

FULLY FURNISHED

or

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

by

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE WORKER'S OUTLOOK

“I AM beaten out of good resolutions, and must look to Jesus alone;” so said one who had found the rotten plank of his own resolutions, unable to bear him, and who was forced to step upon the eternal Rock of Ages, and rest on Him alone. We not only cause endless misery and mischief to ourselves, by looking to fancied resources of our own, but we fill the heart of the Lord Jesus with grief and concern. One of our most talented writers tells of a dream of Christ which she once had, after a season of anxious care and questioning. She said His face looked so weary, that she ventured to ask Him what made Him look so sad, and He answered:

“Carrying your doubts and fears. It was easy to carry your sins and sorrows, but I cannot bear to have you doubt Me, and question My love.”

There are many things which come to those who look to Jesus, and the looking fits the believer in every way for his Christian life and work. I am sure that whilst we should not look at our looking, but at Him who is the Object of our faith, yet we shall find, that our looking to Jesus is the sinner's Satisfier, the saint's inspirer, and the servant's safeguard.

I - Sinner's Satisfier.

How sad was our condition, and how low was our position, till we looked to Jesus!

- Sin as a burden weighed us down with intolerable depression, and made us cry: “**Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me**” (Psalm 38:4).
- The fever of fear was burning in the mind, and made us cry out in the delirium of doubt: “**Oh, wretched man that I am!**”
- The curse of a broken law was a rack to torture us, and made us shout with despair, “**I am carnal, sold under sin.**”
- The ghosts of the misspent past, haunted us, as they looked in at the windows of our being, and made us to be like Job; when all his bones shook at the specter he beheld (Job 4:14-16).
- The sight of sin's loathsomeness, as we saw its working within us, like a foul leprosy, made us confess with the patriarch, “**I am vile.**”

- The black storm of God's wrath against sin, which we saw approaching, made us cry, like those in the book of the Revelation, for something to hide us from the indignation of the Lamb, and as we got a glimpse of the holiness of God, we were led to ask the question, "**Who shall be able to stand?**"

Then it was, we heard the still, small voice of the Lord saying to us, in the music of His grace, "**Look unto Me, and be ye saved.**"

And as we, like Bunyan's pilgrim, looked to Jesus crucified for us,

- The burden of sin's load rolled from us,
- The wretchedness of fear departed,
- The law's curse was removed,
- The ghosts of the past vanished,
- The loathsomeness caused by sin was cleansed away by His blood,
- The holiness of God was our joy and safety, and
- The question of who would be able to stand in the Lord's presence, was answered; for,
- being justified by faith, and thus having peace with God, we found "**we had access into the grace wherein we stood, and could rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**"

Well may we look to Jesus crucified,

- For there is cleansing in His blood,
- Life in His death,
- Blessing in His curse,
- Justification in His judgment,
- Salvation in His loss,
- Joy in His sorrow,
- Ease in His suffering,
- Welcome in His forsaking,
- Heaven in His hell,
- Gladness in His groan, and
- Bliss in His ignominy.

II - *Saint's Inspirer.*

It was with a sad heart that Mary Magdalene wended her way to the sepulchre of Christ, in the early hours of the resurrection morn; but, to her surprise, when she got to the tomb, she found it empty. With quickened footsteps, she ran and told Peter that the Lord had been taken away. After Peter and John had satisfied themselves that the statement of Mary was correct, by going to the tomb and looking for themselves, they went home. Not so Mary; she stood outside the sepulchre, and as she stood, she ventured to stoop down and look in, and to her surprise she saw two angels in white.

The soul who stoops in humble enquiry, is sure to see some angel of blessing.

While in conversation with the angels, she suddenly saw their faces light up with an unusual expression, and they looked past her as if they were gazing at some august presence. This made her look as well, and we know the sequel. The supposed gardener turned out to be her Divine Lord, and she exclaimed with grateful joy, “**Rabboni!**” we can imagine what a spur it gave to her steps as she, in obedience to Christ’s word, went to tell the disciples what she had seen and heard, that Jesus was risen. It was the Lord Mary wanted; nothing else would satisfy her.

The same is true of every true-hearted believer; it is Christ Himself we want, as Charlotte Murray suggests in the following lines:

“Do we know Him; not His doctrines,
Not His wisdom, love, and power,
But Himself, the Friend unfailing
In affliction’s darkest hour?
To be with us as a Person,
Not a presence-vague, unreal;
But a living, loving Saviour,
Who our every need doth fill?
Is He with us now, abiding?
Is He chiefest, and the best?
Would our home be sad without Him?
Have we each His perfect rest?
If we have, we know just dimly
What the light of Heaven will be;
But the joy will be the grander,
For we then our Lord shall see,”

The Bride in the Song of Solomon could speak of her Beloved with glowing utterance, because she knew His care, and enjoyed His company. So shall it be with us; looking at our Beloved, He will inspire us to sing His praises, and tell out His worth.

As we glance at Him:

- In the humility of His grace,
- In the compassion of His love,
- In the tenderness of His sympathy,
- In the dependence of His faith,
- In the unselfishness of His life,
- In the surrender of His will,
- In the thoroughness of His consecration,
- In the devotion of His work,
- In the endurance of His sufferings,
- In the beauty of His character,
- In the prayerfulness of His heart,
- In the readiness of His service,
- In the carefulness of His utterance,

- In the power of His testimony, and
- In the excellence of His God-glorifying life.

We must be inspired to like conduct.

III - The *servant's Safeguard*.

The Christian worker is beset with a hundred and one dangers, anyone of which may cripple him in his Master's service, but the cure for each is found in "**looking unto Jesus.**"

"Looking unto Jesus," *we shall not neglect the inner life.*

It was a sorry confession which the Bride in the Song of Solomon had to make, when she said: **"They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept"** (Song of Solomon 1:6)

"Looking unto Jesus," *we shall be able to say, "My own vineyard I have kept."*

Looking unto Him,

- We shall be clean ourselves, before we bring others to the Fount of cleansing;
- We shall have the lamps of our life trimmed, before we trim others;
- The incense of prayer shall rise from the altar of our holy place, before we urge others to pray;
- The grace of God in its seasoning power shall salt us, before we call on others to be salted with grace;
- The perfume of Christ's sweetness shall make us fragrant, before we exhort others to be sweet;
- The well of Christ's joy will be springing up in us, before we tell others to drink and be satisfied; and
- The command of Christ, **"Follow Me,"** will be obeyed, before we say to others, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good," for what good can we do unless we bring others to the Source of all good?

"Looking unto Jesus," *we shall not quarrel with our fellow-servants.*

The reason why the disciples began quarrelling amongst themselves, was because they got their eyes off Jesus, and began to be occupied with their own fancied self-importance (Luke 9:46; 22:24).

On one occasion, the mother of James and John asked Christ to favour her sons by allowing them to sit in the favoured places on either side of His throne. This request filled the other disciples with indignation. Why? Because they wanted the places themselves. They wanted the places, and were occupied with them; hence their indignation against the two others.

Ah! If they had been occupied with Jesus, they would have said, "Lord, we care not what place we occupy, so long as we are with Thee."

Why does the servant in the parable begin to smite his fellow-servants? He says, “**My Lord delayeth His coming**” (Matthew 24:48), he gets his eyes off his Master and His return, hence, he begins to smite them.

This will not be so if we are looking to Him, for looking to Him we shall see that:

- He loves us dearly,
- Cares for us tenderly,
- Watches us carefully,
- Pleads for us earnestly,
- Chides us gently,
- Speaks of us hopefully,
- Talks to us graciously,
- Tends us faithfully.

And we shall act in like manner to our fellow-men.

“Looking unto Jesus,” *we shall not be deterred in testimony for Christ.*

One of the brightest examples of faithful service we have in the New Testament, is Stephen.

Of him it is said, “**He was full of the Holy Ghost,**” and “**full of faith and power.**”

Such being the case, we do not wonder his enemies were not able to “**resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake,**” and that his face was like an angel’s (Acts 6:5,8, 10,15). But the secret of his sustainment is given to us when he said, “**I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God**” (Acts 7:56).

That heavenly vision was the ballast which kept him steady, amid the storm of persecution that howled around him. It will be the same with us; if we can look our Saviour in the face with an uncondemning heart, we shall not fail to look into the faces of men with unflinching courage.

“Looking unto Jesus,” *we shall not be inflated with pride and self-importance.*

After Isaiah had seen the Lord in His holiness, he exclaimed, “**Woe is me ... for mine eyes have seen the King**” (Isaiah 6:5).

There are three little words of telling importance in connection with the humiliation of the prophet, and they are-

The “Woe” of condemnation.

The “Lo” of cleansing.

The” Go” of commission.

And the truth contained in these words always comes in the above order.

Confession of sin first,
Cleansing from sin second, and then
Consecration in service.

There must be the withering work of the Holy Spirit, to blast our pride and self-sufficiency, before there can be the winning work of His grace to bring others to Himself. We must know what it is to lie low before the Lord, ere there can be fitness for His service. The crucifixion of self must precede the communication of Pentecost.

The same thing is seen in the experience of Job.

He could justify himself till he saw the Lord in His glory, then he said, **“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes”** (Job 42:5, 6). When he had come to an end of himself, the Lord could use him in blessing to his friends, and give him free deliverance; for it was when he prayed for his friends, that his own captivity was turned, and he received double at the Lord’s hands for all he had lost (Job 42:10).

“Looking unto Jesus,” *we shall not use bad material in the Lord’s work.*

There are two men in the Bible who stand out prominently for the carefulness of their work, and for their fidelity to the instructions given to them, namely, Moses and Paul. Both these servants were men who had a heavenly vision. I especially call attention to the first.

Before Moses was entrusted to give instruction regarding the construction of the tabernacle and its vessels, he had to have audience with God. There, face to face with the Lord, he got his instructions. Every detail of the tabernacle, as to the material to be used, the manner of the making, the men who were to make the things, and the positions of the vessels when they were made was given. Again and again do we find the Lord reminding Moses, that everything was to be carried out according to the pattern given (Exodus 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8).

There were seven principal vessels in the tabernacle, which, in their special significance, may be taken to illustrate the kind of material we should use in the Lord’s work.

The vessels were:

- The altar of burnt offering,
- The laver, [129]
- The lamp-stand,
- The table of shewbread,
- The golden altar,
- The golden censer, and
- The ark of the covenant.

“Looking unto Jesus,” *we shall see they all represent Him in the multiplicity of His work.*

- The altar - His all-sufficient atonement for sin.
- The laver - His life-giving and cleansing truth.
- The lampstand - His sevenfold illuminating grace.
- The table of shewbread - His all-satisfying love.
- The golden altar - His all-glorious priestly service.
- The golden censer - His all-fragrant intercession.
- The ark of the covenant - His all-comprehensive glory.

“Looking unto Jesus,” *we shall not mind that work we do, so long as He gives it.*

- Whether it be abiding by the staff, or being in the front of the battle;
- Watching the sick, or rejoicing with the healthy;
- Alone on some isolated Patmos, or in the midst of sympathetic friends;
- In the drudgery of life, or in the ease of it.

So long as we are working for Him, we shall be happy.

There is a beautiful legend told, of a shepherd who was kept at home watching a fevered guest, on the night that the angels came with the announcement of the birth of Jesus. The other shepherds saw the heavenly host, heard their song, and beheld the glory. Returning home, their hearts were wondrously elated. All the night, Shemuel sat alone by the restless sufferer, and waited. His fellow-shepherds pitied his deprivation in that he missed the vision and the glory that they had seen. But in his lowly service, Shemuel had blessing and reward of his own. He missed, indeed, the splendor of that night in the fields, but in his service he gave his own life, and then he saw a more wondrous glory than that which his fellow-shepherds saw.

“Shemuel by the fever-bed.
Touched by beckoning hands that led,
Died. and saw the Uncreated;
All his fellows lived and waited,”

He had waited by the sick-bed, while they saw the glory; now they waited amid earth’s dull scenes, while he witnessed the glories of the eternal.

Let us do all duties as to Christ, and we shall have our reward.

The Lord does not want service done, if it means the neglecting of home duties and life, but He will bless us in those duties. Whatever the need of our life, whatever the trials or temptations, they will be dispelled by **“looking unto Jesus.”**

~ end of chapter 11 ~

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