

FULLY FURNISHED

or

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

by

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CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE THE WORKER'S AMBITION

THE workers ambition should be, not to please men (Galatians 1:10), but to please God. We please Him when we are:

- Obedient *to Him*, as Christ was, who could say, **"I do always those things that please Him"** (John 8:29);
- *Confident in Him*, as the Old Testament saints were, for **"without faith it is impossible to please Him"** (Hebrews 11:6);
- *Separate to Him*, as Paul said to Timothy, **"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier"** (II Timothy 2:4);
- *Walking with Him*, as Enoch did, of whom it is said, he **"pleased God"** (Hebrews 11:5; Genesis 5:22);
- *Helping others for Him*, as the Spirit bids us, **"To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased"** (Hebrews 13:16);
- *Increasing by Him*, **"Ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more"** (I Thessalonians 4:1); and
- *Sympathetic with Him*, **"Let everyone . . . please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself"** (Romans 15:2, 3).

The worker's ambition is, that Christ may be glorified in him, and that thus God may be glorified by him. It is one thing to be saved, and another to know why God has saved, or what purpose He had in view. We are plainly told in Ephesians 2:7, what His purpose was: **"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus,"** and thus He might be glorified in us; and it is our privilege and responsibility to remember this, that our highest aim and one object in Christian life and work, should be to glorify God. Before we direct further attention to the subject which heads this chapter, we shall trace the successive steps up to it.

Man has come short of God's glory (Romans 3:23); man has been tried, and found a failure at every point. Man was tried in innocence, and failed; he was left to his own conscience, and failed; he was tried under law, and failed. God sent His Son, and man murdered Him, and now men are rejecting the Lord, and despising the Holy Spirit.

Man having failed in every point, Christ came to glorify God, on behalf of those who would believe in Him; and Christ having glorified God in the work He gave Him to do, as He Himself says, **“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do”** (John 17:4), the Father has glorified Christ by raising Him from the dead (Philippians 2:9); the Spirit has been sent down to glorify Christ (John 7:39; 16:14); and we, by the power of the indwelling Spirit, glorify the Father and the Son.

There are three passages where Christ is spoken of, as **“glorified in His saints.”**

- The first has reference to what Christ has done for us - **“I am glorified in them”** (John 17:10);
- The second, what God does in us by the power of the Spirit - **“That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you”** (II Thessalonians 1:12);
- The third, what He will yet do for us, **“When He comes to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day”** (II Thessalonians 1:10).

We might sum it up thus:

1. Christ glorified in us, by the work He has done for us.
2. Christ glorified in us, by the work He is doing in us.
3. Christ glorified in us, by the work He will yet do for us.

His our purpose here to confine ourselves to the first. Christ glorified in us, by the work He has done for us. This, of course, implies that we are His saints, He having quickened us by the Spirit, and enabled us by simple faith to rest in Jesus as our Saviour; and we, thus becoming children of God, He calls us saints; hence:

1. HE IS GLORIFIED IN OUR SALVATION - **“His glory is great in thy salvation”** (Psalm 21:5).

When the sisters of Lazarus sent to Jesus, to ask that He would come and heal their brother, He said, **“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby”** (John 11:4); and He did not go at once, but tarried two days where He was. In the meantime, Lazarus died, and when Jesus reached Bethany, he was already buried. Now Christ might have prevented him dying, but that His power might be seen, and He Himself glorified thereby, He let him die.

A servant of Christ, addressing a children’s meeting at Brighton, put the following question to the children:-

“Would you rather Adam had never sinned?”

Immediately a little fellow got up and said, “I wish Adam had never sinned.”

“I don’t,” said the friend; “for man was made a little lower than the angels, but by grace he is made an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ, and thus is made higher than the angels.”

As we see in Revelation 5:6, 11, the redeemed in glory are round about the Lamb, but the angels are round about them, an outer circle. It appears, therefore, that God is infinitely more glorified by saving the believer from the punishment, power, and presence of sin, and making him one with Himself, than if he had remained in innocence.

2. HE IS GLORIFIED BY THE STANDING INTO WHICH HE BRINGS US:

We are sinners in a three-fold sense-

(1) *Sinners by our connection with Adam*, for when he sinned, we fell in him, he being the federal head or representative of the whole race of mankind, as we have it in Romans 5:12: "**As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,**" or, as the margin puts it, "in whom" (Adam) "all sinned."

(2) *Sinners as to our sinful nature*. When we were born into this world, Adam was formed in us, just as we read in Genesis 5:3: "**Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.**"

(3) *Sinners as to our practice*. A crab apple tree can only bring forth crab apples; a sting-nettle will sting-it is its nature to do so; so a sinner with a sinful nature can only bring forth sins.

We are saints in a three-fold sense:

1. Saints as to our standing in Christ.

We are no longer in the flesh (Adam), but in Christ; all that He is, is ours, and all that He has done, is reckoned to our faith in Him.

In Christ - what are we in Him?

- In Christ we are dead to sin;
- In Christ we are buried;
- In Christ we are risen; and
- In Christ we are seated at God's right hand.

What have we in Him?

Preaching in the south of Scotland, a friend gave the writer the following, on a slip of paper:-

"In Christ we are complete:

- In Him we have a life which can never be forfeited;
- In Him we have a righteousness which can never be tarnished;
- In Him we have a pardon which can never be reversed;
- In Him we have a justification which can never be cancelled;
- In Him we have an acceptance which can never be questioned;
- In Him we have a peace which can never be broken;

- In Him we have a rest which can never be disturbed;
- In Him we have a hope which can never be disappointed;
- In Him we have a glory which can never be clouded;
- In Him we have a love which can never be darkened;
- In Him we have a happiness which can never be interrupted;
- In Him we have a strength which can never be exhausted;
- In Him we have a purity which can never be defiled;
- In Him we have a comeliness which can never be marred;
- In Him we have a wisdom which can never be baffled;
- In Him we have an inheritance which can never be alienated;
- In Him our resources can never be exhausted; and
- In Him our future can never be uncertain.”

2. Saints as to our nature.

In this respect also we are saints. We are born of God, and made partakers of the Divine nature, for he that is **“born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”** (I John 3:9).

3. Saints as to practice.

The new nature, by the power of the indwelling Spirit, will triumph over the old nature, and it will be seen by the fruit which we bear, that we are saints. But we wish more particularly to dwell upon the fact, that Christ is **“glorified”** by the position into which He brings us, and as an illustration, to take the cherubim in the tabernacle.

First. *The cherubim on the veil* (Exodus 26:31; Matthew 27:51).

The veil of the temple was rent in twain; and what does this tell us, but that we are dead - that in the person of our Representative, we have borne the punishment due to our sin?

Second. *The cherubim on the beautiful covering that was over the sanctuary* (Exodus 36:8; Ephesians 2:6).

The high priest would look up and see them there. What does this tell us, but that, as we look in the Word of God, and at the right hand of God, in the person of our Representative, we are risen with Him, and seated together in heavenly places?

Third. *The cherubim on (or of) the mercy-seat.*

The cherubim were made of the same piece of gold as the mercy-seat, as it says in the margin of Exodus 25:19: **“And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the matter of the mercy seat.”**

We have the same thought expressed in Hebrews 2:11: **“He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.”**

What does this tell us, but that we are united to, in, and one with our Lord Jesus Christ - that “**as He is, so are we in this world**” - called by the same name, having the same nature (I John 4:17), and we shall share the same glory (John 17:21, 22)?

“What presumption!” says someone.

It would be, if it was the imagination of man’s mind, but it is the unalterable word of the living God; and how it exalts our blessed Lord, and glorifies Him, when we remember it is all of His own free, unmerited favour, that He thus bestows such blessings upon us!

NOTE: The cherubim actually are the administrators of God’s righteous judgments (Genesis 3:24), or the upholders of God’s throne (Ezekiel 10:20), or the executors of God’s dealings in providence (Ezekiel 1); just as the seraphim are the administrators of God’s mercy (Isaiah 6:2).

- The Father loved us, and gave us to Christ!
- Christ loved us, and redeemed us with His own precious blood;
- The Spirit loved us, and quickened us, and united us to our living, loving Lord.

Glory be to His name!

“Sovereign Lord and gracious Master,
Thou didst freely choose Thine own;
Thou hast called with mighty calling.
Thou wilt save and keep from falling;

Thine the glory, Thine alone!
Yet Thy hand shall crown in Heaven
All the grace Thy love hath given;
Just, though undeserved, reward
From our glorious, gracious Lord.”

We have already seen what Christ has done for us, and the position into which He has brought us.

We now give a few hints, how we may please God, and glorify Christ.

I - We glorify Christ as we are guided by Him.

First. Who guides?

The Lord by the Holy Spirit. “**As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God**” (Romans 8:14).

Second. Where does He guide?

1. Into the way of peace. **“To guide our feet into the way of peace”** (Luke 1:79).
2. In Christian life: **“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide [or counsel] thee with Mine eye”** (Psalm 32:8).
3. In conflict: God saved Hezekiah out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and guided him on every side (II Chronicles 32:22).
4. In service: **“Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel”** (Psalm 73:24).
5. In blessing: **“Even by the springs of water shall He guide them”** (Isaiah 48:10).
6. In every time: **“The Lord shall guide thee continually”** (Isaiah 58:11).
7. Into all truth: **“He will guide you into all truth”** (John 16:13).

It is in this that the Lord Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, **“He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.”**

God never guides contrary to His Word, and if we would walk in the Spirit, we must walk in the truth - not ask the Lord to guide us, and then go in our own way. We remember a friend telling us the following incident: He was in the north of Scotland, and when walking out one day, met an old woman at a place where two roads met. She had a stick or staff in her hand, and just as he got up to her, she flung it up about a dozen times. He asked her why she did so, and she laughed and said:

“When I come to two ways I always do that, to see which way I am to go.”

“But why did you throw it up so many times?”

“Because,” she said, “the head of the staff would not go the right way, so I threw it up until it did!”

Do we not sometimes ask the Lord to guide, and all the time our minds are made up as to what we are going to do? If we would glorify Christ, we must be guided by the Spirit in the truth.

II - We glorify Christ as we look to Him.

It was a sight of Christ on the Cross which made the centurion glorify God, for we read, **“When he saw what was done, he glorified God”** (Luke 23:47).

- looking to Jesus crucified, to see what He has done;
- looking to Him risen, to see what He gives;
- looking to Him in His Word, to see what He requires;
- looking to Him as our Example in prayer, work, humility, love to others, and doing the Father’s will;
- looking to Him as our Leader, and as Gideon said to his followers, **“Look on me, and do likewise”** (Judges 7:17), so may we look to Him and follow wherever He leads.

Looking to Him, not self, the world, Satan, temptations, strength, weakness, attainments, brethren, joys, gifts, work, afflictions, law, sins, love, righteousness, faith, repentance, feelings, or peace, but Jesus, Jesus only, we thus glorify Him.

Most of our readers have heard of what the princess said, after she had been liberated through the devotion of her husband.

Cyrus having taken captive a prince and his wife and children, when they were arrayed before him, said to the prince-

“What will you give me if I release you?”

“The half of my kingdom,” said the prince.

“And if I release your children?”

“The whole of my kingdom.”

“And if I release your wife?”

“Myself.”

Cyrus was so pleased with the devotion of the prince, that he released them all gratuitously. After they had got back to their own country, the prince said to his wife-

“Wasn’t Cyrus a handsome man?”

The princess said-

“I did not notice; I had only eyes for him who was willing to give himself for me.”

May we have eyes only for Jesus, who was not only willing, but who has given Himself for us.

III - We glorify Christ as we are obedient to Him.

We read, the “**King’s daughter is all-glorious within**” (Psalm 45:13).

The *within-ness* of glory was caused by the *without-ness* of obedience, for while it is perfectly true we must have the *within-ness* of the Spirit’s power for the *obtainment* of obedience, we can only have that glory by the *retainment* of obedience. When Jesus washed His disciples’ feet, He told them why He did it. He left them an example, how they were to serve each other, and said, “**If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them**” (John 13:17).

Here we have three thoughts:

1. Knowledge.
2. Doing, or obedience.
3. happiness, the result.

These three always go together. Jesus has told us to abide in Him, therefore we know; now we are responsible to do it; and if we do so it will have a two-fold effect-joy will be brought to our own hearts; and glory will be brought to God, for to abide in Him, and to be obedient to Him are the same thing, as we are told, “**he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him**” (I John 3:24).

IV - We glorify Christ as we are ready for Him.

The writer was preaching one Lord’s Day afternoon, in a village in Warwickshire, upon the second coming of Christ, and amongst the audience there was a local preacher and his wife. The truth was like new revelation to them.

A day or two afterwards, the local preacher, who was a stone mason, was working in his shop at the quarry, and thinking about the Lord’s coming; and it became to him such a reality, that, with mallet in one hand and chisel in the other, he went and looked out at the shop door, to see if He were coming!

Are we, who profess to be looking for Him, really expecting and looking for Him, and living as though we expected Him, and thus being ready for Him? For if we are, we glorify Him in keeping in our hearts His own precious promise, “**I will come and receive you unto Myself,**” and rejoice in hope of the coming glory.

V - We glorify Christ as we identify ourselves with Him in rejection.

We are exhorted to “**glorify the Lord in the fires**” (Isaiah 24:15).

- When we are in the fire of affliction, as Job was, we have the God-given opportunity to glorify Him by our patience (Job 2:3);
- When we are in the fire of persecution, as the three Hebrews were, we can be the instrumental cause of glorifying Christ, by revealing Him to the ungodly (Daniel 3:25);
- When we are in the fire of temptation, as Joseph was, we glorify God by our resistance, and enjoy His special presence (Genesis 39:7-21);
- When we are in the fire of trial, as Abraham was, we glorify God by our acquiescence in His will (Hebrews 11:17-19);
- When we are in the fire of misrepresentation, we glorify God in suffering as Christians (I Peter 4:14-16);
- When we “**glory in tribulation,**” “**in**” our “**infirmities,**” that the grace of Christ may rest upon us, we glorify God (Romans 5:3; II Corinthians 12:9); and
- When we glory in the Cross of Christ, that is, in having fellowship with Christ in suffering, we glorify God (Galatians 6:14, 17).

Rumor says, on one occasion the Queen, in speaking of the late Prince Consort, said: “He was such an one that I could have gladly walked barefooted round the world with him.”

Who would not do the same with Christ?

To be with Him is the cry of the newborn soul, as is evidenced in the deliverance of the demoniac, who prayed that he might be **“with Him”** (Luke 8:38);

- It is the prelude to seeing Christ’s glory, for Peter and the other two disciples were said to be **“with Him”** ere they saw His glory (Mark 9:2);
- It is the place of honour, for the disciples were said to be **“with Him”** before He instituted the Last Supper (Luke 22:14);
- It is the secret of witness-bearing, as the people owned, for they took knowledge of the early disciples that they had been **“with Jesus”** (Acts 4:13);
- It is the power that separates from sin, for we are said to be **“dead with Christ”** (Romans 6:8);
- It is the keeping place of our life, for it is said to be hid **“with Christ”** (Colossians 3:3);
- It is the hope of the coming glory, for we shall for ever be **“with the Lord”** (I Thessalonians 4:17; 5:10; Colossians 3:4); and
- It is the joy of the sufferer, for we know if we **“suffer with Him”** we shall **“be also glorified together”** (Romans 8:17).

VI - We glorify Christ as we are fighting in Him.

It is said that when the body of the Prince Imperial was picked up, there was not a single wound in his back; the wounds were all in the front part of his body. That was an evidence that he kept his face to the foe; and if we would glorify Christ, we shall keep our face to our spiritual enemies, standing upon resurrection ground, knowing our foes have been beaten by Christ. Having on the whole armour of God, fighting in His strength, we shall be conquerors.

After the Lord had given deliverance to Israel at the Red Sea, He was acknowledged to be **“glorious in power,”** and **“glorious in holiness”** (Exodus 15:6, 11); and as we trust Him, He will give us victory over our enemies too, and then, like Israel, we shall glorify Him for what He has done.

VII - We glorify Christ as we are inviting others to Him.

“They glorified God in me” (Galatians 1:24), says the Apostle Paul, as he refers to what **“God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry”** (Acts 21:19, 20).

The brethren were bound to acknowledge the working of God through him. The seed of truth had been sown, and a harvest of blessing was the result.

“Come, see a Man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” said the woman of Samaria; and it must have rejoiced His heart to hear her speak thus of Him, for as He saw the crowd coming to Him, He said, **“The fields are white unto the harvest;”** thus He was glorified by the woman’s simple testimony. So will He be by ours, if done with a single eye to His glory.

To tell out His love, to herald forth His grace, to proclaim His truth, to preach His Gospel, to enforce His claims, to witness to His faithfulness, and to invite to Himself, is the privilege of those who are Christ’s own.

VIII - We glorify Christ as we are enduring in Him.

Moses “**endured, as seeing Him who is invisible**” (Hebrews. 11:27).

- He met with opposition at home, but he endured;
- He met with opposition from his brethren, but he endured;
- The pleasures of sin, the attractions of the world, and the riches of Egypt were put in his way, but he endured, as seeing Him who was more to him than earthly attractions; and
- Looking at things from heaven’s standpoint, he saw their hollowness, emptiness, and vain show.

The secret of Moses’ endurance is expressed in those two words, “**seeing Him;**” and as we gaze upon Christ, He will fill our hearts with joy (John 20:20), so that the world will lose its attractions.

IX - We glorify Christ as we are delighting in Him.

Some Christians do things because it is their duty, but that is bondage; but if we are living to, and for Christ, and working for Him, simply because we cannot help it, it is liberty and delight.

There are many ways in which we can delight in the Lord.

- Delighting in communion, “**I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste**” (Song of Solomon 2:3).
- Delighting in service (Psalm 40:8).
- Delighting in God’s ways, not our own (Isaiah 58:2).
- Delighting in the Word of God (Psalm 119:16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 77, 174).
- Delighting in God Himself (Job 27:10; Psalm 37:4).
- Delighting in doing God’s will, “**I delight to do Thy will, O my God**” (Psalm 40:8).

Delighting to worship Him:

- The shepherds came and worshipped Christ, and returned glorifying God (Luke 2:20);
- The palsied man who was healed returned to his house glorifying God (Luke 5:25);
- The woman who was made straight stood up glorifying God (Luke 13:13);
- It was the same with the leper (Luke 17:15), and Bartimaeus (Luke 18:43).

Gustave Dore, the great French artist, was once travelling in foreign lands. Through some accident he lost his passport. When he came to pass through the custom-house of another country, and his passport was demanded, he told the custom officer that he had lost it, but assured him that he was Dore, the artist. The custom-house officer did not believe him, and said, mockingly, “Oh, yes, we have a good many like you! You are Dore, are you?”

“Yes.”

“Very well, then; take this pencil and paper” - and he handed these to him as he spoke - “and prove it.”

“All right,” said Dore, and with an amused smile playing on his face, he took the pencil and began to make a neat little sketch of a company of peasants on the wharf, with their piles of baggage and children playing about them.

The custom officer looked on with astonishment for a few moments, as the life-like creation grew under the pencil, and then said:

“That will do, sir. You are Dore, for no man but Dore could do that.”

That is the way we are to prove our Christianity. We must carry our passport in our every-day conduct. A Christian spirit which shows itself in smiling face, and kindly words, and right conduct, is the best introduction one can have. Sometimes it is a protection better than any armour. And the way for these ends to be achieved, is to allow the Divine Artist, the Holy Spirit, to paint upon the canvas of our lives the lovely character of the Lord Jesus, and as others see this, He must be glorified.

~ end of chapter 29 ~

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