They also serve who only stand and wait - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/7 20:59

They also serve who only stand and wait

By Alexander Maclaren

'Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.'—John xx. 21, 22.

We have seen in a former sermon that the charge of the risen Christ to Peter, which immediately precedes these verses, allotted to him service and suffering. The closing words of that charge 'Follow Me!' had a deep significance, as uniting both parts of his task in the one supreme command of imitation of his Master.

But the same words had also a simpler meaning, as inviting the Apostle to come apart with Christ at the moment, for so far a deeper token of His love or indication of His will. Peter follows; but in following, naturally turns to see what the little group, sitting silent there by the coal fire on the beach, may be doing, and he notices John coming towards them, with intent to join them.

What emboldened John to thrust himself, uncalled for, into so secret an interview? The words in which he is described in the context answer the question. 'He was the disciple whom Jesus loved, which also leaned on His breast at Supper, and said, Lord! which is he that betrayeth Thee?'—He was also bound by close ties to Peter. So with the familiarity of a perfect love which casteth out fear, he felt that the Master could have no secrets from him, and no charge to give to his friend which he might not share.

Peter's swift question, 'Lord! and what shall this man do?'—though it has been often blamed, does not seem very blameworthy. There was perhaps a little touch of his old vivacity in it, indicating that he had not been sufficiently subdued and sobered by the prospect which Christ had held out to him; but far more than that there was a natural interest in his friend's fate, and something of a wish to have his company on the path which he was to tread. Christ's answer, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me!' gently rebukes any leaven of evil that there may have been in the question; warns him against trying to force other people into his groove; with solemn emphasis reiterates his own duty; and, in effect, bids him let his brother alone, and see that he himself discharges the ministry which he has received of the Lord.

The enigmatical words of Christ, and the long life of the Apostle, which seemed to explain them, naturally bred an interpretation of them in the Early Church which is recorded here, as I believe, by the Evangelist himself, to the effect that John, like another Enoch at the beginning of a new world, was to escape the common lot. And very beautiful is the quiet way in which the Evangelist put that error on one side, by the simple repetition of his Master's words, emphasising their hypothetical form and their enigmatic character: 'Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?'

Now all this, I think, is full of lessons. Let me try to draw one or two of them briefly now.

I. First, then, we have in that majestic 'If I will!' the revelation of the risen Christ as the Lord of life and death.
In His charge to Peter, Christ had asserted His right absolutely to control His servant's conduct and fix his place in the world, and His power to foresee and forecast his destiny and his end. But in these words He goes a step further. Â‘I will that he tarry; to communicate life and to sustain life is a divine prerogative; to act by the bare utterance of His will upon physical nature is a divine prerogative. Jesus Christ here claims that His will goes out with sovereign power amongst the perplexities of human history and into the depths of that mystery of life; and that He, the Son of Man, Â‘quickens whom He will,Â’ and has power Â‘to kill and to make alive.Â’ The words would be absurd, if not something worse, upon any but divine lips, that opened with conscious authority, and whose Utterer knew that His hand was laid upon the innermost springs of being.

So, in this entirely incidental fashion, you have one of the strongest and plainest instances of the quiet, unostentatious and habitual manner in which Jesus Christ claimed for Himself properly divine prerogatives.

Remember that He who thus spoke was standing before these seven men there, in the morning light, on the beach, fresh from the grave. His resurrection had proved Him to be the Lord of death. He had bound it to His chariot-wheels as a conqueror. He had risen and He stood there before them with no more mark of the corruption of the grave upon Him than there are traces of the foul water in which a sea bird may have floated, on its white wing that flashes in the sunshine as it soars. And surely as these men looked to Christ, Â‘declared to be the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead, Â‘they may have begun, however Â‘foolish and slow of heartÂ’ they were Â‘to believe,Â’ to understand that Â‘this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living,Â’ both of death and of life.

These two ApostlesÂ’ later history was full of proofs that ChristÂ’s claim was valid. Peter is shut up in prison and delivered once, at the very last moment, when hope was almost dead, in order that he might understand that when he was put into another prison and not delivered, the blow of martyrdom fell upon him, not because of the strength of his persecutors, but because of the will of his Lord. And John had to see his brother James, to whom he had been so closely knit, with whom he had pledged himself to drink the cup that Christ drank of, whom he had desired to have associated with himself in the special honours in the Messianic KingdomÂ—he had to see him slain, first of the Apostles, while he himself lingered here long after all his early associates were gone. He had, no doubt, many a longing to depart. Solitary, surrounded by a new world, pressed by many cares, he must often have felt that the cross which he had to carry was no lighter than that laid on those who had passed to their rest by martyrdom. To him it would often be martyrdom to live. His personal longing is heard for a moment in the last words of the Apocalypse, Â‘Amen! even so, come, Lord Jesus!Â’Â—but undoubtedly for the most part he stayed his heart on his LordÂ’s will, and waited in meek patience till he heard the welcome announcement, Â‘The Master is come and calleth for thee.Â’

And, dear friends! that same belief that the risen Christ is the Lord of life and death, is the only one that can stay our hearts, or make us bow with submission to His divine will. He who has conquered death by undergoing it is deathÂ’s Lord as well as ours, and when He wills to bring His friends home to Himself, saith to that black-robed servant, Â‘Go, and he goeth; do this and he doeth it.Â’ The vision which John saw long after this on another shore, washed by a stormier sea, spoke the same truth as does this majestic Â‘I willÂ’—Â‘He that liveth and became dead and is alive for evermore,Â’ is by virtue of His divine eternal life, and has become in His humanity by virtue of His death and resurrection the Lord of life and death. The hands that were nailed to the Cross turn the keys of death and Hades. Â‘He openeth and no man shuttest; He shuttest and no man openeth.Â’

Continued:
Re: THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/8 17:21

THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT
By
Alexander Maclaren

Â‘Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do! Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.Â‘—JOHN xxi. 21, 22.

II. We have here before us, in this incident, the service of patient waiting.

Â‘If I will that he tarry, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.Â’ Peter is the man of action, not great at reflection; full of impulse, restless until his hands can do something to express his thoughts and his emotions. On the very Mount of Transfiguration he wanted to set to work and build Â‘three tabernacles,Â’ instead of listening awed to the divine colloquy. In Galilee he cannot wait quietly for his Master to come, but must propose to his friends to Â‘go a fishing.Â’ In the fishing-boat, as soon as he sees the Lord he must struggle through the sea to get at Him; whilst John sits quiet in the boat, blessed in the consciousness of his MasterÂ’s presence and in silently gazing at Him verily there. All through the first part of the Acts of the Apostles his bold energy goes flashing and flaming. It is always his voice that rings out in the front, whether preparing on the Pentecost Day, bringing healing to the sick, or fronting the Sanhedrim. His element is in the shock of conflict and the strain of work.

John, on the other hand, seldom appears in the narrative. When he does so he stands a silent figure by the side of Peter, and disappears from it altogether before very long. We do not hear that he did anything. He seems to have had no part in the missionary work of the Church.

He Â‘tarryed,Â’ that was all. The word is the sameÂ—Â‘abideÂ’Â—which is so often upon his lips in his Gospel and in his Epistles, as expressive of the innermost experience of the Christian soul, the condition of all fruitfulness, blessedness, knowledge and Christ-likeness. ChristÂ’s charge to John to Â‘tarryÂ’ did not only, as his brethren misinterpreted it, mean that his life was to be continued, but it prescribed the manner of his life. It was to be patient contemplation, a Â‘dwelling in the house of the Lord,Â’ a keeping of his heart still, like some little tarn up amongst the silent hills, for heaven with all its blue to mirror itself in.

And that quiet life of contemplation bore its fruit. In his meditation the deeds and words of his Master slowly grew ever more and more luminous to him. Deeper meanings came out, revealing new constellations, as he gazed into that opening heaven of memory. He reaped Â‘the harvest of a quiet eyeÂ’ and garnered the sheaves of it in his Gospel, the holy of holies of the New Testament; and in his Epistles, in which he proclaims the first and last word of revelation, Â‘God is loveÂ’Â—the pure diamond that hangs at the end of the golden chain let down from Heaven. Often, no doubt, his brethren thought him Â‘but an idler in the land,Â’ but at last his Â‘tarryingÂ’ was vindicated.

Now, dear brethren! in all times of the worldÂ’s history that form of Christian service needs to be pressed upon busy people. And there never was a time in the worldÂ’s history, or in the ChurchÂ’s history, when it more needed to be pressed upon the ordinary Christian man than at this day. The good and the bad of our present Christianity, and of our present social life, conspire to make people think that those who are not at work in some external form of Christian service for the good of their fellows are necessarily idlers. Many of them are so, but by no means all, and there is always the danger that at the external work which good, earnest people do shall be greater than can be wholesomely and safely done by them without their constant recourse to this solitary meditation, and to tarrying before God.

The stress and bustle of our everyday life; the feverish desire for immediate results; the awakened conviction that Christianity is nothing if not practical; the new sense of responsibility for the condition of our fellows; the large increase of all sorts of domestic, evangelistic, and missionary work among all churches in this dayÂ—things to be profoundly thankful for, like all other good things have their possible dangers; and it is laid on my heart to warn you of these now. For the sake o
f our own personal hold on Jesus Christ, for the sake of our progress in the knowledge of His truth, and for the sake of those very work which some of us count so precious, there is need that we shall betake ourselves to that still communion. The stream that is to water half a continent must rise high in the lonely hills, and be fed by many a mountain rill in the solitudes, and the men who are to keep the freshness of their Christian zeal, and of the consecration which they will ever feel is being worn away by the attrition even of faithful service, can only renew and refresh it by resorting again to the Master, and imitating Him who prepared Himself for a day of teaching in the Temple by a night of communion on the Mount of Olives.

Further, there is here a lesson of tolerance for us all. Practical men are always disposed, as I said, to force everybody else into their groove. Martha is always disposed to think that Mary is idle when she is sitting at Christ’s feet, and wants to have her come into the kitchen and help her there. The eye which sees must not say to the hand which toils, nor the hand to the eye, ‘I have no need of thee.’ There are men who cannot think much; there are men who cannot work much. There are men whom God has chosen for diligent external service; there are men whom God has chosen for solitary retirement and musing; and we cannot dispense with either the one or the other. Did not John Bunyan do more for the world when he was shut up in Bedford Gaol and dreamed his dream than by all his tramping about Bedfordshire, preaching to a handful of cottagers? And has not the Christian literature of the prison, which includes three at least of Paul’s Epistles, proved of the greatest service and most precious value to the Church?

We need all to listen to the voice which says, ‘Come ye apart by yourselves into a solitary place, and rest awhile.’ Work is good, but the foundation of work is better. Activity is good, but the life which is the basis of activity is even more. There is plenty of so-called Christian work to-day which I fear me is not life but mechanism; has slipped off its original foundations, and is, therefore, powerless. Let us tolerate the forms of service least like our own, not seek to force other men into our paths nor seek to imitate them. Let Peter flame in the van, and beard high priests, and stir and fight; and let John sit in his quiet horns, caring for his Lord’s mother, and holding fellowship with his Lord’s Spirit.

Continued:

Re: His perfect care - posted by JoanM, on: 2008/12/8 20:15

There are many beautiful truths in here. Just one is:

Â“Peter is shut up in prison and delivered once, at the very last moment, when hope was almost dead, in order that he might understand that when he was put into another prison and not delivered, the blow of martyrdom fell upon him, not because of the strength of his persecutors, but because of the will of his Lord.Â”

Many years ago, after nearly a year of unsuccessful treatment for a painful condition (great prayer corporate and individual) I surrendered to the course of surgery. Before the surgery was scheduled, on a Sunday, I happened to show one of the doctors in my fellowship and the pastor the continuing condition and told them of my decision. We (the choir) sang a song about the Divine Love in the Blood that was shed and I was overwhelmed by God’s Love for the congregation saw me. After church, as I opened my car door I saw that I was healed. I had known the joy of healing before. This was different. I was filled with the peaceful confidence that when I die it will be for no other reason than because of the will of my Beloved Lord. Did you learn something of this?

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/8 20:23

Quote:

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Â‘God is love’Â—the pure diamond that hangs at the end of the golden chain let down from Heaven.
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Such sweet balm for a troubled soul.
Re: THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/9 16:34

THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT

By
Alexander Maclaren

Â’Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do! Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.Â’—JOHN xxi. 21, 22.

III. Lastly, we have here the lesson of patient acquiescence in ChristÂ’s undisclosed will.

The error into which the brethren of the Apostle fell as to the meaning of the LordÂ’s words was a very natural one, especially when taken with the commentary which JohnÂ’s unusually protracted life seemed to append to it. We know that at belief lingered long after the death of the Apostle; and that legends, like the stories that are found in many nations of heroes that have disappeared, but are sleeping in some mountain recess, clustered round JohnÂ’s grave; over which the earth was for many a century believed to heave and fall with his gentle breathing.

John did not know exactly what his Master meant. He would not venture upon a counter-interpretation. Perhaps his brethren were right, he does not know; perhaps they were wrong, he does not know. One thing he is quite sure of, that what his Master said was: Â‘If I will that he tarry.Â’ And he acquiesces quietly in the certainty that it shall be as his Master wills; and, in the uncertainty what that will is, he says in effect: Â‘I do not know, and it does not much matter. If I am to go to find Him, well! If He is to come to find me, well again! Whichever way it be, I know that the patient tarrying here will lead to a closer communion hereafter, and so I leave it all in His hands.Â’

Dear brethren! that is a blessed state that you and I may come to; a state of quiet submission, not of indifference but of acquiescence in the undisclosed will of our loving Christ about all matters, and about this alternative of life or death among the rest. The soul that has had communion with Jesus Christ amidst the imperfections here will be able to refer all the mysteries and problems of its future to Him with unshaken confidence. For union with Him carries with it the assurance of its own perpetuity, and Â‘in its sweetness yieldeth proof that it was born for immortality.Â’ The Psalmist learned to say, Â‘Thou shalt afterward receive me to glory,Â’ because he could say, Â‘I am continually with Thee.Â’ And in like manner we may all rise from the experience of the present to confidence in that immortal future. Death with his Â‘abhorred shear’ cuts other close ties, but their edge turns on the knot that binds the soul to its Saviour. He who has felt the power of communion with the ever-living Christ cannot but feel that such union must be for ever, and that because Christ lives, as long as Christ lives, he will live also.

Therefore, to the soul thus abiding in Christ that alternative of life or death which looms so large to us when we have not Christ with us, will dwindle down into very small dimensions. If I live there will be work for me to do here, and His love to possess; if I die there will be work for me to do there too, and His love to possess in still more abundant measure. So it will not be difficult for such a soul to leave the decision of this as of all other things with the Lord of life and death, and to lie acquiescent in His gracious hands. That calm acceptance of His will and patience with ChristÂ’s Â‘IfÂ’ is the reward of tarrying in silent communion with Him.

My dear friend! has death to you dwindled to a very little thing? Can you say that you are quite sure that it will not touch your truest self? Are you able to leave the alternative in His hands, content with His decision and content with the uncertainty that wraps His decision? Can you say,

Â‘Lord! It belongs not to my care,

Whether I die or liveÂ’?
The answer to these questions is involved in the answer to the other:—Have you trusted your sinful soul for salvation to Jesus Christ, and are you drawing from Him a life which bears fruit in glad service and in patient communion? Then it will not much matter whether you are in heaven or on earth, for in both places and states the essence of your life will be the same, your Companion one, and your work identical. If it be Christ for me to live it will be gain for me to die.

Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture

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Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/11 13:09

Quote:
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The soul that has had communion with Jesus Christ amidst the imperfections here will be able to refer all the mysteries and problems of its future to Him with unshaken confidence. For union with Him carries with it the assurance of its own perpetuity, and in its sweetness yieldeth proof that it was born for immortality.Â‘
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Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/12 21:32

Quote:
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HeartSong wrote:
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The soul that has had communion with Jesus Christ amidst the imperfections here will be able to refer all the mysteries and problems of its future to Him with unshaken confidence. For union with Him carries with it the assurance of its own perpetuity, and in its sweetness yieldeth proof that it was born for immortality.Â‘
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pastorfrin wrote: Quote

"The Psalmist learned to say, Â‘Thou shalt afterward receive me to glory,Â’ because he could say, Â‘I am continually with Thee.Â’ And in like manner we may all rise from the experience of the present to confidence in that immortal future. Death with its Â‘abhorred shearsÂ’ cuts other close ties, but their edge turns on the knot that binds the soul to its Saviour. He who has felt the power of communion with the ever-living Christ cannot but feel that such union must be for ever, and that because Christ lives, and as long as Christ lives, he will live also."

Alexander Maclaren

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Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/12 21:43

Quote:
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He who has felt the power of communion with the ever-living Christ cannot but feel that such union must be for ever,
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But these things of earth keep getting in the way.
I know this is wrong thinking - help me to see it right.
If none would mind me adding this poem to this thread -- this first stanza stood out to me in a strong way, the day I found it.

"My Goal"

My goal is God Himself, not joy nor peace;
Nor even blessing, but Himself, my God.
'Tis His to lead me there, not mine but His...

At any cost, dear Lord, by any road.

So faith bounds forward to its goal in God,
and love can trust her Lord to lead her there.

Upheld by Him, my soul is fow'ring hard,
Till God hath full fulfilled my deepest prayer.

No matter if the way be sometimes dark,
No matter though the cost be oft-times great,
He knoweth how I best shall reach the mark,
The way that leads to Him must needs be straight.

One thing I know, I cannot say Him nay;
One thing I do, I press on towards my Lord.

My God, my Glory here from day to day,
And in the glory there, my Great Reward.

By Frederick Brook

Hi Jesus-is-God,
You are most welcome to add to this thread and thank you for the poem; it does follow very well with what I believe Alexander Maclaren was trying to say.
These lines strike to the heart of the message.

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Quote:
---------------------------------Upheld by Him, my soul is following hard.
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Quote:
---------------------------------He knoweth how I best shall reach the mark.
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Quote:
---------------------------------And in the glory there, my Great Reward.
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HeartSong wrote:
Quote:

But these things of earth keep getting in the way.
I know this is wrong thinking - help me to see it right.

HeartSong,
We only see spiritually with our hearts, as Alexander Maclaren writes in this next paragraph.

"Therefore, to the soul thus abiding in Christ that alternative of life or death which looms so large to us when we have not Christ with us, will dwindle down into very small dimensions. If I live there will be work for me to do here, and His love to possess; if I die there will be work for me to do there too, and His love to possess in still more abundant measure. So it will not be difficult for such a soul to leave the decision of this as of all other things with the Lord of life and death, and to lie acquiescent in His gracious hands.
That calm acceptance of His will and patience with Christ's Â’IlÂ’ is the reward of tarrying in silent communion with Him."

HeartSong,
The things of earth that keep getting in the way are the 'ifs' in our life. If we give the ifs over to Christ we then have the "calm acceptance of His will..."

That calm acceptance of His will and patience with Christ's Â’IlÂ’ is the reward of tarrying in silent communion with Him."

We know Him in and with our hearts or we do not know Him at all, this is where this silent communion with Him comes from.

In His Love
pastorfrin

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/14 0:05

pastorfrin,

When I am alone with Him, there is no problem. It is when I am with other people, or there are other people involved, that there is a sense of being pulled away from Him. Is the "If" an indication of a divided heart? That I am still trying to please man? The problem is more prevalent in conjunction with people that I have a past history. If I withdraw myself from the problem goes away - but how do you have a relationship with others if you are withdrawn?

Oh, I think I see - all relationships must go through Him. Our relationship is with Him, and then through Him it extends to others - and in this manner the "if" is removed, or rather, the "if" is given over to Him. We all get our bearing from Him - it is a new way of relating - it is freedom from worrying about what others think - it releases us from the confusion and bondage of trying to please others. It is singular focus - that being Christ, and Christ alone.
It seems as if I already knew this at one time . . .

Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/14 13:35

Quote:
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HeartSong wrote:
pastorfrin,

When I am alone with Him, there is no problem. It is when I am with other people, or there are other people involved, that there is a sense of being pulled away from Him. Is the "if" an indication of a divided heart? That I am still trying to please man? The problem is more prevalent in conjunction with people that I have a past history. If I withdraw myself from them the problem goes away - but how do you have a relationship with others if you are withrawn?

Oh, I think I see - all relationships must go through Him. Our relationship is with Him, and then through Him it extends to others - and in this manner the "if" is removed, or rather, the "if" is given over to Him. We all get our bearing from Him - it is a new way of relating - it is freedom from worrying about what others think - it releases us from the confusion and bondage of trying to please others. It is singular focus - that being Christ, and Christ alone.

It seems as if I already knew this at one time . . .
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HeartSong,

Yes, but this must carry through to Â‘allÂ’ of my life, where my life becomes Â‘His lifeÂ’ lived through me.

Galatians 2:20

Â“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.Â”

This is what I believe Alexander Maclaren is saying as he concludes this teaching.

Â“My dear friend! Has death to you dwindled to a very little thing? Can you say that you are quite sure that it will not touch your truest self? Are you able to leave the alternative in His hands, content with His decision and content with the uncertainty that wraps His decision? Can you say,

Â‘Lord! It belongs not to my care,

Whether I die or liveÂ’?

The answer to these questions is involved in the answer to the other:Â—Have you trusted your sinful soul for salvation to Jesus Christ, and are you drawing from Him a life which bears fruit in glad service and in patient communion? Then it will not much matter whether you are in heaven or on earth, for in both places and states the essence of your life will be the same, your Companion one, and your work identical.

If it be Â‘ChristÂ’ for me to live it will be Â‘gainÂ’ for me to die.Â”

Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture

"Are you able to leave the alternative in His hands, content with His decision and content with the uncertainty that wraps His decision?"

This is where it becomes "not I, but Christ liveth in me:"

In His Love
pastorfrin
Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/14 13:51
Thank you pastorfrin.

Re: - posted by Lor_E (), on: 2008/12/15 7:53

Quote:
-------------Dear brethren! that is a blessed state that you and I may come to; a state of quiet submission, not of indifference but of acquiescence in the undisclosed will of our loving Christ about all matters, and about this alternative of life or death amongst the rest. The soul that has had communion with Jesus Christ amidst the imperfections here will be able to refer all the mysteries and problems of its future to Him with unshaken confidence.
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...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me

I don't remember where I heard it, and I may not be quoting it verbatim, but:

*it is not a matter of running, but of resting;
not a matter of doing, but of trusting*

Sometimes I wonder if we who live here in the flesh expect the flesh to become perfected, so that we can have a "perfect" relationship with Christ. Yet, here all this time the perfect Christ seeks to have a relationship with us so that He might perfect and complete us until the moment we see Him face to face.

With all the variant things we could hope to be perfected in: perfect health, perfect harmony, perfect peace, perfect obedience, perfect hearing... I think the most important is perfect trust, that basic foundation so easily ignored.

Trust is so simple to say, to speak, and yet a difficult lesson to learn...sometimes we act so surprised by God's faithfulness, like WOW look what God did for me- isn't that something!? Instead of saying, Isn't God something that He would take care for every detail of my life with such perfect love! (What I mean to say is that it is not just what He does, but who He is...)

It is the very thing that the enemy tripped me up in when I was but 12 years old. I had some terrible things happening that I felt no control over and when reading my Bible I read the verse *if God so cares for the sparrow, does He not much more care for you...* I felt a pang in my heart as I heard a whisper, "does He so truly care for you, if He did would He allow this and this to happen to you?" Somehow I believed that lie and it took me on a spiral downward for many years. And when God in His great mercy scooped me up in His arms of grace and revealed to me His Son, even then it took several more years to come to the realization, the revelation of that seed of doubt planted so long ago.

But praise to God, He did reveal Himself to me! He tore out that weak, selfish, doubting, fearful weed that had grown in my heart for all those years, and I was absolutely crushed when I saw my doubt. I wept bitterly.

It was so simple a moment, so defining.

I not only live amidst the imperfections, I am still an imperfection :) but I know One who is perfect, who does everything for my good- my spiritual good, who can do more than I could even think to ask! And in Him I can rest that whatever happens to me, it will be only according to His will. He will give to me every breath that I have coming.

I am sorry for going on like this... thank you for your patience.

*Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. for His mercy endureth forever.*

*For He satisfieth the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness... He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands asunder...* excerpts from Psalm 107

Thank you for the opportunity to be further reminded of such a wonderful God we have!

Hidden in Christ yet visible to all, standing on the rock, but sometimes not without trembling...

Lori
Re: His perfect care - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/19 20:48

Quote:
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JoanM wrote:
There are many beautiful truths in here. Just one is:

Â“Peter is shut up in prison and delivered once, at the very last moment, when hope was almost dead, in order that he might understand that when he was put into another prison and not delivered, the blow of martyrdom fell upon him, not because of the strength of his persecutors, but because of the will of his Lord.Â”

Many years ago, after nearly a year of unsuccessful treatment for a painful condition (great prayer corporate and individual) I surrendered to the course of surgery. Before the surgery was scheduled, on a Sunday, I happened to show one of the doctors in my fellowship and the pastor the continuing condition and told them of my decision. We (the choir) sang a song about the Divine Love in the Blood that was shed and I was overwhelmed by GodÂ’s Love for the congregation I saw before me. After church, as I opened my car door I saw that I was healed. I had known the joy of healing before. This was different. I was filled with the peaceful confidence that when I die it will be for no other reason than because of the will of my Beloved Lord. Did you learn something of this?

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Re: His perfect care

Hi Sister JoanM,

IÂ’m very sorry to have somehow missed your post, please forgive me it was not intentional; IÂ’m still a bit in the fog.

To answer your question I would say yes, definitely so.

Alexander Maclaren states it very well when he says

Â“Lord! It belongs not to my care,

Whether I die or Live.Â”

And Â“If it be Â‘ChristÂ’ for me to live it will be Â‘gainÂ’ for me to die.Â”

If our lives have been given over to Jesus Christ, how can we look at it any other way?

When I was so very, very ill and unaware of where or who I was so much of the time, my only memorable prayer was, Â“Lord, donÂ’t let me slip from your hands.Â” With this I found complete assurance and rest. Not rather I lived or died, but that I was secure in Him.

In His Love
pastorfrin

Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/12/21 13:05

Quote:
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HeartSong wrote:
Thank you pastorfrin.

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You are most welcome, thank you for the discussion.
Hi Lori,

It is wonderful to experience the truth that Jesus is living in us just as His word says He will; oh what joy!

Thank you Lori for helping to remind all "of such a wonderful God we have!"

Lori - this one line of yours ....

"(What I mean to say is that it is not just what He does, but who He is...)

Bless GOD. It's all about Who He is.

When we pray - that He'll strip us of all But Himself - we find that it's All and Only about "WHO" HE IS. Praise GOD - thank you!

Isaiah 44:24

Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

Isaiah 45:5-6

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That
they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

Isaiah 45:18
For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.

Isaiah 45:22
Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Isaiah 46:4
And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.

Rev. 1:8
I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Rev. 22:16
I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Re: - posted by Lor_E (), on: 2009/1/3 14:55
And of His fullness have all we received and grace for grace.

Re: , on: 2009/1/4 11:21
Amen, and Amen Pastor Frin and Lori.

We must know these things.
That we may know HIM and what HE has already purchased for us and not just our Salvation but HIS fulness - Amazing.

Yesterday on "Him we Preach" thread - I had this mental picture of this ...

Joh 13:5 After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

with

Rev 1:11-17 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: ..... And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned d in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword and His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength.

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead ...

The foot-washer.
This all just awed me.

And Paul, of all people saying "that I might know HIM.

Just amazed.

Thank you both!

Re: - posted by pastorfрин, on: 2009/1/10 23:26

Quote:

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Jesus-is-GOD wrote:

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Thank you both!

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Hi Jesus-is-God,

You are most welcome. My desire is to 'Know Him' more, never to be satisfied until I see Him, Oh what a Day, a Glorious moment that will be.