

# J. Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret

by Hudson Taylor

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*The exchanged life is a reality where Christ lives in us and we live by faith in Him, bringing rest, trust, and strength in His presence.*

**Scripture:** John 15:4, Galatians 2:20

**Topics:** "Abiding in Christ", "The Exchanged Life"

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## Description

Hudson Taylor shares the profound secret of drawing upon the inexhaustible wealth of Christ for every need, emphasizing that true holiness and joy come from abiding in Him rather than striving for betterment. He recounts his journey from struggle and failure to a place of rest and sufficiency in Christ, realizing that faith is not about striving but resting in the Faithful One. Taylor highlights the transformative power of recognizing our oneness with Christ, which brings peace, strength, and the ability to overcome sin. He encourages believers to embrace their identity in Christ, understanding that His resources are always available to them. Ultimately, Taylor's message is one of liberation and joy found in the exchanged life where Christ lives in us.

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## Transcript

This is excerpted from the chapter on "The Exchanged Life" in Hudson Taylor's *Spiritual Secret* by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor (London: China Inland Mission, 1955, pp. 110-116, et passim). J. Hudson Taylor, M.D. was a missionary to China, and the founder of the China Inland Mission. Here is the inward joy and power that Hudson Taylor found in Christ. What was the secret? The simple, profound secret of drawing for every need, temporal or spiritual, upon "the fathomless wealth of Christ."

Yes, in me, in me He dwelleth--

I in Him and He in me!

And my empty soul He filleth

Now and through eternity.

-- Horatio Bonar

" . . . God made me a new man! God has made me a new man!"

Wonderful was the experience that had come in answer to prayer, yet so simple as almost to baffle description . . .

Do you know, I now think that this striving, longing, hoping for better days to come is not the true way to holiness, happiness or usefulness. It is better, no doubt, far better than being satisfied with poor attainments, but not the best way after all. I have been struck with a passage from a book . . . entitled Christ is All. It says,

"The Lord Jesus received is holiness begun; the Lord Jesus cherished is holiness advancing; the Lord Jesus counted upon as never absent would be holiness complete . . . .

"He is most holy who has most of Christ within, and joys most fully in the finished work . . . ."

. . . . To let my loving Savior work in me His will, my sanctification, is what I would live for by His grace. Abiding, not striving nor struggling; looking off unto Him; trusting Him for present power; . . . resting in the love of an almighty Savior, in the joy of a complete salvation, "from all sin"--this is not new, and yet 'tis new to me . . . . Christ literally all seems to me, now, the power, the only power for service, the only ground for unchanging joy . . . .

How then to have our faith increased? Only by thinking of all that Jesus is and all He is for us: His life, His death, His work, He Himself as revealed to us in the Word, to be the subject of our constant thoughts. Not a striving to have faith . . . but a looking off to the Faithful One seems all we need; a resting in the Loved One entirely, for time and eternity.

. . . . I looked to Jesus, and when I saw--oh, how joy flowed!

It was resting in Jesus now, and letting Him do the work--which makes all the difference. Whenever he spoke in meetings after that, a new power seemed to flow from him, and in the practical things of life a new peace possessed him. Troubles did not worry him as before. He cast everything on God in a new way, and gave more time to prayer.

It was the exchanged life that had come to him--the life that is indeed "No longer I." . . . It was a blessed reality "Christ liveth in me." And how great the difference!--instead of bondage, liberty; instead of failure, quiet victories within; instead of fear and weakness, a restful sense of sufficiency in Another.

Perhaps I may make myself more clear if I go back a little. . . . I prayed, agonized, fasted, strove, made resolutions, read the Word more diligently, sought more time for meditation--but all without avail. Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness sin oppressed me.

I knew that if only I could abide in Christ all would be well, but I could not. I would begin the day with prayer, determined not to take my eye off Him for a moment, but pressure of duties, sometimes very trying, and constant interruptions apt to be so wearing, caused me to forget Him. Then one's nerves get so fretted in this climate that temptations to irritability, had thoughts and sometimes unkind words are all the more difficult to control. Each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power. To will was indeed "present with me," but how to perform I found not.

Then came the questions, is there no rescue? Must it be thus to the end--constant conflict, and too often defeat? . . . . Instead of growing stronger, I seemed to be getting weaker and to have less power against sin; and no longer, for faith and even hope were getting low. I hated myself, I hated my sin, yet gained no

strength against it. I felt I was a child of God. His Spirit in my heart would cry, in spite of all, "Abba, Father." But to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless.

. . . . I knew I was powerless. I told the Lord so, and asked Him to give me help and strength. Sometimes I almost believed that He would keep and uphold me; but on looking back in the evening--alas! There was but sin and failure to confess and mourn before God.

. . . . And yet, never did Christ seem more precious; a Savior who could and would save such a sinner! . . . And sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord; but they were transitory, and at best there was a sad lack of power.

All the time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was--how to get it out. He was rich truly, but I was poor; He was strong, but I weak. I knew full well that there was in the root, the stem, abundant fatness, but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As gradually light dawned, I saw that faith was the only requisite--was the hand to lay hold on His fullness and make it mine. But I had not this faith.

I strove for faith, but it would not come; I tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply of grace laid up in Jesus, the fullness of our precious Savior, my guilt and helplessness seemed to increase. Sins committed appeared but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause, which could not or would not take God at His word. . . . I prayed for faith, but it came not. What was I to do?

When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes, and the Spirit of God revealed to me the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never known it before.

"But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One."

As I read, I saw it all! "If we believe not, he abideth faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed)! That He had said, "I will never leave thee."

"Ah, there is rest!" I thought. "I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has not He promised to abide with me--never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, . . . He never will.

. . . . As I thought of the Vine and the branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured direct into my soul! How great seemed my mistake in wishing to get the sap, the fullness out of Him! I saw not only that Jesus will ever leave me, but that I am a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The vine is not the root merely, but all--root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit. And Jesus is not that alone--He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for or needed. Oh, the joy of seeing this truth! I do pray that the eyes of your understanding too may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in Christ.

. . . It is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior, to be a member of Christ! Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and your left poor? Or your head be well fed while your body starves? . . . No more can your prayers or mine be discredited if offered in the name of Jesus (i.e., not for the sake of Jesus merely, but on the ground that we are His, His members) so long as we keep within the limits of Christ's credit--a tolerably wide limit!

The sweetest part, . . . is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest position He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient. . . . So, if God should place me in serious perplexity, must He not give me much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trials, much strength? No fear that His resources will prove unequal to the emergency! And His resources are mine, for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me.

And since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! . . . I am no better than before. In a sense, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be. But I am dead and buried with Christ--ay, and risen too! And now Christ lives in me, and "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

. . . . Do not let us consider Him as far off, when God has made us one with Him, members of His very body. Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonoring our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for true service is Christ.

And it is all so simple and practical!

"But are you always conscious of this abiding in Christ?" Mr. Taylor was asked many years later.

"While sleeping last night," he replied, "did I cease to abide in your home because I was unconscious of the fact? We should never be conscious of not abiding in Christ."

I change, He changes not;

The Christ can never die:

His truth, not mine, the resting place;

His love, not mine, the tie.

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