

Love at Leisure

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that true Christian love finds its strength and rest in quietly sitting at Jesus' feet, embracing humble devotion, attentive listening, and joyful learning.

Scripture: Luke 10:39, John 19:30, Romans 8:1, Ephesians 1:6, Matthew 11:29-30, John 11:23-24

Topics: "Christian Love", "Faith and Rest", "Humility"

Description

In 'Love at Leisure,' C.H. Spurgeon invites believers to embrace the example of Mary, who sat humbly at Jesus' feet to listen and learn. Spurgeon emphasizes the necessity of resting in Christ's presence, setting aside worldly cares, and cultivating a heart of humility and attentive love. This devotional sermon encourages Christians to find strength and renewal through quiet communion with Jesus, preparing them for faithful service. It is a timeless call to deepen one's relationship with the Savior through love, rest, and learning.

Transcript

"Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His Word." Luke 10:39.

MARY was full of a love to Christ which could be very active and self-sacrificing. I have read to you of her pouring the precious box of spikenard upon our Lord for His anointing. She was, therefore, one who not only waited and listened, but she served the Lord after her sort and fashion. If she had been simply contemplative and nothing more, we might, perhaps, have considered her somewhat of a one-sided character—and while pointing to that which was good in her as an example, we might have had to comment on her deficiencies. But she did more than sit at the Master's feet. Beloved, if we ever serve the Lord as Mary did, we shall do well.

Now, since she was able thus to serve, she becomes a safe example for us in this other matter of restful faith. The portion of her life occupied in sitting at her Master's feet may instruct and help us. I feel I can safely hold her up to you as an example in all respects and the more so because of the particular incident just now before us where she received the Master's express commendation. He also praised her for bringing the box of ointment but, on this occasion, He praised her, too, saying that she had chosen the good part which should not be taken from her. He could not have more conspicuously set His seal of approval on her conduct than He did. I am not going to say much about her, but I want to speak to those of you who love the Lord as Mary did, to try if I cannot entice you for your own rest and for your own encouragement into following her example in this particular incident, namely, that of sitting at the feet of

the Lord Jesus Christ. I have already said you can see that the example is only part of her life—one side of it. At another time I may take the other side and exhort you to also follow her in that, but for this next hour or so, I want you to leave out the other side of her character and stick only to this. Consider it well, for I am persuaded that this is the true preparation for the other—that contemplation and rest at the Savior's feet will give you strength which will enable you afterwards to anoint His feet according as your heart's love shall dictate.

On this occasion, then, we have only to do with Mary sitting at our Savior's feet. There shall be four heads which you will not forget—love at leisure sitting down. Love in lowliness, sitting at Jesus' feet. Love listening—she heard His Words. Love learning—she heard His Words to a most blessed purpose. All the while she chose the good part.

I. First, then, LOVE AT LEISURE. That is a point which I want you especially to notice. You that have families to feed and clothe know how, all day long, you are busy—very busy, perhaps. The husband is away from early morning till the evening comes. The children have gone to school and the wife is occupied in a hundred household things. But now the evening meal is over and there is a warm fire burning in the hearth. Is it not one of the most pleasant sights of English interiors to see the family gathered around the fire to just sit still for a little while to talk and to indulge in those domestic loves which are the charm of that sweet English word, "home"? May an Englishman never cease to think of the word, "home," as the most musical word that ever dropped from mortal lips! Now love is quiet and still and, I was about to say, careless. Outside it has to watch its words, but inside it is playful, it is at ease, it disports itself, fearless of all adversaries. It takes its rest. The armor is put off and the soldier feels the day's battle is done. He stands not on his guard any longer. He is among those that love him and he feels that he is free. I do not know what life would be if there were not some of those sweet leisure moments when love has nothing else to do except to love—those intervals, these oases in the desert of life wherein to love is to be happy and to be loved is to be doubly blest!

Now, Christian people ought to have such times. Let us put aside our service for awhile. I am afraid that even those who are busy in the Master's work and are not occupied much with lower things, yet overlook the necessity for love to be at leisure. Now tonight, at any rate, you that work longest and toil most and have to think the hardest can ask the Lord to make this a leisure time between you and Jesus. You are not called upon to help Martha to prepare the banquet. Just sit still—sit still and rest at Jesus' feet and let nothing else occupy the next hour but sitting still and loving and being loved by Him.

Can we not get rid of worldly cares? We have had enough of them during the six days—let us cast the whole burden of them upon our Lord. Let us roll them up and leave them all at the Throne of Grace. They will keep till tomorrow and there is no doubt whatever that they will plague us enough, then, unless we have faith enough to master them. But now put them on the shelf. Say, "I have nothing to do with you now—any one of you. You may just be quiet. My soul has gone away from you up to the Savior's bosom, there to rest and to delight herself in Him."

And then let us try to banish all church cares also. Holy cares should not always trouble us. As I came here just now, I said to myself, "I will try tonight not to think about how I shall preach, or how this part of the sermon may suit one class of my Hearers or that part another. I will just be like Lazarus was, of whom it is written that, 'Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him.'" You know that the preacher to such a congregation as this may often find himself like Martha, combined with much serving if he forgets that he is but a servant of the Master and has only to do His bidding. You may well excuse us. But it must not be

so tonight. Whether you are deacon or elder, or preacher, or hearer, you must have nothing to do tonight with anything outside of our blessed Lord and our own hearts! Our love shall claim this time for her own rest. No, Martha, even though you are getting ready to feast Christ, we will not hear the clatter of dishes or the preparation of the festival. We must now just sit there at His feet and look up, and have no eyes except for Him, no ears except for Him, no heart except for Him. It shall be love's leisure night tonight!

And, in truth, Beloved, we have plenty of reason for resting. Let us sit at Jesus' feet because our salvation is complete. He said, "it is finished," and He knew that He had worked it all. The ransom price is paid for you, O my Soul! Not one drop has been withheld of the blood that is your purchase. The robe of righteousness is woven from top to bottom—there is not one thread for you to add. It is written, "You are complete in Him" and however frail we are, yet we are "perfect in Christ Jesus," and in spite of all our sin, we are "accepted in the Beloved." If it is so, O Love, have you not room for leisure? Is not this thought a sofa upon which you may stretch yourself and find that there is space enough for you to take your fullest ease? Your rest is not like the peace of the ungodly of whom it is said, "The bed is shorter than that a man may stretch himself upon it." Here is perfect rest for you—a couch long enough and broad enough for all your need! And if, perhaps, you should remember, O my Heart, that you have sin yet to overcome and corruption within you yet to combat, remember this night that Christ has put away all your sin, for He is "the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes" and that He has overcome the world on your behalf and said to you, "Be of good cheer." You have to fight, but your foe is a routed foe! It is a broken-headed dragon that you have to go to battle with and the victory is sure, for your Savior has pledged Himself to it! You may well take your leisure, for the past is blotted out and the future is secure! You are a member of Christ's body and as such you cannot die! You are a sheep of His pasture and as such He will never lose you! You are a jewel of His crown and as such He will never take His eyes or His heart off of you! Surely, then, you may take your leisure.

Let us also rest because we have received so much from our Master. Be sure to remember, O heart that would have leisure for love, that though you have many mercies to receive, there are not as many to come as you have already had! You have great things yet to learn, but not such great things as you have already been taught. He that has found Christ Jesus to be his Savior has found more than he will ever again find, even though he finds a Heaven, since even Heaven itself is in the loins of Christ and he that gets Jesus has got an eternity of bliss in him! If God gave you Christ, all else is small compared with the gift you already have. Take your leisure, then, and rejoice in your Lord, Himself, and in His Infinite perfections.

As to the Lord's work, we may well take leisure for love, because it is His work. It will go on rightly enough. It is His work, the saving of those souls. It is well that we are so eager—it were better if we were more eager. But just now we may lay even our eagerness aside, for it is not ours to save—it is His—and He will do it. He will soon give you to see of

the travail of His soul. Christ will not die in vain. Election's decree shall not be frustrated and Redemption's purpose shall not be turned aside. Therefore rest.

Besides, my Heart, what can you do, after all? You are so little and so altogether insignificant. If you worry yourself into your grave what can you accomplish? God did well enough before you were born and He will do well enough when you are gone Home. Therefore fret not yourself. I have sometimes heard of ministers that have been quite exhausted by the preparation of a single Sunday sermon. I am told, indeed, that one sermon on a Sunday is as much as any man can possibly prepare! It is such laborious work to

elaborate a sermon! And then I say to myself, "Did my Lord and Master require His servants to preach such sermons as that? Is it not probable that they would do a great deal more good if they never tried to do any such fine things, but just talked out of their hearts of the simplest Truths of His blessed Gospel!"

I turn to the Old Testament and I find that He told His priests to wear white linen, but He also told them never to wear anything that caused sweat, from which I gather that He did not want His priests in the Temple to be puffing and blowing and sweating and boiling like a set of Negro slaves. He meant that His service, although they threw their strength into it, should never be wearisome to them! He is not a taskmaster, like Pharaoh, exacting his tale of bricks and then again a double tale, giving his servants no straw wherewith to make them. No, but He says, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Therefore it seems to me that with all the work His people do—and they ought to do it so as to pour their whole life on His head like a box of precious spikenard, yet He did not mean them to go up and down about His service, stewing and worrying and killing their very lives out of them about this and that and the other!

They will do His service a great deal better if they will very often come and sit down at His feet and say, "Now I have nothing to do but to love Him—nothing to do but to receive His love into my soul." Oh, if you will seek after such quiet communion you will be sure to work with a holy might that shall consume you! First take in the strength by having these blessed times of leisure at the Savior's feet. "He that believes shall not make haste." He shall have such peace and restfulness, such quiet and calm, that he shall be in no hurry of fear or fright, but he shall be like the great Eternal who, with all that He does—and He works up to now and guides the whole universe which is full of stupendous wonders—yet never breaks the eternal leisure in which His supreme mind forever dwells!

Well, if we cannot keep up such leisure as that, at least let us have it tonight. I invite you, persuade you and entreat you, Beloved Mary and others like you, to do nothing but just enjoy the leisure of love and sit at Jesus' feet.

II. The second thing is LOVE IN ITS LOWLINESS. Love needs to spend her time with Christ. She picks her place and her place is down at His feet. She does not come to sit at the table with Him, like Lazarus, but she sits down on the ground at His feet.

Observe that love in this case does not take the position of honor. She is not a busy housewife, managing affairs, but a lowly worshipper who can only love. Some of us have to be managers for Christ—managing this and managing that—but perhaps love is most at home when she forgets that she has anything to manage. She leaves it to manage itself, or better still, she trusts the Lord to manage it all and just subsides from a manager into a disciple, from a worker into a penitent, from a giver into a receiver, from a somebody, which Grace has made her, to a nobody, glad to be nothing, content to be at His feet, to let Him be everything, while self sinks and sinks away. Do not let me only talk about this, Beloved, but let it be done! Love your Lord now. Let your hearts remember Him. Behold His robes of love, all crimsoned with His heart's blood. You shall take your choice whether you look up to Him on the Cross, or on the Throne. Let it be as suits your mind best tonight, but in any case say unto Him, "Lord, what am I, and what is my father's house, that You have loved me so?"

Sit near your Lord, but sit at His feet. Let such words as these be upon your lips, "Lord, I am not worthy to be called by Your Grace. I am not worthy to be written in Your Book of Life. I am not worthy that You

should waste a thought on me, much less that You should shed Your blood for me. I remember now what I was when You did first deal with me. I was cold, careless and hard towards You, but very wanton and eager towards the world, giving my heart away to a thousand lovers and seeking comfort everywhere except in You. And when You did come to me, I did not receive You. When You did knock at my door, I did not open to You, though Your head was wet with dew and Your locks with the drops of the night. And, oh, since through Your Grace I have admitted You and You and I have been joined together in bonds of blessed union, yet how ill have I treated You! O my Lord! How little have I done for You! How little have I loved You! I could faint in Your Presence to think that if You did examine me and question me, I could not answer You one of a thousand questions You might ask me. Your book accuses me of negligence in reading it. Your Throne of Grace accuses me of slackness in prayer. The assemblies of Your people accuse me that I have not been hearty in worshipping. There is nothing, either in Providence or in Nature, or in Grace, but what might bring some accusation against me! The world itself might blame me that my example so little rebukes it and my very family might charge that I do not bless my household as I should." That is right, dear Brother, dear Sister. Sink! Go on sinking. Be little. Be less. Be less still. Be still less. Be least of all. Be nothing!

Lift up your eyes from your lowly place to Him who merits all your praise. Say to Him, "But what are You, Beloved, that You should have thought of me before the earth was? That You should take me to Yourself to be Yours and then for me, should leave the royalties of Heaven for the poverties of earth and should even go down to the grave, that You might lift me up and make me to sit with You at Your right hand? Oh, what wonders You have worked in me and I am not worthy of the least of Your mercies! And yet You have given me great and unspeakable blessings. If You had only let me be a doorkeeper in Your house, I had been happy, but You have set me among princes! If You had given me the crumbs from Your table, as dogs are fed, I had been satisfied, but You have put me among the children! If You had said that I might just stand outside the gates of Heaven now and then, on gala days, to hear Your voice, it would have been bliss for me! But now You have promised me that I shall be with You where You are, to behold Your Glory and to be a partake of it, world without end." Do not such thoughts as these make you sink? I do not know how it is with you, but the more I think of the Lord's mercies, the more I grow downward. I could weep to think that He should lavish so much on one that gives Him no return at all, for so it seems to my heart that it is with me. What do you think of yourself? What is your faith, your love, your liberality, your prayers, your works? Dare you call them anything? Do you imagine that the Lord is pleased with your past? Would He not rather say to you, "You have bought Me no sweet cane with money, neither have you filled me with the fat of your sacrifices; but you have made Me to serve with your sins and wearied Me with your iniquities." So we sit down again at His feet and from that place we would not wish to rise. Love's leisure shall be spent in acts of humiliation. We will bow at the feet that were pierced for our redemption!

III. But now, in the third place, here is LOVE LISTENING. She is down there in the place of humility, but she is where she can catch each word as it falls, and she is there with one purpose. She wishes to hear all that Christ has to say and she wishes to hear it close at hand. She wants to hear the very tones in which He speaks and the accents with which He delivers each precept. She loves to look up and see those eyes which have such meaning in them and that blessed Countenance which speaks as much as the lips themselves. And so she sits there and she looks with her eyes toward Him as a handmaid's eyes are to her mistress. And then, with her ears and her eyes, she drinks in what He has to say.

Now, Beloved, I want you to do that. Say in prayer now, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears." And then with your ears open, hear what He says by His Word. Perhaps there is some text that has come home to

your soul today. Hear it. Hear it well. It would not be much use for anyone to try to preach a sermon in the center of the city in the middle of the day. If you stood near St. Paul's Cathedral with all that traffic going by and all that rumbling, roaring and shouting, why, the big bell, itself, might speak and you would hardly hear it! But when it is night and all is still, then you can hear the city clocks strike and you might hear a man's voice even though it was not a very strong one, if he went through the streets and delivered a message with which he had been entrusted. Well, our blessed Lord often takes advantage of those quiet times when the man has a broken leg and cannot get to work, but must be still in the hospital. Or when the woman is unable to get about the house to attend to her ordinary duties, but is so helpless that she cannot do anything else but think. Then comes the Lord and He begins to bring to our remembrance what we have done in days past—and to talk with us as He never has the opportunity of doing at any other time. But it is far more blessed to find time ourselves, so that the Lord will not need to afflict us in order to get us quickly at His feet! Oftentimes the Good Shepherd, in caring for the sheep, "makes us lie down," but He is glad when we come of our own accord that we may rest and listen to His Word.

Listen to what He is saying to you by Providence. Perhaps a dear child is sick at home, or you have losses and crosses in business. It may not seem to you as if these things come from your loving Lord, but they are perhaps the pressure of His hand to draw you to His side that He may tell you His secret. Perhaps it has been mercy that has come to you in another way. You have been prospered, you have been converted, you have had much joy in your family. Well, the Lord

has a voice in all that He does to His people, so listen tonight. If you listen you will be obliged to say, "What shall I render to the Lord for His benefits to me?"

Listen also to what the Spirit says in your soul. Listen, for it is not till you get your soul quiet that you can hear what the Spirit of God is saying. I have known such a clatter of worldliness or pride, or some other noise in the soul of man, that the still small voice of the Holy Spirit has been drowned to the serious detriment of the disciple. Now, I hope you have really done with all your cares and left them outside the Tabernacle tonight, that even the cares about your class in the Sunday school and about your preaching engagement tomorrow, and everything else, have been put aside and that now you are just sitting down at Jesus' feet and listening. While you listen in that fashion, in lowly spirit at His feet, you are likely to hear Him say some words to you which, perhaps, may change the whole tenor of your life! I do not know what God the Lord will speak, but, "He will speak peace to His people." Sometimes He speaks in such a way that a turbid life has become clear. A life of perplexity has become decided and distinctly happy. And a life of weakness has become a career of strengths. And a life that seemed wasted for a while has suddenly sprung up into eminent usefulness! Keep your ears open, Mary! Keep your ears open, Brother, and you will hear what Jesus Christ has to say!

But now let me say, while you are sitting and listening, you will do well to listen as much to Him as to what He has to say, for Christ Himself is the Word and His whole life is a voice! Oh, sit down, sit down and listen! I wish I had not to talk tonight and could sit down and do it for myself and just look up at Him, God over all, blessed forever, and yet Brother to my soul, a partaker of flesh and blood! This very fact, that He is Incarnate, speaks to me! That God is in human flesh speaks comfort to my soul, such as no words could ever convey! God in my nature! God become my Brother, my Helper, my Head, my All! Could not my soul leap out of the body for joy at the Incarnation if there were nothing else but that revealed to us?

Now let me look up again and see my Lord with His wounds, as Mary did not see Him, but as we now may—with hands and feet pierced, with scarred side and marred visage—tokens of the ransom price paid

in His pangs and griefs and death. Is it not amazing to see your sin forever blotted out and blotted out so fully, and blotted out by such means as this? Why, if there were not an audible word, those wounds are mouths which speak His love! The most eloquent mouths that ever spoke are the wounds of Christ. Listen! Listen! Every drop of blood says, "Peace." Every wound says, "Pardon."

Life. Eternal life."

And now see your Beloved once again. He is risen from the dead and His wounds bleed no more! Yes, He has gone into Glory and He sits at the right hand of God, even of the Father! It is well for you, dear Brother or Sister, that you cannot literally sit at His feet in that guise, for if you could only see Him as He is, I know what would happen to you—even that which happened to John when he saw Him with His head and His hair white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes as a flame of fire, and His feet as if they burned in a furnace. You would swoon away! John says, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

You cannot sit at those feet of Glory till you have left this mortal clay, or until it has been made like unto His glorious body! But you may in faith do so—and what will His Glory say to you? It will say, "This is what you shall receive. This is what you shall share. This is what you shall see forever and ever." He will say to you—even to you who mourn your insignificance and in lowliness sit at His feet—"Beloved, you shall partake of the Glory which the Father gave Me, even that which I had with Him before the world was. Soon, when a few more moons have waxed and waned, soon you shall be with Me where I am."

Oh, what bliss is this! Never mind Martha's frowns! Forget her for the moment and keep on sitting at Jesus' feet! She may come in and grumble and say that something is neglected—tell her she should not neglect it then, but now your business is not with plates or pots, but to do as your Master has permitted you to do, namely, to sit at His feet and listen to Him!

IV. So I close by saying, in the fourth place, that here is LOVE LEARNING. While she listened she was being taught, because she sat at Jesus' feet with her heart all warm—sitting in the posture of lowliness she was, as few could hear them—hearing words so as to spy out their secret meaning. You know the difference between a man's voice at a distance, saying something, and his being very near you. You know how much the face can say, the eyes can say and the lips can say—and there is many a deaf man that has heard another speak though he has never heard a sound—he has known the meaning by the very movement of the lips and the gleams of the countenance. Ah, and if you get into such near fellowship with Christ as to sit at His feet, you will get His meaning! When the letter kills others, you will see the secret meaning that is hidden within and you will rejoice.

She got at His meaning and then she was hearing the words so as to drink in the meaning. "They sit down at Your feet," says the old Scripture, "everyone shall receive of Your words." Beloved, that is a great promise—to receive of His Words. Some people hear the words but do not receive them—but there sat Mary where, as the words fell, they dropped upon her as snowflakes drop into the sea and are absorbed! So each word of Jesus dropped into her soul and became part and parcel of her nature—they fired and filled her very being!

What she learned she remembered. We see love learning what she will treasure up. Mary never forgot what she heard that day. It remained with her forever. It seasoned her whole life. The words of her Master were with her all the days she was watching. All the days she was waiting, she was waiting after they had been spoken. They kept her watching and waiting till, at last, love's instinct told her that the time was come and then she went upstairs where she had put away the choice ointment for which she spent her money.

She had laid it up and kept it till the time should come—and just before the Savior's death and burial she fetched it down, the gift which she had hoarded up for Him—and she poured it out in adoration.

As she sat at His feet, she resolved to love Him more and more. Love was learning to love better. As she had listened and learned, the learning had crystallized itself into resolves to be, among women, the most devoted to Him. Perhaps, little by little, she had laid aside this great price which she had paid for the spikenard. Be it as it may, it was dear to her, and she brought it down when the time was come and put it all on Him with a joyous liberality and love. Well, now, I want you to learn of Jesus after that fashion and, by-and-by, when the time comes, you, too, may do some deed for Christ that shall fill the house in which you dwell with sweet perfume. Yes, shall fill the earth with it, so that if man scents it not, yet God Himself shall be delighted with the fragrance you pour, out of love, upon His Son!

We are going to have Communion. Here are the emblems of His blessed body and blood and I hope they will help us to have nothing to do but to think of Him—nothing to do but to be lowly in His Presence—nothing to do but to listen to His words and to drink in His teaching.

But there are some here that do not love Him. It may be that God will lay you low by affliction in order to bring you to the feet of Jesus. Perhaps He will allow disaster and disappointment to overtake you in the world, to win you to Himself. If any of you have had this experience, or are passing through it just now, do not trifle with it, I pray you, for, while we are in this life, if the Lord comes to us to remind us of our sin, He does it in the greatness of His mercy and in order that He may bring salvation to us! It will be quite another thing, in the next life, if you die unrepentant and unforgiven. Then you may, indeed, dread the coming of God to bring your sin to remembrance! But while you are here, if the Lord is so speaking to you, incline your ears and listen to His voice, however harshly it may seem to sound in your ears. Even if He should strip you, be glad to be stripped by Him. If He should wound you, and bruise you, willingly give yourself up to be wounded and bruised by Him. Yes, even if He should slay you, rejoice to be slain by Him, for remember that He clothes those whom He strips, He heals those whom He wounds and He makes alive those whom He kills! So it is a blessed thing to undergo all those terrible operations of Law-work at the hands of the Most High, for it is in that way that He comes to those whom He means to bless.

I cannot preach to you, for the time has gone, but do you know, I think one of the most dreadful things that can ever be said of man is that he does not love Christ&—I should be sorry to enter on my list of friends the man that did not love his mother—no, I could not call him a man. Dead is that heart to every noble sentiment that loves not her that bore him! And yet there might be some justifiable cause to excuse even that. But not to love the Christ, the God that stooped to bleed for man—this is inexcusable! I dare not tonight utter, as my own, what Paul said, but, very pointedly and solemnly, I would remind you who love not Christ of it. Paul says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema Maranatha"—cursed at the coming. Sometimes when I think of my Lord and my heart grows hot with admiration of His self-denying love, I think I could almost invoke the imprecation on the head of him that does not, would not, could not love the Christ of God! But better than that I will ask His blessing for you and so I say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Here our sermon closes. And may God's blessing rest on it.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: PSALM 63; LUKE 10:38-42; JOHN 12:1-8.

I will read the 63rd Psalm first, as somewhat representing the state of heart into which I would we could all come tonight.

Psalms 63:1. O God, You are my God. Read that sentence how you will, it is unspeakably precious. If we say, "O God, You are my God," it brings out the possession which the Believer has in God. If we say, "O God, You are my God," it shows the greatness of the possession which we thus have in having this God to be our God forever and ever. And if we say "O God, You are my God," it leads us to think of God and not of His gifts as our chief good.

I, 2. Early will I seek You: my soul thirsts for You, my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see Your power and Your glory, so as I have seen You in the sanctuary. Long after the old times over again—for those times of Heaven upon earth—those special seasons when the Lord made the veil between us and Heaven to be very thin, indeed, and allowed us almost to see His face. "To see Your power and Your glory, so as I have seen You in the sanctuary." Well, then, let us go to the sanctuary again, or make the place where we are a sanctuary. Even the stony pillar may mark the site of Bethel and every spot may be hallowed ground.

3-5. Because Your loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus will I bless You while I live: I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. Satisfaction, absolute satisfaction! Satiety of every desire, full to the brim to the running over only because God is our God! We need nothing beyond that to make our mouth praise with joyful lips.

6, 7. When I remember You upon my bed, and meditate on You in the night watches. Because You had been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings will I rejoice. If I cannot see Your face, the shadow of Your wing shall be enough for me, for they shall shelter me from all harm and I will, yes, I will rejoice. Under the wings we are near the heart of God and he who knows God's heart of love must be glad.

8-10. My soul follows hard after You: Your right hand upholds me. But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foes. All our sins and all other things or beings that are the enemies of our soul! Christ has overcome and He will leave them upon the field.

II. But the king shall rejoice in God; everyone that swears by Him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped. Now a short passage in the New Testament about Mary, the sister of Martha.

Luke 10:38-40. Now it came to pass, as they went, that 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 word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him and said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me. Agitated, distressed Martha was afraid that something would go wrong with the dinner. She had too much on her hands—too much on her brain. That led her to blame her sister, Mary, and to try to get the Lord to blame her, too. There is a strong tincture of self-righteousness in Martha's speech.

41, 42. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, You are careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is necessary and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. I shall not tell her to leave My instruction, said our Lord, or to get up from the position which she occupies. No, you may go about your work, she is honoring Me as much as you are, if not more. This did not mean that Mary was perfect, or that Martha was wholly to be condemned. Both needed to learn much from Jesus and Mary was more in the way of it. Still Martha was doing good service. But you will see that Mary could do something for Christ, too, when the time came.

John 12:1, 2. Then Jesus, six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper, and Martha served: and Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him. Martha served—she had not given that up. She was a wondrous housewife and she did well to keep to her occupation. Lazarus had been dead and had been raised again. But he was not the center of interest—"He that raised him up was there."

3-7. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then said one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which would betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of My burying has she kept this. Somebody or other always seemed to object to Mary! If Martha does not do it, Judas will. To be found guilty of excess of love to Christ is such a blessed criminality that I wish we might be executed for it! It were sweet to be put to death for such a crime! It was that that Christ died of—He was found guilty of excess of love.

8. For the poor you always have with you; but Me you have not always. It is not every day that you can do something personally and distinctly for Christ, Himself, and therefore, whenever the occasion serves you, be sure to be there to avail yourself of it! True, you can serve Him indirectly by aiding His poor saints. Still, something for Him—for Him, Himself—should often be devised as Mary devised this service that day.

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