

'By the Fear of the Lord Men Depart From evil.'

- Proverbs 16:6

by Horatius Bonar

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the loving and authoritative call of Christ to His church, inviting her to rise, follow Him, and anticipate eternal glory.

Scripture: Proverbs 16:6, Song of Solomon 2:10

Topics: "Eternal Hope", "The Call of Christ"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the loving and authoritative call of the Lord Jesus Christ to His church, depicted as His bride. He describes how Christ's voice, filled with love and admiration, beckons His beloved to arise and depart from the evils of the world, promising a glorious future together. Bonar illustrates this call as not only a present invitation to holiness but also a future promise of eternal union and glory at Christ's second coming. The sermon encourages believers to heed this call, leaving behind sin and worldly distractions to embrace their identity as joint heirs with Christ. Ultimately, Bonar reminds the church that their true home and rest lie beyond this world, in the eternal presence of their Bridegroom.

Transcript

My beloved spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me. See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me." -Song of Songs 2:10-13

The speaker is the heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is his voice we hear; the voice which is as the sound of many waters; which spoke the "gracious words" the like of which were never uttered on earth. It is to his bride he speaks; "the bride, the Lamb's wife;" his chosen, redeemed, called, sanctified one; given him by the Father before the world began; his one spouse, his "love, his dove, his undefiled;" of whom it is written, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." Of the saints of all ages is this "bride," this "body," composed; all of them washed in the same blood, and clothed with the same righteousness.

1. It is the voice of LOVE. "My darling" is his name for his church. Other names of endearment he has for her, but this is chief. All in him betokens love. All that he is, and says, and does, intimates love; a love that passes knowledge; a love stronger than death and the grave; a love which many waters cannot quench nor the floods drown. It is in tender love that the Bridegroom thus addresses the Bride.

2. It is the voice of ADMIRATION. "My beautiful one" is his name for her. "You are all beautiful, my love, there is no spot in you." The "fairest among women," is his name for her, even as her name for him is the "chief among ten thousand." The heart of the Bridegroom is full of admiration for the beauty and perfection of his bride. She is "perfect through the loveliness which he has put upon her." He has ravished our heart, and we have ravished his!

3. It is the voice of AUTHORITY. The husband is the head of the wife; so is Christ the head of the church; and though it is love that speaks, it is authoritative love. "Arise," "come with me." Obedience is our true position; and no amount of love in him can ever alter this. It is not bondage; but it is obedience. It is not sternness on his part, yet it is authority. Our Bridegroom is Jehovah, Immanuel, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Shall we treat his voice as that of an inferior or an equal; or as the voice of him whom no amount of condescension and endearment, and admiration, can ever make less truly the Head of the church, Head of principalities and powers, the Head of the universe, of whom it is said to the church, "He is your Lord, worship him."

But when and in what circumstances does he speak these words to his church? Doubtless at his second coming, when calling her to the honor and glory prepared for her.

I. When he calls her up into the clouds to meet him in the air. He comes for her; and he finds her in the grave. He speaks to her as once before to Lazarus, Come forth! "You shall call, and I will answer; awake and sing, you that dwell in dust." He summons her from the tomb; he summons her up into the clouds, into his pavilion, where the marriage is celebrated- "Come up here." He speaks, she hears, and goes up to meet him for whom she had waited so long. "Arise, my darling."

II. When he calls her into the marriage chamber. The marriage feast follows the ascension. She goes in with him to the marriage; blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper; she goes in and sits down beside him as his bride, his queen, in gold of Ophir. "Arise, my darling."

III. When he calls her into the new Jerusalem. Out of the marriage supper they come. They rise up from the feast. They enter the city. He calls her into the city which he has prepared- the place which he had gone to prepare for her- the "many mansions." "Arise, my darling."

IV. When he calls her up to his throne. This is the final act of blessing. Come sit with me on my throne; come reign with me over a redeemed creation. Now the crown is put upon her head; and the royal robes invest her. The everlasting kingdom is now hers. She is heir of God, and joint heir with Christ Jesus. "Arise, my darling."

Thus he shall speak to his church in the day of his coming glory; for then shall this 'Song of Songs' be realized to the full. Meanwhile he speaks thus to us singly. As he said to Abraham in Ur, 'Get out of this land', so does he speak to each of his Abrahams, his chosen ones- 'Come out and be separate; arise, shine, for your light is come; arise, leave the world; become a pilgrim; arise, leave your sins, become holy; arise, take up your cross and follow me.'

He spoke thus to each of us at first; he speaks thus to each of us still each day; for each day is a repetition of the first message on his part, and the first obedience on ours. Arise- come away- follow me. He speaks as the Savior, and as the Bridegroom. Let us hear, let us follow. Upward, still upward; onward, still onward, is his beckoning. This present world is no place of tarrying; no congenial air or climate or company for the bride, the Lamb's wife. This is not our rest; this is not the resurrection-land; nor the marriage-hall, nor the

new Jerusalem, nor the kingdom. We must not tarry here. We have foretastes here, but that is all; the Lord's supper reminds us of the marriage supper. It is well to sit for an hour at the earthly table, but it is better to sit down forever at the eternal table. With such a summons and such a hope, let us not sleep as do others; let us awake and arise, and come away; away from sin, and death, and sorrow; away to the everlasting hills, the everlasting city, the everlasting glory. We are joint-heirs with him; partakers of his throne and crown!

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