibility for Christianity, we catch a glimpse of the great following the Lord has among women, and ever will have because he is able to "turn to a woman, a woman's heart," one of complete understanding. O women, you who do not as yet know him, come see that Man!

Our heavenly Father, we are the women of the earth. We are the weaker ones, but thou didst send thy Son to be our strength in the important place we occupy as bearers of the race, and we thank thee, as thy servants, for that Christ. Amen.

## THE GIFT OF PEACE

*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.*

—John 14:27

THERE is an inner strength and beauty in the brief word "peace." Too often we associate it only with freedom from war with all its horrors. We have traveled a long hard road, crimson with the blood of our youth; we have suffered agonies from loss and sorrow, and in the physical sense, peace, even with the complete cessation of hostilities, still seems to lie a long way off.

The Lord left us a different peace: his peace. His was a tranquillity of spirit which no ill wind could disturb, no evil force destroy. The secret of his peace lay in his unchanging attitude toward the will of his Father. He moved in that will. He had his being in it and he found peace and rest therein.

He wants us to lay hold and savor the full, deep meaning of the will of God. He desires for us to know the inner spring of his peace, and so that far-off day, before he went to his Father, he impressed upon his hearers the fact that the Comforter which his Father was to send would teach them all things and would call to their remembrance the words that he had spoken.



Echoing across the centuries we hear Christ's clear, penetrating voice: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." If we have our being in a high stratum of life, if we abide in the will of God, why should we be troubled? why should we be afraid? The force for good will ever be at work within us and we can go forward fearlessly.

Why should we be disturbed so greatly by the fretting, nagging things which so often beset our days? They are small and inconsequential when taken separately, but many times we allow them to accumulate until they overburden us and bow us down.

We fail to "consider the lilies of the field." We are told that "they toil not, neither do they spin," yet we permit the day's tasks to become mountains in our way. We forget Jesus' admonition to "take . . . no thought for the morrow," and we go floundering on, anxious and troubled over things that may never happen, forgetting that if they should happen, our Lord will go with us, clearing the tangled way before us.

We dwell all too often in the lowlands when we should be living victoriously upon the heights, drinking in the beauty and the wonders that God has placed before our eyes. We should be stretching upward spiritually and physically, growing in wisdom and stature through close association with one who thus grew in his sojourn upon the earth.

"My peace I give unto you." It must grieve

our Lord to have us fail to accept that proffered gift. It would hurt an earthly parent deeply if he gave his little child a gift, new and shining and beautiful—a lovely thing for which that child had longed and for which he had expressed a desire—if, when that gift is handed to him, he should turn from it to continue his playing with some old and battered toy.

No less do we hurt the Lord when we earnestly long for peace of mind, for tranquillity of spirit, and we pray for it. When he answers by assuring us that he is giving it to us, we go on living with the old anxieties, the same old fears which have been worn threadbare by much handling.

Peace is a quiet joy. Peace is an upward winging. Peace is rest after a long, high climb. Peace is God's will for his children. Jesus bade us open our hearts to receive it. Strange that we should go seeking for something that is already ours!

True, in life there is much work to be done, but our Lord strengthens us for that work. There are burdens that we have that should be laid upon Christ's shoulders that are stronger than ours. We may know failure and disappointments, we will have losses, but we are pupils in the school of life and there are lessons we must learn. May we be diligent scholars, pleasing to the great Teacher of all time.

**Blessed Lord, help us to stay our minds on thee, that we may attain that most priceless possession—perfect inner security and peace. Amen.**

## THE BEAUTY-LOVING LORD

*Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name;  
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

—Ps. 29:2

WHEN we consider the beauty with which our Lord has dressed the world, when we recall that he helped his Father plan all the loveliness that has been literally spilled over the earth, truly we should give him the praise "due unto his name."

No land has been left entirely desolate. Each section of every country has been allotted its own peculiar radiance and charm: the desert with its wild splendor, no less than that of the lush forests and fruitlands; the immeasurable white reaches of the Arctic, no less than that of the tropics with their languorous blossomings, their flame-colored birds. When we realize this, we stand amazed at the marvelous distribution of color and light over all lands.

The Creator knew that the passion for beauty would ever burn in the human breast, and he supplied that beauty to meet an insistent need. As we behold the grandeur of the snow-capped mountains, as we view the blue wash of the restless sea, as we watch the ever-changing white clouds riding the sky like so much flying music, we can behold Christ's own beautiful mind pictured there.

He himself has been likened by the poets to the rose of Sharon. No doubt this rose of old was an unusually rare species—breath-takingly beautiful. Many have compared him also to “the lily among thorns,” and to “an apple tree among the trees of the wood” (Song of So. 2:2). What could be purer than a lily? What could be more beneficent to a hungry and thirsty wayfarer than to come at some luminous moment upon a tree bright with red-globed apples in the midst of non-fruit bearing trees?

We are told to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Surely it must please him to look down upon a communion service in any house of worship. Here, if ever, is manifested that type of holiness. The altar has been fittingly dressed in pure white linen. The silver chalices gleam with light, and the ones who dare partake of those sacred emblems come with humility of spirit, and with the white radiance of true worship shining in their hearts. Here more than anywhere do they truly bow to the will of God. They take the bread, remembering our Lord’s blessed body; they sip the red wine, conscious of his out-pouring love.

One can believe he considers this worship beautiful in its holiness. We may be sure that as Jesus walked the earth he noted with joy the Creator’s handiwork (and his own). He saw that it was good. He must have been delighted with a slender tree blowing in the wind—a flower hidden in the wayside grass, knowing

all its intricacies. Had he not helped to create them? No doubt he gloried in the golden glow of the sun, in the pellucid light of the little new moon curved over a darkening meadow. We know he loved the stars, for his Father had once chosen a beautiful one to be his own emblem.

He spoke to his disciples saying: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28-29).

In this brief statement we see his keen evaluation of beauty. He spoke of God clothing the grass of the field. Even those small glistening spears were not beneath his notice. We may be certain our Lord loved the grass. He moved through its silver brightness so often. He wants us to consider his handiwork—to be aware of it and to fully appreciate his gracious gifts to us.

One can believe that he considers that awareness a form of worship. It is a consciousness of him and his handiwork. It is the evaluation of his creation. It is a gladness in the heart that is akin to praise, and he accepts it as such.

To witness a beautiful landscape and to be unmoved by it is surely a sad lack of appreciation upon the viewer's part. Amiel, the wise philosopher, once made this statement: "Landscape is a state of mind." Dull, indeed, is the mind that is not lifted heavenward by a great sweep of distance, by a sudden view of misted hills and

lakes and forests, bathed in all but celestial light.

There is an interesting story told of two appreciative travelers leisurely touring the Holy Land on foot. They were eager to become acquainted with the ground over which our Lord had traveled—to follow, as it were, in his footsteps. They had moved across the hills and swales and hollows, ever conscious of the beauty spread before them.

They had come upon the Sea of Galilee, which they felt was as entrancing as the Lucerne that they had viewed together on another journey. Up windy slopes they climbed; they rested in the shade of a gray olive tree which shadowed a vocal brook. Farther south they had climbed the harsh, forbidding slopes of Mount Nebo, with its gigantic crags and parapets lifting dramatically, while far off through the amethystine air lay the deep blue waters of the Dead Sea. They were grateful for all that splendor, conscious that the Lord had been there before them.

They left that hilltop glory and wended their way toward Jericho. They came to a shepherd's cottage and saw an old man sitting idly in his moss-hung barn door. They paused to speak to him. He was eager to talk. He wanted to know what matter had brought them down his way: "Was it Old Home Week? Or a ball play? or what?" he questioned.

“No, uncle,” one of the men replied. “We are just looking for scenery.”

The old fellow, with ill-concealed disgust, eyed them and their luggage. “Humph,” he said, “I’ve druv across these hills nigh unto forty years, an’ ”—with the greatest scorn—“I never seen no scenery yet.” And having thus delivered himself, he renewed his chewing of the straw he had neglected.

Is this not the way with many of us? We spend our days, our years, our lives amid the splendor of the dawn, the golden glory of high noon, the afterglow of twilight, and the night with its wash of stars, and we have not seen them, felt them, loved them for their own beauty, nor have we turned to the Creator with humble, grateful hearts, exclaiming, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?”

Shall we not, in turn, be mindful of him and his mercy in making our lines fall in pleasant places? Shall we not lift glad hearts for the beauty of every day that lies close about us?

Dear Lord, everywhere there is evidence of thy care that is over us. May nothing of thy handiwork go unnoticed by us. Help us, dear Lord, to have open eyes and receptive hearts. Help us to praise thee as we should and to truly worship thee in the beauty of holiness. Amen.

❧ *Jesus Was a Poet* ❧

Jesus was a poet—  
He spoke in singing words  
Of gold wheat and its sowing,  
Of small gray-feathered birds;  
He told of one repentant  
Who had set himself to roam,  
And many a pilgrim, harking,  
Has wept and turned toward home.

He sang of vine and fig tree,  
Of water and of bread,  
Of sheep and a good shepherd;  
And every word he said  
Was pregnant with deep meaning  
To pierce the listener through;  
Strong words that live forever  
As great poetry should do.  
And though no single stanza  
Has balanced form and rhyme,  
Yet Jesus is the greatest  
Poet of all time.



## THE GRACIOUS GUEST

*Now . . . , as they went, . . . he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his words.*  
—Luke 10:38-39

COME SEE the Christ, framed as he is by a cottage door. We see him sitting in a home-sweet living room in Bethany. Beside him on a low stool, a young woman sits, her eyes fixed earnestly upon him as she drinks in his every word.

This is an interior scene. It is Martha and Mary's home where they dwelt with their brother Lazarus, and today, as he often was, Jesus was their guest.

He was companioned for the moment by Mary alone, for Martha, who ever took responsibility hard, had just gotten up and flounced out into the kitchen. Martha was the flouncing kind. She was a good woman—energetic, capable, often too demanding, but good. She was one who was spoken of by her neighbors as an excellent housekeeper. Her floors shone; her windows sparkled. Her little house was often the envy of her less capable neighbors.

We can see her now—slamming the pots and pans a bit, stooping over her clay oven to

peer anxiously in at the browning loaf, basting the sputtering meat. She cracks the tablecloth unnecessarily as she spreads it. She has one ear cocked for the boiling kettle, and the other straining to catch the conversation in the next room.

Finally she can stand it no longer. She steps to the door, hands on hips, and, as one may imagine, speaks: "Master, I think it's high time my sister comes out to the kitchen to help me. Lazarus will soon be home and will be wanting his dinner. There is much to be done in getting a meal, and I believe Mary should be out there doing some of it."

Their gentle Guest looks up at her with loving, understanding eyes. He knows Martha's nervous system is ever too tightly wound. He knows how reliable she is through any time of stress, how truly good she is. He also knows Mary's sweet nature, her desire for knowledge, her hunger for things eternal. He realizes that the sisters are as unlike as any two could possibly be. He loves them both, but he does not withhold his gentle rebuke: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42).

Martha may have smelled something burning at the moment and she hurried out to the kitchen to remedy the damage, but we can well believe the gentle words of the Master had

their lasting effect. Perhaps from that moment on, she, too, may have thought more of the ageless, timeless things of eternity, the important things that make for better and vital living.

The dust might gather a bit thicker upon her sills, a garment go unmended for a while, but she would have many more interests in common with her sister, and no doubt Lazarus was far more comfortable in the home that had demanded too much of him hitherto.

Come see a man who valued friendship and who needed it as we all do. He was divine, yet he was human enough to long for companionship throughout his days, and he sought out those who were worthy of that blessed association.

He loved these three friends especially, and he knew later on when the beloved brother fell ill, that the little household was in great distress and anguish. He also knew that there never could have been a more efficient and tender nurse than Martha. He knew when Lazarus died that her sorrow was quite as great as that of her sister and that when she heard he had at last returned from his journey, she it was who hastened to him, while Mary "sat still in the house."

Martha's greeting was identical to that of her sister which came later on. "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." An old, old cry of anguish went up from her broken heart. Strange that the sisters, so unlike, should

have uttered the exact words, and that both expressed, in the same manner, absolute faith in their friend's ability to ask a favor of God and to have that favor granted.

Come see a man who has power to raise the dead and who knew of the joy that awaited the sisters: One who was certain that his Father heard him at all times, and who strove to bear witness to that fact in order that those gathered about the tomb that day might have their own wavering faith strengthened.

Come see a man whose love for his friends was so great that even though he could see the sunlight through the clouds, he mourned with them in their sorrow and they felt his sympathy like a warm arm close about them.

As we recall that scene it comforts us to know that he is a changeless Christ. He understands all sorrow. He grieves with us when we grieve, although he knows that for us, too, the light will break as the healing hours pass. He is our Friend. Come see that Friend.

He was not only a friend to the three in Bethany, but to the peoples of the whole wide world. He will come and abide with us if we invite him to do so. He will uphold us in our sorrow and rejoice with us in our gladness.

Would it not be wise to hang this picture of the little home in Bethany on our heart's wall, as we would hang any fine painting? A picture we could often turn to when cares press close upon us, and there find the same Christ, the

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same Friend, ready to offer his words of wisdom and counsel to us as he did to the two of old. It would truly be edifying and good for us often to recall that scene.

**Our blessed Lord, come stay with us. Abide with us. Let our roof be thy shelter, our fire thy warmth. Teach us to know thy eternal truths, and may we heed them. Reprove us if there be need of reproof, and may we be worthy of thy blessed friendship. Amen.**

## THE SORROWING CHRIST

*Jesus wept.—John 11:35*

HERE we have the shortest verse in the Bible, yet it is as long as the longest, and as strong as the strongest, for it gives absolute proof that “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” (Heb. 4:15). And this knowledge has the power to comfort our hearts immeasurably.

Jesus was divine, but he was also very, very human. His friend was dead, and those who loved him were brokenhearted over their loss. We have the simple statement that he wept, and because of that weeping all hearts on earth that are hurt and bleeding may be assured of his understanding sympathy. He, too, has sorrowed. He, too, has suffered and wept. He knows the heights and depths of human emotion and he understands.

The Jews considered the tears of Jesus as weakness. They doubtless said among themselves: “If he loved Lazarus so much, why did he not heal him? If he could have healed him, why did he not do so?” Always doubting, always rejecting the One altogether lovely, altogether loving.

They looked with amazement at the weeping

Christ and said: "Behold how he loved him!" And when we think of him willingly giving up his life on the cross, are we not amazed also, and do we not cry from the depths of our beings: "Behold how he loves us!"?

Twice, and twice only, we are told that the Lord wept. In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew we have a vivid picture of Christ sorrowing over Jerusalem. He must have stood on some pinnacle overlooking the city, viewing it with stricken eyes as he exclaimed: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Here is sorrow so poignant that it hurts the heart. Here was Christ yearning over the inhabitants of a sin-ridden city—a people who had rejected him and had killed the ones he had sent to help them. They would not repent and nothing could be done for these hardhearted ones, and the Saviour stood there weeping—a great pity in his heart for those blind, wayward children of his.

He wept for others. He never once wept for himself. He shed no tears when Peter hurt his heart by denying him. It was Peter who wept then, and his were bitter tears indeed. There was no room for self-pity in our Lord's make-up. Even in the garden of Gethsemane, when in agony his sweat was "as it were great drops

of blood," we are not told that he wept. No doubt his grief was beyond the relief of tears. He was battling the powers of darkness. Satan was tearing at his very soul, but he was seeking to know the absolute will of the Father and he was prepared to do that will. Even on the cross there were no tears shed. His tears were alone for a hurt, stricken world.

Our Bible is full of the sound of weeping: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentations, and weeping, . . . Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (Matt. 2:18). And the Jews in captivity tell us: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1). Jeremiah has this to say: "O that my head were waters, . . . that I might weep day and night!" (Jer. 9:1). Poor tortured, bewildered humanity! And the dear Christ too hurt to weep openly!

"Weep not for me," Jesus said, "but weep for yourselves." On and on from the beginning, humanity has been weeping, so rugged has been the road, and so self-willed and rebellious the travelers!

Yet mingled with the wailing and the weeping there has ever been the sound of rejoicing and high praise. It has lifted up like the smoke of evening incense to the very throne of God, which must repay him in part for his fatherhood to man and his unfailing love for his wayward children.



The only weeping we know of that was entirely useless occurred one far-off morning in an Eastern garden. There in the half light a woman's tears were suddenly dried and her sorrow was turned to shouting, singing joy. There came a voice: "Woman, why weepest thou?" Why, indeed, with the risen Christ waiting in the shadows to dry her tears and to comfort her heart—to comfort the heart of this whole sorrowing world with his presence! The wonder is that any of us should weep after that soul-shaking event.

Further on we are told this glorious news to stay our tendency to weeping: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

No more death! Never more some Lazarus lying in his grave with Christ himself weeping above him. No more pain, that cruel taskmaster that has caused millions on earth to weep in agony. No more night of sorrow! There will be no need for sun or moon or stars, or candlelight—for God will light the universe of eternity with his all-pervading radiance. Is it not a glorious prospect for the saved of earth? Should we not strive to be among that exceedingly happy throng?

Our gracious heavenly Father, clear our eyes of tears that we may more readily see the inner workings of thy will in our lives. Help us to realize that "our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." In thy Son's name we ask it. Amen.

❧ *His Eyes Are Kind* ❧

I know Christ's eyes are kind as he looks down  
Upon our world today.  
He is more grieved than earthly parents are  
When children go astray;  
His eyes are kind.  
Yet deeper far than any human sight  
He beholds our hearts,  
And he can see the inner secret springs  
From which all action starts.

He understands some hurtful uttered word  
May cause us to release  
A harsh response. He knows that nagging pain  
Can roil the heart's deep peace.  
He knows that we are human, and with love  
He views our inmost mind,  
And understands our longing to be good—  
His eyes are kind.

## TESTIMONY

*Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.* —Matt. 9:29

RECENTLY a clear-eyed, consecrated Christian woman made a positive and unforgettable statement of faith.

She was speaking to friends in a home living room, though apparently with no thought that she was etching her words as deeply on the hearts of her listeners as she did. She had been through a shattering experience, but neither physical nor spiritual scars were then visible.

She and her husband and small son had been in a car wreck not long before. Her husband was killed instantly, her son was seriously injured, and she herself had been badly broken in body. We who were listening were deeply touched, and we strove to express our heartfelt sympathy, but she spoke calmly:

“It is all right. There was a presence with me, a presence that stayed by me and continued to strengthen me through those days, and I was enabled to go on. Three years before the crash I had been definitely converted. Before that time I had been a church member, a professed Christian, but after my true conversion I realized that I knew nothing of the deep inner workings of the Spirit. I had not become acquainted with

my Saviour. I had not been moving with him, and having him move in my life. Then all was changed.

“Those three brief years of vital experience had schooled me, until, to do the will of God was my one aim, my one desire. If it was his will that I go on alone, if in that way I could best be of service to my Lord, I would go forward bravely, even joyfully, if that service could thus be accomplished. Strangely I did not mourn for my husband. I had the assurance that he would be waiting for me, and that I would see him again, and,” she continued, “I was determined to go forward with the One who had stood by me so mercifully through that crucial experience—his hand on mine, my hand in his.

“I recall coming back to life and taking the first spiritual step. It seemed to me that I was moving out upon something as nebulous as a cloud that could not possibly support my weight. Then at each step I found a foundation as solid as a rock beneath my feet, and step by step I could go forward unafraid. I was simply walking by faith, trusting the rock would not fail me. I recalled the scripture where it says: ‘The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust’ (Ps. 18:2), and that he had sent his Son Jesus to lead the way.

“The Lord began opening up dazzling vistas of usefulness for me, throughout which I have

found him a mighty guiding power, and all is well."

Truly hers was a brave testimony of faith, and one that must have indeed been pleasing to her Lord. This speaker is now doing a marvelous, outstanding work with her consecrated life, and she contacts no one to whom she does not impart something of her shining faith that glorifies the Christ.

What is this intangible thing we call "faith"? Perhaps we can best define it as she did. It is a rock upon which we can stand, and on which we can safely go forward. When faith is absolute that rock is unshakable and sure. It is a foundation of right living; it is a structure on which to build. It is a quality highly commended by the Lord when he walked the earth. Instantly he recognized it in an individual and gave it praise. He was often amazed to find "so great faith" where it might have been least expected.

He would speak out: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Once when he was exceedingly sorrowful at the sad lack of faith in his followers, he said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed"—and he went on to tell them the miraculous accomplishments that would be theirs if only they had even that little faith.

Throughout his word we come upon such statements as: "By grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." "The just shall live by faith." Simple, straightforward truths that have completely changed the world's thinking.

Faith signifies strength and trust and a glorious high purpose. It is dependent upon the veracity of another. It is a belief in the truthfulness and accuracy of our spiritual narrative and teaching.

The firm foundation of faith is the supreme perfection of God: his unflinching goodness, his unerring knowledge and truthfulness; and his absolute purity. Having faith is the unflinching acceptance of the will of God. Too often we fail in that acceptance; too often we forget that his will is his tenderest consideration for our welfare, and that it is always right, always safe and best.

Oh, that we might step fearlessly forth upon the rock that awaits our advancing feet, and that we might ever go forth with an unwavering trust in One all wise who loves us enough to give us, unworthy as we are, his constant consideration and his wise guidance!

Our Lord and our God, we would have faith in thee and in thy word: faith that no adversity can shake, no evil undermine. Help us to see the safety and strength that lies in the rock set there by thine own hand, and to step out thereon with courage, knowing that we cannot fail in any service for thee. Amen.

❧ *O Splendor of Faith* ❧

O splendor of faith! O light that will not dim!  
O vision of the truth that God has given  
In the form of Christ to the followers of him  
Who walk the earth, their faces toward heaven.  
Fearless they move across the rutted sod,  
Assured of a great love, the constant giving  
Of strength from the unfailing hand of God  
That makes for victory and righteous living.

O splendor of faith! O light within the breast!  
O truth culled from the holy Word that never  
Will fail to bring the seeking heart its rest,  
And hope and gladness that will last forever.  
My faith, be strong! Oh may its lamp burn  
bright,  
Through the golden days, or through the darkest  
night!



## THE COMPASSIONATE CHRIST

*When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him. —John 6:5*

ALWAYS the compassionate Christ! Always the considerate Christ where humanity was concerned! His pity reached out to the multitude who sought him in their need. It was a working pity and no man sought him in vain.

Compassion is literally "suffering with another." All Christ's life was spent amid such suffering. He who could have been back in the radiant magnificence of heaven, who could have been having the companionship of close communion with the Father, was instead treading the rough roadways of the earth, sharing the suffering of those about him, and it was a labor he would not shirk.

Now on this special day they had followed him out from the town. The stretcher-bearers, the lame, the halt, the blind, had all but trodden upon his heels, so eager were they for his healing touch.

They were not unlike the earth throngs that still turn to him in desperation when trouble besets them. They cry to him for help, pleading with him and when that help comes, many

forget the Healer and fail to thank him in their self-sufficiency.

Upon this occasion men had left their flocks and their fields, and women had left their kitchens with the work undone in order to follow this much discussed One. They were eager to see this man whose name was upon every tongue and they came hurrying after him.

After a while Jesus halted. He turned to the throng and bade them be seated. He had chosen a beautiful setting for this day. We are told it was "a place of much grass," and we can all but see that sweep of grass, glistening, dipping, lifting silverly under the scurrying wind.

There must have been gorgeous color and light over the hillsides that morning. Perhaps the more appreciative ones in the throng had their weariness lifted a bit by that all-enveloping beauty. The day wore on and evening came. Jesus was weary after the strenuous day and he knew the others were extremely tired. He turned to Philip, the one who stood nearest him, and asked, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Andrew was standing by and said, "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"

Let us go back to the morning and to this boy with the basket. His name may have been Jonas. One may well believe that back at his home he had been pruning the grapevines in his father's

vineyard, and that he had looked up suddenly, and had seen in the distance a great crowd hurrying by.

No doubt he ran into the house to find his mother, calling her attention to the throng and begging her to let him go with them. He was sure that the Miracle Worker, of whom he had heard so much, was the one walking a bit ahead of the others and he longed mightily to see that man.

At first his mother may have objected, telling him that he was too young to go, that the way would be too long, as is the way with mothers; but when she saw his disappointment and noticed the tears gathering in his eyes, she decided it really could do no harm for him to go with the rest that beautiful summer morning, and perhaps he could get to see the strange man of whom they had heard so much. That would be good, she thought.

She turned hastily, gathering up a basket and placing in it a few barley biscuits and a couple of fish left from the morning meal. She told him he would have to hurry or he would be left behind. And hurry he did. He came to the edge of the crowd and found another lad of his own age who seemingly was very weary. He was lame, and Jonas put his shoulder under the boy's arm; the crutch helped the other side, and they hastened to catch up with the others. When the crowd stopped and they drew near, boylike they slipped between knees, pushed a bit here and

there, until they came to the front where the man stood speaking.

Jonas listened intently. The words borne on the air were like nothing he had ever heard before: they were words of tenderness and love, gentle words that touched the boy to sudden tears. The man himself drew him as a magnet draws steel. Soon the crowd was pressing forward—closer—closer—Jonas and his companion were perforce pushed nearer the speaker.

They watched him touch blind eyes and sight was restored. They saw the lame leap for joy after this One had said the freeing word. They heard the loud rejoicing of the dumb, freed at last from their lifetime bondage.

Jonas took his companion by the arm and drew him nearer the Healer. He said excitedly: "You, too, can be healed. You can run and jump as I can. Come, let him touch you." And sure enough, the gentle hands reached out to the young lad and healing came. And oh, the joy of it! Jonas had never seen anyone as happy as his newly found friend. To see one who lifelong had been hurt, freed from that hurt, was a blessed experience.

The sun was setting now, and Jonas heard himself being singled out by the man Andrew. He had turned perplexed eyes on the throng. There were thousands needing to be fed. He had spied Jonas and his small basket. "Here, lad, may I take your basket?" he asked. Eagerly the lad handed over the basket, food and all,

for he had forgotten to eat his lunch, so engrossed had he become in the man who had been speaking. Andrew handed the basket to the Master, half reluctantly. What would these small loaves and few fishes be among so many!

“Make them sit down,” Jesus commanded, and down they sat on the clean, sweet-smelling grass and waited his further orders. After the giving of thanks, the man opened the basket, and behold! loaf after loaf, fish after fish came forth, until Jonas, his eyes all but popping out of his head, could scarcely believe what he saw.

Even after all hunger had been satisfied, other baskets appeared from nowhere, until twelve of them were filled with fragments that were left. Jesus impressed upon the crowd that waste was sinful, and to this day his words bear lasting fruit to those who live by his word.

Jonas heard the voices about him speaking with wonder: “Here is of truth a prophet that shall come into the world.” The boy did not doubt that statement. As he and his companion turned homeward they scarcely could contain themselves, so great was their exultation and delight. Jonas said: “I shall keep my basket always and I shall remember the miracle wrought through it.” And his companion leaped and skipped, trying his new-found legs with joy.

“Was ever anyone so kind before?” cried Jonas. “Was there anyone who cared so greatly for the people? I shall go telling of this day

and of that man who can do all things. I shall call out to everyone to come see that man.”

Our gracious Lord, thou art ever compassionate. We, too, would be thy followers. Not for the loaves and fishes, but because we love thee. We do seek the bread of life from thy hands. Thou alone canst give it to us. May we be strengthened by it as we strive to serve thee. Amen.

## THE MASTER TEACHER

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

—John 3:1-2

THE JEWS believed that one important characteristic of the Messiah would be that he should be able to tell them all things, even the secrets of their hearts. They evidently gained this conception from the eleventh chapter of Isaiah: "There shall come forth a rod out of . . . Jesse, . . . and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."

Nicodemus was a man carrying a load of grave responsibilities. The Jews depended upon him for his counsel and advice, and he had probably run into problems that he was unable to solve at this particular hour. He needed help and instruction, and whom should he seek other than the great Teacher of all time, who was drawing men to himself by the thousands with his wisdom and understanding?

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, probably not so much through fear of the Jews as through

a desire to meet the man alone so they could discuss his problems uninterrupted. Nicodemus had witnessed him daily, surrounded by vast multitudes, and there seemed no opportunity for him to speak quietly with Jesus. This he so much longed to do.

Nicodemus respected the man, but apparently he had no intention of being one of his disciples. He was seeking him with a selfish motive as men so often do today. He addressed him as Rabbi, which means divine teacher, or master. This was a straightforward acknowledgment of his respect and belief in the man whom he was addressing.

Even then, the Jewish leader did not get to discuss his personal problems. The Teacher took advantage of the would-be questioner and at once delved into things eternal.

In that brief conversation were condensed all the important truths of time and eternity. Nicodemus' spiritual education could have been complete through the instruction he received that day if he had been receptive, and who can say—perhaps he was. At any rate he went away thoughtfully, his own problems shrunken into insignificance before the vast understanding of the man called Jesus.

We recall before Christ chose the twelve men who were to be his disciples, he spent the entire night upon a mountainside in prayer. The following day was to be an especially important one in his early ministry. He was seeking counsel



of his Father and we may be certain he received it.

He was to begin some important teaching on the following day. He was to deliver at least a portion of what has been known through the centuries as the Sermon on the Mount.

What he was to say, he realized, would go down through the ages to countless ones yet unborn. The twelve men he had chosen to follow him were with him as he descended to meet the waiting multitude. Luke tells us that he "came down to the plain"; Matthew speaks of his "going up into a mountain." Doubtless it was a slight eminence that he climbed in order to look out upon the sea of faces as he delivered the greatest dissertation in history.

It was an instructive lesson and he was the instructor. His listeners—many of them from Judaea and Jerusalem, many from Tyre and Sidon—had come from everywhere to hear him speak, as well as to be healed of their diseases.

Jesus sat down to deliver his address; it was the posture of the teachers in that day. And there he lifted up his eyes and his voice and began preaching his never-to-be-forgotten sermon.

What a revelation his strongly moving, weighty words must have been to that curious waiting throng! Surely they could not have forgotten them their lifetime through. Those words are still a vital part of living for every lover of the Christ. His blessing ascends from them for the pure in heart, for the merciful, for the meek,

for the peacemakers, for all sorrowing and persecuted ones.

Here is a map of behavior. It is a guidepost for everyday living. Should one follow the road there pointed out by the hand of the living God, none would be lost, none would come short of the glory that awaits the pilgrims of the earth.

The text of the sermon may well be considered the firm, strong foundation upon which to build our house of life. God grant that we may turn often to the carefully stenciled blueprint in order that our houses may stand unshaken and secure against the evil winds of life.

In the sixth chapter of Matthew, Christ is still teaching. It likely is a continuation of the Sermon on the Mount. Here he is giving instructions on almsgiving, on forgiveness, on the laying up of treasures, and he gives therein that glowing example for men to follow as they pray. The Lord's Prayer was taught that day to poor seeking, groping mankind who knows not how to pray except they be taught.

The very air of the mountainside must have been rife with the sound of those deathless words. They are still caught and held by unseen aerials and transmitted to us across the centuries. The reception is crystal-clear. The meaning is plain for us to hear and heed.

Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the might and power of a voice still speaking after all the years, bidding us look homeward, bidding us find unhindered the way he has prepared for us.

Dear Teacher of us all, we would have lived in darkness had not the light of thy word been spread upon our way. Help us to be listeners and obeyers that we may be educated spiritually from thy great truths. Amen.

## CHRIST THE WAY

*And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*  
—Isa. 35:8

IN ORDER to find that clean, beautiful highway and walk thereon, we should first consult our Lord as to our spiritual condition and welfare. If the disease of sin lurks in our being, he will heal us if we desire that he do so. He will set us free to walk that highroad unhindered by the great burden of sin.

He has said, and it is true, that he will remove our sins as far as the east is from the west, if we but come earnestly asking for that great blessing. Shall we not come at once and submit to his healing in order that we may take our way joyfully and gladly on that upper road that leads to a bright eternity?

Recently in one of our modern churches, there was a bulletin with a certain prayer printed upon it. In fact the same prayer appeared there every week for a year. It began something like this: "O Lord, we pray thee, forgive our manifold sins and wickedness." It went on bewailing the sins of commission and omission that had been

the same prayer, the same congregation rising and repeating it together, the same God, grieved, no doubt, at what he heard.

No change from week to week—still a great group of abject petitioners, still a mass of accumulated sins being pushed over onto the dear, faithful, forgiving Lord in order to clear the week for another batch of the same. It made one think of the little boy who had recently undergone a successful tonsillectomy. A small playmate, all concern, asked him: "Did it hurt to have your tonsils out?" And the other, evidently having heard his mother tell of the experience, answered rather impatiently: "I didn't have them out, I just had them removed."

Alas, that is the way with many professing Christians. They become spiritually ill, they seek for help and healing, but they do not submit to the right treatment. They do not take their way to the great spiritual hospital. They do not submit to the head surgeon's skilled hands and have the deeply embedded roots of sin taken out by his keen, clean surgical knife. Their sins have only apparently been shifted from one channel to another, and by the next Sabbath the patients are miserable again. They have come for more treatment at the hand of our Lord.

It is anything but a joyous Christianity, or a victorious one, that travels that endless vicious circle. There is nothing compelling or impelling about those who go bewailing their manifold

themselves should have prevented. The out-and-out sinners are never led to the Lord by such demonstrations on the part of those who name the name of the Lord as their own. Sinners see only a sick people, not too much different from themselves.

Why should truly consecrated Christians thus grieve our Lord? He is willing to do his part. He is able to remove for all time the embedded roots of man's sinful nature for those who come asking him to do so, and under his skill the trouble need never return.

The true Christian who has been through that successful surgery will never willingly sin again. His love for the great Physician will be so deep, the relief from his malady so manifest, that he would not, for any proffered gain, bring back the discomfort of the old miserable disease.

The Lord allows for errors and unintentional mistakes on his children's part. He does not look upon them as sins. No one dares stand up and say he never makes a mistake in judgment. He can pray for wisdom, however, and wisdom will be given him. No true follower of the Lord should sidestep the footprints that go before him on the road until they be lost and grievous effort must be made to find the road again.

There should be no need to bewail the sins committed along the way, for there should be no intentional sin committed. No wickedness should occur to darken the bright upward climb

We can well believe our Lord wishes his children to be happy, to go forward unweighted and unbowed by the burdens of sin. He has worked out a cure and he has established a way—a way called holiness.

Let us go through this spiritual clinic. If need be let us submit to the deep spiritual surgery that will free our lives from the taproot of evil, which will inevitably spring up to flourish injuriously if it is not removed cleanly by the divine hand of our Lord.

It can be done and it will be done, if we are obedient and willing patients, eager to be rid of a grave illness and to be eased of our burdens that we may go on unhampered. Christ is the way. Walk ye therein.

Dear heavenly Father, thou didst send thy Son to be our physician and surgeon, who will take away our sins with the keen knife of thy word, which is "sharper than any twoedged sword."

Help us to submit to that drastic treatment in order to be freed from a desperate illness that would prevent our full service to thee. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

## 🌿 *Family Altars* 🌿

If every home in every land had altars  
Where families worship daily, and where prayer  
Is lifted up, and God's dear Word held sacred,  
With Christ a welcome guest beside them there,  
The nations would not need to reassemble  
In further parley over future peace;  
For enmity and strife would be forgotten,  
And wars with their wild rumors all would cease.

The love of God is born at family altars,  
Peace and good will to all mankind is part  
Of any praying group's sincere devotion.  
God, God, may every household take to heart  
The old earth's deepest need, and rear their altars  
Close by their own fireside, and peace, long  
sought  
Will lave the earth because of mankind's heeding  
The vital lessons that the Master taught.



## LORD OF THE UPLANDS

*Lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, . . . and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord . . . is his name.—Amos 4:13*

“IN THE beginning God . . .” In the beginning Christ was God’s helper. They created the earth, the moon, and the stars. They worked together upon the high places of the world and found them good when completed. The everlasting hills were their masterpieces. They moved among the white splendor of mountaintops, and we can well believe that it is their will that we live in the uplands of the spirit, that we move in a rarefied atmosphere of faith and trust, gathering unto ourselves something of Christ’s own calm serenity gained by taking the far look into eternity, and his tranquillity of mind developed through his absolute trust in God.

Upon those heights we can breathe the same clean air that he breathes. We can steep our beings in the radiant light we find there. There we can best “worship [him] in the beauty of holiness.” Victorious living is within reach of us all. The Lord walks upon the high places of the earth and there we, too, can walk. There we can best discipline our wayward spirits. We

can have a clearer view of our destination. We can, in truth, pattern after our Lord.

In Jesus' lifetime upon earth he was well acquainted with mountains. Near Nazareth there was a steep hill within walking distance of the town. Often as a lad he must have sought that hill. One can imagine him on a sunny morning setting out on that delightful pilgrimage, his face uplifted, his young clean body strong for the climb. When at last he reached the crest, he could view in the distance the Mediterranean Sea gleaming and sparkling in the morning sun like so much rippling quicksilver. In the opposite direction he could look down upon the long, sinuous lines of the caravans on their never-ending treks across the desert sands.

The lad must often have wondered, as lads ever do, what lay beyond his line of vision. Perhaps he knew, but he must have dreamed of vast spaces, far distances, as he gazed. Where would the sea carry one if one set sail upon it? How far do the caravans travel before reaching their destination? What undiscovered lands lay out beyond that dim horizon? How the glorious sapphire day must have thrilled his boy heart, even as such a day thrills youth everywhere!

When Jesus became a man the wrongs of earth lay heavily upon his heart. He was despised and rejected of men. Still he loved them all with a great love. He needed help from God to direct his dealings with them. He would grow weary through his hard-pressed days and he felt

impelled to talk with his Father. He had the need of high places, the need to climb above the distractions of his days. He sought a mountainside after the noise and confusion of the lowlands, and he would slip away unnoticed, not even his disciples knowing where he had gone.

Upon one occasion, however, they were especially concerned. It was imperative that they find him, for the demand from below was so great. They found him in a solitary place, a place high up with an unseen God. They came to him crying: "Master, all men are seeking for thee—the world has gone after thee. What shall we do?"

Well the Master knew the motley throngs that were awaiting his coming. One can imagine he turned to his Father and said: "Now I must go. They are calling for me, but O Father, help me to deal with them wisely, and may I do thy will." And he would make his way down the long slope to take up once more his compassionate task of healing and teaching.

As he went down he brought something of the heights with him—the physical and spiritual heights from which he had descended; and those to whom he ministered must have felt a clean wind blowing—a clear light shining that they hitherto had neither felt nor seen.

Let us remember that it is on the heights of our living that we can best prepare for the great mortal changes that must come to us all: dis-

appointments, losses, and suffering are a part of living. Illness comes—at last, even death, that greatest change of all. But we learn not to fear as long as the Lord is with us there on the heights. He will be with us until we climb the last steep rise and step upon the highlighted shores of eternity. From then on there will be unbelievable heights, vast distances, far reaches for us to travel joyfully, gladly, freed from the encumbrances of earth—and we will be ever with the Lord.

May we ever climb upward in our living—upward into the very presence of God himself. And when, and if, we must come down to face the everyday tasks, may we carry with us something of the bright cleanness of high places—some white light that we have attained through direct communion with One Almighty—and be able to transmit it to our fellow men.

Our Lord and our God, the throngs are still seeking thee, even as of old—yea, in the same old way, each for his own desperate need. Bring down from the mountaintop thy blessed healing power gathered there. Share it with us that we, too, may rise higher and nearer to thy own great stature. Amen.

## THE PRAYING CHRIST

*Never man spake like this man.—John 7:46*

COME see a man. One who had all power at his finger tips, yet who constantly felt the need of keeping in close touch with his heavenly Father. Truly the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart were acceptable to that Father. Truly the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous avails much, whether that prayer is uttered by Christ himself, or by any consecrated Christian of today.

Never a man prayed like this man. No one has ever been so close to God as he, so a part of him; and he did not lose that contact for a moment during his earthly pilgrimage. Being one with God, there could be no separation.

He found it to be an absolute necessity to be alone with the Father in order to consult with him and to be strengthened by that intercourse. He bids us go alone to pray. He knew we could not always take our way to a mountainside. He told us not to stand praying on the street corners for all to witness, but he pointed us to our closets, and there he tells us to pray in secret and we will be answered openly.

He needs our prayers. As we study the Gospels we soon discover that Jesus knew he could not

do the work alone. He needed the twelve, he needed seventy—he needs the great multitude of his followers today to help him Christianize the world. His desire is that more and more of his followers hold aloft his banner so that he may come to be acknowledged by the world as the promised Messiah and the universal Saviour of mankind.

He prayed, and he said that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” What an impetus those words give to those of us whose prayers have seemingly gone unanswered for long. Evidently he is telling us to pray on and not grow disheartened and weary if God sees fit, for our own ultimate good, to withhold his answer for a season.

In John 17, Christ prayed the most poignant and fervent prayer—one that we who love him can never forget. He prayed for himself first in this case. Such a prayer as we should pray before attempting any labor of love for him. Otherwise we would not be able to accomplish the task.

That day he voiced his petition to the Father thus: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” The reason is clear why he asked for glory for himself, for he wanted only to glorify God. Ever the humble Christ, always the selfless one, thinking outward for the welfare of others!

Should this not be our attitude today as we

seek for wisdom and guidance at the hand of the Lord?

His prayer continues: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God." He was sick and tired of the idols set up about him. He was eager and earnest that men should acknowledge the one true God, and that he himself might be about his own God-directed mission on earth.

He speaks again: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." There is great wistfulness in this last sentence. After such glory the earth was a drab place in which to live.

This request in this most marvelous prayer is so filled with splendor, so alive with light, it is like a rocket sent up, and bursting against the high places of the heart and mind. "The glory which I had with thee before the world was . . ."

One must close one's eyes against the blinding brightness of that picture in order to be able to imagine the two of them standing upon the ramparts of heaven, looking outward and downward into endless spaces, sheer depths, vast voids, while under the hands of the Almighty, stars were being flung into space in splashes of silver and the moon rolled outward to take its golden way through the night. The wild seas roared onward toward far shores, and at last the earth,

that whirling globe for which the Son who stood by God's side was one day to die, was started on its way through infinite space! Truly here was glory that no human mind can fully imagine, no words picture. Oh, the wonder of that prayer!

Then our Lord prayed for his beloved disciples but he went further, and here our hearts should stand still in humbleness yet rejoice with unspeakable joy and gladness. He prayed directly for us, for you and for me. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

All who believe are included in this prayer. To be one with the Father and Son, to be considered worthy to dwell in their company, is enough to take the breath of any serious thinker.

Christ not only prayed his own direct prayer to the Father, but he took his precious time to teach us how to pray. The simplicity and majesty of our Lord's prayer has come down through the ages to become a living, breathing part of humanity.

What a sacred privilege it is for us to address the great living God as "Our Father!" And truly his name should be a hallowed name as we pray. We earnestly desire his will to be done in our lives, and that his kingdom come soon upon the earth. We are wholly dependent upon him for our daily bread—but there is one phrase in that perfect prayer over which poor faltering hu-



manity often stumbles. If the heart is holding resentment against another, if hatred be there, it is no wonder we hesitate when we come to this phrase of our Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Alas! too often we dare not pray that prayer. We do not want that kind of forgiveness from the heavenly Father. Then, remembering his great mercies to us, we do turn, and we do forgive, and we can then pray with a lightened heart.

It is his power alone that can keep us from temptation; it is his might that can deliver us from evil. Therefore, we pray after him a prayer so all-encompassing, so infinitely better than our own faltering, and often craven petitions, that somehow we seem to take on something of Christ's own dignity and majesty as we pray.

Dear Lord, we thank thee for teaching us how to pray. We trust that thou wilt forgive our often strangely ineffectual praying—the shortsighted wording of our prayers—and accept thine own words, repeated back to thee as we come in our great need to thy throne. Thou knowest our inner hearts, O Lord, and will answer us according to thy will. Amen.

## THE HOMELESS CHRIST

*And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. —Matt. 8:19-20*

HERE we have one of the most pathetic utterances of all time. To be sure, our Lord had his boyhood home back in Nazareth, and he knew that he would be doubly welcome there at any time, but still, as a home, it was not his own.

He had voluntarily renounced the comfort of an earthly dwelling in order to further the interests of the heavenly estates. Through the years when men were establishing their own homes and were rearing their families, our Lord was homeless.

No doubt on lonely evenings after a trying day, he would note wistfully the nesting birds, or he would watch the foxes seeking their own shelters, knowing that among them all he was, in a way, a pilgrim and a stranger upon the earth.

He who could have dwelt in a king's palace, dining from golden plates and drinking from silver goblets, had no roof, no bed, no spread table to call his own.

It is little wonder that he often sought the sheltering roof of his friends in Bethany. The

picture of him there is ever drawn pleasantly. There he was a beloved and welcome guest. He knew their home was his as long as he cared to claim it.

Even that home meal, self-invited though he was, with short, stubby Zacchaeus, must have been a welcome break in a hard day's experience. It was cooked in a home by a woman's hands, and although Zacchaeus was not exactly an exemplary citizen, he was an excited and delighted host.

We can fancy that Jesus very much enjoyed the brief reprieve from the clamor of the multitude that day. Even his last supper was eaten in a public place. Likely it was in the dining room of a hostelry of some sort, and the atmosphere of a true home was lacking.

How many of us today open our homes to his presence? How many welcome him at the door and bid him come in? Should we not give this homeless one a place at our fireside, a chair at our table?

Often in Christian homes we see the pictured Christ looking out upon a family from a fitting frame, his intent eyes beholding them lovingly. We can well believe those eyes have a staying quality. A family under that kind of surveillance would be a reverent family; and no unseemingly word would be uttered in his presence, no unworthy deed observed to cloud those watching eyes.

Is not the loving Christ pleased when he notes grace being said above a family's daily bread? Does he not approve when that family gathers for the reading of his Word, and for prayer, at their fireside? Surely he blesses a household such as this, and such a family is truly worthy of that blessing.

Has not the homeless Christ made it clear that a home on earth is a place of preparation for the glorious one that is to come? He says: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." We are also told that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard" those things that are waiting for us in the Father's house. The homes of earth, and the heavenly home above, are mighty concerns of Jesus.

He who had no home is preparing unheard-of wonders for us. He is building your home and mine upon the eternal reaches of heaven. He is a master architect, and we may be sure there will be no leaking roof, no faulty chimney, no dimmed windows in that bright new home.

Our homes here should be places of ever-increasing knowledge that parents impart to their children, a place where the little ones become acquainted early with our blessed Lord. Children who are brought up to know his truths, his word, his way, will later be able to go out into the world with an ever-widening influence

for good. The individual's start in life decides his future, and blessed is that child who is early made acquainted with things holy, who has Jesus so clearly presented to him that he learns to love him with a lifetime love.

This child's growth may well be likened to that of a great river which has its beginning in the wild splendor of the northland. First a crystal spring leaps upward from its rocky depths. It forms a running brook which empties into a lake set like a turquoise gem in the heart of a forest. From thence a small stream overflows and is formed. It moves southward, gradually widening, to grow in might and power, in ever-increasing depth and width, until it becomes a throbbing artery, running the entire length of a great nation, to become a thing of importance—a traffic bearer for the world's commerce—a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

The children who are sent out from Christian homes move forward to help with the world's work, gaining in strength and wisdom as they increase in knowledge and understanding of the needs of earth, going about in service for the Lord, that homeless one who, with his Father, first conceived the glorious possibilities of homes upon the earth.

Our blessed Lord, we thank thee for our homes. A home is one of thy precious gifts bestowed upon men.

We are grateful to know that when these earthly homes are dissolved, we have an everlasting one in heaven. Grant that we may so live that we will be worthy of that great gift. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## ❧ *A Christian Mother* ❧

She has "set [her] nest among the stars," this one  
Who makes her home a place of peace and rest,  
Where a family may return when day is done  
To find the comfort of that sheltering nest.

She has built up close to God. She makes her  
home

A place where he is welcome day or night.

Though that abode lifts from the earth's good  
loam,

Yet spiritually it keeps its starry height.

Her labor is not commonplace, for she  
Consults her heavenly Guest and heeds his voice.

He has set mankind in families, and He

Is pleased with her and bids her heart rejoice.

Her purpose is divine, and all she asks

Is to glorify him in her daily tasks.

## THE GLOBAL CHRIST

*And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*

—I John 4:14

“FOR GOD so loved the world . . .” He loved not only the far reaches of the Holy Land, not Palestine alone, nor Judaea, nor Samaria, neither did he love the Jerusalem of that day, nor Nazareth, nor Bethlehem to the exclusion of all other towns and nations. He loved the whole wide world of yesterday, today, and tomorrow with a passionate and everlasting love.

He gave his Son to die for our world, so profound was his pity for the unsaved. He gave him for your sake, he gave him for mine, and for every race that was to spring up from the motley nations of the earth. He gave him for all those who will believe upon him.

Christ’s “whosoever” blankets the entire globe with its tender, yet vital, meaning. His voice can still be heard speaking clearly: “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Alas! “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.” What a sad commentary upon the peculiar stubbornness and waywardness of mankind! Again the voice: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the



light of life." Yet many of the peoples of the earth today are still stumbling along, blinded by the darkness of ignorance and disbelief. They have not been directed to that light.

He tells us again: "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

Here is the world's bread ready to nourish and strengthen our spiritual and physical beings, yet how few there are who fully and freely partake of that gracious offering. Literally thousands are starving for that plenteous food.

He is the truth, and bewildered humanity is still asking, as did one of old: "What is truth?" We recall Pilate's questioning the Master: "Art thou a king then?" And the Lord made answer: "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end . . . came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.)

Then it was that Pilate asked him another searching question: "What is truth?" and there the Truth stood before him as clearly lighted as if an incandescent lamp burned within the man—the global Christ.

We recall the day when the Master and his disciples sat at dinner and a woman came bearing a receptacle containing precious ointment—a rarity that may have cost her her life's savings.

She emptied the perfume upon him and wiped his feet with her unbound hair, so great was her

love and adoration for the Saviour who had befriended her. He had come into the world to save sinners, of whom she felt she was the greatest.

These are the words he spoke when he rebuked his disciples for criticizing her act: "Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. 26:13). Again we see he was thinking in world terms. He had no doubt that the gospel would be preached to the end of time, and truly the memorial set for the woman that far-off day is still a sweet fragrance borne on the winds of the world.

Christ knew we would need every memorial thus established by which to shape our lives. Many of us who love him today would gladly sacrifice our earthly treasures for his commendation, so intense is our gratitude for his saving power. Truly many of the saints of earth have performed acts that would well be "told as a memorial" to them: sacrificial deeds which by their utter selflessness have been pleasing to our Lord.

He does not condemn any outpouring of love and reverence on his children's part as extravagance or wild emotionalism. He accepts every gift we make in his name as unto him. His "inasmuch" covers a wide field indeed. It covers the world. We cannot all come bearing rare perfume to our Lord, but even the smallest gift of

charity is to him like incense rising heavenward. What we do for others in the world about us, he considers it as done for him, and it must ever be as a sweet smelling fragrance to his nostrils.

His consideration was ever for the world to which he was sent. Among his last words before he ascended into heaven were these:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. (Matt. 28:19-20.)

All nations—he was the global Christ to the very last. And watching from heaven his eyes are still upon the earth. He is deeply concerned for each individual and for the world he came to save. Shall we not look skyward more often to behold this lover of our world, this lover of us?

Our heavenly Father, help us to make our memorials by doing only what is pleasing in thy sight and in thy Son's sight. May we be about thy business, and may we spread the good tidings of salvation to the farthest corners of the earth, thy earth, dear Lord. Amen.

## AMONG THE SHADOWS

*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. —Matt. 26:38*

THE DARKNESS had descended upon our Saviour: all injustice, all the hatred and malice of evil men had been heaped upon him, and he who had lived white and clean, whose entire life was given over with devotion to doing good, was on his way to the cross.

It was a bitter hour indeed when he entered a garden, drawn there by his need of help for his tortured soul. He sought a garden in his intense need to commune with his Father. He hungered for human companionship and he took with him Peter, James, and John. He must have chosen them, feeling a certain nearness to them, believing that they would be especially concerned for his welfare, and thinking he could rely upon them for the human touch of understanding sympathy.

Although but a few minutes before he had told Peter of the denial that was soon to take place, he still had faith in Peter's love for him. To have that denial loom before him as a certainty must have added greatly to our Lord's heartbreak in that darkened hour.

Gethsemane doubtless was a place burgeoning

with spring that April day. It must have been beautiful, and our Lord chose it for his urgent prayer. But his soul was in such turmoil, his grief over a rejecting world so heavy, that he was not conscious of his surroundings. He was in mortal agony as he prayed.

The hearts of those who love him have ever been weighted down with sorrow for him in that awful hour. Oh, the countless ones who have been moved to tears remembering him there and sharing his sorrow! Oh, the many who have stopped their ears against the tortured cry: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

Here was the human Christ. He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. When suffering in mind and body bears us down, we, too, cry out for release; but his added words, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," are more readily submissive than our human, faltering prayers. This was the divine Christ. He surrendered there and then to that will with no thought of retracting his words.

And now he arises and approaches the three who were to watch as he prayed. Alas! they were asleep. What shame they must have felt when those gentle hands awakened them and those searching eyes rebuked them! He spoke directly to poor vacillating Peter: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

He cautioned them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and he told them

sorrowfully that he understood that the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak.

He knew the emotional strain of the past days had drained them of energy, and his great heart made excuses for them. Strange, indeed, that they needed these excuses when it was the last hour they were to spend with him before his final agony.

Even in the midst of his sorrows he had compassion on these apparently indifferent ones and forgave them. Our Lord had, and still has, amazing tolerance for human weakness. He turned back into the garden and prayed again, repeating his plea and his supplication: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

And he went back to the waiting three to find them sleeping again. How hungry he was for human companionship to have gone back to them the second time! How sad that he found it lacking! One cannot wonder too greatly at the first overpowering sleep that overtook the men, but surely after Christ's rebuke those heavy eyes should have stayed open.

"He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words." At this point Luke tells us that "there appeared an angel unto him . . . , strengthening him." This is the first gleam of light thrown on that dark scene. God sent his angel. He often sends an angel in one form or another, even to us, when our hearts are sore and troubled.

The angel may come in the form of a Christian friend who knows how to speak the freeing word to our breaking hearts. It may come in a whisper from God himself if we but listen for his voice, and we, too, are strengthened and comforted.

What this angel said to our Lord must have been illuminating. It must have been comforting and healing to his torn heart, for from that moment he went forward with bravery and courage so unprecedented that our hearts are strengthened at the remembrance.

His tormentors came on. They deviated not one whit from their brutal purpose. The cross had to be borne for a little way by a stranger, who, no doubt, throughout eternity will be proud that he was assigned the humble task of assisting the world's Saviour up that steep and lonely hillside.

They killed him, of course. But their power ceased then and there. The tomb held him for a few brief hours but the watch they set was helpless. At the eerie sound of the wind in the olives, the grating of a moving stone, the cry of a wild bird that midnight hour, their swords clattered to the ground. They fell, and lay as men long dead, while the Christ stepped forth, straight as an arrow, white as a lily, freed for eternity.

The dark shadows lifted from the world. There was the glorious sunburst of the dawn, and countless rejoicing ones have lifted glad voices,

crying out: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear Jesus, our hearts are wrung at the memory of thy suffering, at the injustice thou didst endure. Grant that from that awful hour we may draw strength from thy strength for whatever Gethsemane that may be ours. May we be able to walk in the will of God, out of the darkness of any night. Amen.



## ❧ *Good Friday* ❧

Why do they call this dark day "good"?  
Why do they call it good?  
Against the sky there lifts a hill  
Where once three crosses stood:  
Three crosses stark against the sky  
Carved out of oaken wood.

A day of shame for all mankind,  
A day of bitter shame:  
A scarlet, raging fire that burns  
With a consuming flame,  
A day when we who love the Christ  
Cry out his holy name,

Too blinded by our tears to see  
Beyond the dark, a light.  
We weep as little children weep  
Uncomforted at night.  
We fail to know and comprehend  
His power and his might.

We fail to realize that he,  
Though crucified, will rise  
From out his tomb, that light again  
Will flood the darkened skies.  
O mourning ones, look up, look up,  
And dry your weeping eyes.

## *Words from the Cross*

### I. COMPASSION

Upon a darkened hill three crosses stand  
Silhouetted sharply against the sky,  
And suspended there—three men, each foot and  
hand  
Pierced by a nail, and suddenly a cry  
From the parched lips of him, the central One.  
The immortal words he speaks are brief and few,  
An intercession from God's only Son:  
"Father, forgive them, they know not what they  
do."

### II. MERCY

At the right hand of Christ, a petty thief  
Begs from his cross: "Remember me, O Lord,  
When thou comest to thy kingdom." Shame and  
grief  
Are his this day, the cross his due reward.  
And lo, the Master's tender heart is stirred,  
He turns on him his grave and sorrowing eyes,  
And speaks the memorable and freeing words:  
"Today thou wilt be with me in paradise."

### III. CONSIDERATION

Mary, the mother, kneeling beside his cross  
Is weeping her heart out on that bitter day,  
Grieving over the world's and her own loss,  
Crushed with sorrow, and too hurt to pray.

There stands beside her a grave man who seeks  
To comfort her; 'tis John, the much-loved one.  
Visioning them together, Jesus speaks:  
"Behold thy mother; woman, behold thy son."

#### IV. THE CRY OUT OF DARKNESS

Torn from the purest heart the world has known,  
Suddenly there bursts the anguished cry  
Of him who feels deserted and alone:  
"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani."  
The saddest utterance in any tongue;  
Within no written language can we find  
A more heart-breaking pathos than was wrung  
From the hurt heart of the Saviour of mankind.

#### V. THE GREAT THIRST

Divine he is, yet human in his need.  
He pleads for water for his broken lips;  
One fills a sponge and lifts it on a reed,  
And strangling is the bitter brew he sips.  
O gracious, blessed Master of us all,  
I yearn to quench thy thirst from some cool  
spring.  
I hear your voice, your agonizing call,  
And long to bring you that good offering.

#### VI. IT IS FINISHED

His thirty-three brief years on earth are done.  
But "even the world itself could not contain  
The books" that could be written of God's Son,  
So many were his deeds, so great our gain.

He came to earth as Saviour of mankind;  
He walked the roads we walk—he is our Friend.  
Our hearts are breaking, yet we are so blind  
To think this darkened hour is the end.

#### VII. THE END AND THE BEGINNING

At last with a loud voice the Master cries:  
“Father, into thy hands”—he bows his head—  
“I commend my spirit”; bravely then he dies.  
But oh, say not, say not that he is dead!  
After a few brief hours he will arise,  
And open we will find his tomb’s dark door.  
Shout it aloud to the farthest, highest skies:  
“He lives, and he will live forevermore!”

## MORNING ON THE SHORE

*After these things Jesus showed himself again to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed he himself.*  
—John 21:1

A SPRING morning on the shores of Galilee is enough to take the breath of any sensitive beauty-lover, and to all but break the heart with its eternal loveliness.

In the far distance Mt. Hermon's snowy summit glimmers down like a great jewel. The sea glitters with rippling silver that ever turns shoreward to shatter like broken glass upon the sands.

A riot of color runs down to the water's edge, where masses of wild flowers lift their glowing faces to the sun. White fluted poppies flutter among the crimson phlox. Pale yellow mustard floats like a sunlit cloud. Here and there, clumps of shy blue violets reach up to toss their heady perfume on the morning air, the breeze shaking the dew from their petal tips.

There comes the sound of little scurrying feet, and the timid Syrian sheep are tipping down to the water's edge to drink. Another slight sound—the rustle of sandaled footsteps—and lo, Jesus comes, parting the bushes, stepping carefully to miss the flowers in the grass, his eyes turned heavenward in praise to the Father for the day that he had made beautiful.

Now he moves along the shore, coming at last to a fitting place for the task he has in mind, a place where rocks are seemingly made to form a hearth, and where one particularly large, smooth one can be used for a table.

Here the Master produces coals and sets them burning. He draws forth bread and glistening silver fish, and there he happily prepares a morning meal for his friends. One can imagine his quiet pleasure at the thought of seeing them again. He knows the surprise and joy that will be theirs when they discover his presence. He works away leisurely, turning the fish that are browning on the glowing coals, heating the loaf of bread, keeping watch of the sea.

The fishermen are still a long way off on the dawn-tinted waters. He sees their sail unfurl—it lifts—the wind shifts, and now they have turned inland, their boat moving lightly toward the shore.

Let us go back to the day before when Peter, Thomas, John, and several others of the Lord's disciples were sitting idly by, still bewildered by the recent strange events, scarcely knowing how to take up their daily lives again. Life that had been exciting had suddenly become dull and monotonous to these men. At last Peter, always the spokesman, worn from long emotional strain, roused himself. Sighing he said: "Well, I go a fishing." To take up his long-neglected tasks, to go back to the old ways after the full, interest-

ing days spent with the Master, seemed to Peter an anticlimax indeed.

"We will go with you," one of his companions exclaimed, and back they went, back to the tangled meshes of the unused nets, the drooping sails, and the old boards whitened by the sun and rain. Their long, long waiting was done.

All night long they cast their nets and caught nothing, but they had many things of interest of which to speak. It was difficult for them to keep their minds upon the work at hand. They spoke often of recent happenings. They reminded each other of the many strange events that had taken place. They spoke of the Master reverently, recalling this and that—a look, a word, the walks they had taken together, the miracles they had seen performed, their hearts deeply stirred by those burning memories.

All night long they had talked of their Beloved, until the stars dimmed, and the sun silvered the eastern horizon and lit the sea with rosy fire.

As they neared the shore they saw a man standing tall and straight at the water's edge. They had no idea who he was. They noted the upward curling smoke; they caught the delicious odor of broiling fish.

The stranger called to them: "Children, have ye any meat?" Their voices came to him over the water with the one word "No." "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find," he called. The nets slid once more over

the ship's wet, darkened side. There was a stirring, a great swishing, and lo, a writhing silver mass gleams in the morning light, the net so full the men are unable to draw it in.

John, shading his eyes with his hand, made a startling discovery. He cried to Peter: "It is the Lord"; and Peter, straightening above the writhing net, knew this to be a fact. Seizing his great cloak he flung it about him, and overboard he went with a splash, plunging through the sea to meet the Master.

The others took time, at least, to drag the floundering net inland before they, too, ran joyfully to meet their Lord.

They saw the fire of coals. They smelled the odor of the food, they noted the broken bread waiting for them, and they were hungry. Jesus called, "Come and dine," and eagerly, gladly they obeyed. What a breakfast that must have been! What a delight to have had it prepared by those loving hands! What a reunion! One cannot fail to rejoice with those men of long ago and to wish that we, too, might have partaken of that food with our Lord beside the morning sea.

That breakfast is one of the most joyful events in Holy Writ. For our Lord, the old rough roads were traveled at last. The agony of the cross must have begun to fade in this new-found joy. All eternity lay before him where he could begin again with his Father, knowing that his work had been well accomplished. For his



disciples it was enough to be once more in his blessed presence.

We may be certain that the Lord enjoyed that morning with its blessed association, and that even now as he walks the glittering hills of heaven, he recalls with pleasure that brief earthly hour beside the heart-shaped sea, known on earth as Galilee.

Our dear Lord, we like to recall that vivid event in thy life here upon earth. We like to think of thee freed at last from the pressing throngs that sought thee for their own selfish needs.

We rejoice that thy suffering is past, and there was that beautiful morning for thee, freed from care. Grant that we, too, may partake of thy proffered bread of life, and the good meat of thy Word, and may we ever share thy blessed companionship both here and throughout eternity. Amen.

 *The Risen Christ* 

What of the world if the Christ had failed us?  
What of the weary and forlorn  
Waiting and longing for a Saviour?  
What if the Christ had not been born?

What if he had not moved among us,  
Holding a torch to light the way?  
What if he had not died to save us—  
What, oh, what would we do today?

But he was born, and the torch is lifted,  
And though he died, he arose again.  
This morning a hallelujah chorus  
Lifts from the joyous throats of men.

Cry it aloud—sing out forever.  
Let praises ring that a glad world gives.  
Let the sounding board be the gates of heaven—  
The Christ is risen! He lives! He lives!

## ❧ *He Will Come Again* ❧

“All the city was moved.” Jerusalem,  
Amazed at the loud hosannas, the shrill cry  
Of little children, questioned: “Who is this?  
Who is he, this meek one, riding by?”  
And the multitude made answer, “This is he—  
Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.”

Not only the city, but the whole wide world  
Will be shaken when this same Christ comes  
again.

No doubt someday the cables under the sea  
Will tense with the news from a far-off land to  
men,  
And announcers will shout from each tuned radio  
set:

“Christ comes again! He has landed on Olivet!”

Shaken, indeed, and many with failing breath  
Will fall on their faces, stricken with awesome  
fear,

But countless will be the saints who will rejoice  
And shout his praise—he has made it clear  
That he will come again. O men, prepare  
For the event that will take place someday,  
somewhere.









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