

October 20. 1678. the Workmanship of Christ: Or, the Sealing Image.

by Jane Lead

Jane Lead's sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and preserving the divine Workmanship of Christ in believers' lives through vigilance and spiritual renewal.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:9, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:10, 1 Peter 2:5, Revelation 2:26

Topics: "Christ's Workmanship", "Sanctification"

Description

Jane Lead preaches about the importance of overcoming and keeping Christ's work until the end, emphasizing the need to focus on what Christ has wrought in us, rather than our own righteousness which is fleeting. She describes Christ's work as a finely crafted piece, a representation of His workmanship that needs to be carefully preserved and adorned with beauty. Lead highlights the rarity and significance of being engraved with Christ's living image, requiring constant watchfulness to protect it from defacement and destruction.

Transcript

This Word in the 2d. of the Revelation, was called over in me, He that overcometh and keepeth my Work unto the end, to him I will give Power over the Nations. It was a passage that I had not taken notice of: the Opening of which was very significant. Enquiring what was meant by this Work, it was thus given into me; It is not enough to keep my Sayings, and to observe my Words, but look to what I have wrought. The Emphasis lies in Christ's appropriating it to be his Work: not what is the Creatures. For that would not be worth taking care to keep it up, whose Righteousness is as the Morning Dew that passeth away; therefore to be little set by: because they are such, as will never pass through the burning Element. But now to define what the Lord Christ means by his Work (which must needs be a fine wrought Piece, which no other can parallel with, being one entire Work) this, word of encouragement came to me. The Grand and Eternal mystery of all Truth is like a Tree full ripe, that would be unburthened of its Fruit, to those who hunger after it. Now then seek on (saith the word of Life:) from Within the Truth of Righteousness will spring. Whereupon there was the Figure of a White Stone, and a wonderful and perfect Image Engraven upon it. I was carried in the Spirits Eye to see this, and charged was here to wait, to behold its further Ornaments; which by an Artificial Hand was put on, as an Embroidering with leaves of Gold. This (said the Spirit) is a Representation of the Workmanship of Christ the Lord: that carefully is to be kept up in its Beauty and Ornaments. Where ever Christ hath after this manner drawn his own living Image, not as a

dead Picture, but a Life-moving Creature; This requires all watchfulness to preserve from defacing. It is no common nor ordinary framed work, which doth come to this degree of a Christ-formation. This is matter and substance beyond all of Light, Knowledge, and whatever can be declared. This is what is wrought in God, and after the express Image of the Deity, of an absolute New make: Wrought out by the skillful hand of Wisdom, as a meet Tabernacle, that God will adorn with Glory. This world of charge does belong only to such, as are thus far wrought upon; which upon examination is very rare to find such an Engraving in every part thus fitly framed, so as to make up a compleat Heavenly building.

It was shewn also and testified, where this could be witnessed in any, in the feeling Life, (beyond all dead Workmanship) it would soon come to know their own hand of might to hold the Rod of Iron, that should dash the Nations, who are joined to the Beast, to make War within and without our Gates. But now this is not sufficient, that we are Engraven and Carved upon, though indeed it is the foundation-Matter. Yet except we hold out all the suffering part, for resistency against this singular Workmanship, (which is so expressly drawn after the Lord our Righteousness) it is not enough. For strong assaults and batteries to weaken and make this Building to shatter and fall, if possible, will not be wanting. Therefore needful it is, an Hourly Watch to keep over what is thus fashioned and wrought: or else as far it is gone, it may suffer loss in respect of those promised immunities of Dominion, through the gift of the Morning-Star. Which hath Power to bind and loose the Starry Constellations, that hath born such Rule in the now visible Creation, in this old Region. Now that we may come to be Conquerors over all this Elementary Life, we are instructed to keep and hold fast, what is of God's Nature and Likeness, already wrought, that so we endanger not the losing of the reward, that is so great worthy and dureable, as there is no mention thereof to be made, it cannot be by Tongue or Pen declared. The Spirit doth expressly shew it, that no one can be excused from being proved and tried, by what can stir and rise out of the circumference of the Earthly Center, which will break out with all violence. But the steady Mind, through Faith and Love in God's Workmanship, shall overcome. For where the Foundation of God's Sealing-Image is found, it goeth forth very strong. It is not only an invisible Spirit, but a mystical compacted Body, that hath divine Faculties and Powers to be its fortitude and guard, if wisely kept in exercise. What shall against it prevail?

But it may be Queried by some, who as Strangers yet may be to this inward Workmanship, If it is such a singular framed Piece, as no other Ingredients or Matter in it is to be but what is from the Divine Nature of JESUS, who is it to be attained to, and kept: and how is it to be distinguished and know from all other Workmanships?

Ans. This is worth the giving some Light of Evidence unto, according to sound Judgment, in the Revelation of the Spirit, and the Witness-feeling of this new Formation wrought in my own Particular, through great Love-Benediction. For the Holy Watcher (who well knew what was wrought in me) did pronounce the Solemn Charge, that I should be all careful and vigilant to keep to the very end what was after God thus wrought. Which Word extends not alone to me, but to all such who can the same Risen-Life of the LORD, upon examination find to be restored to them. Which will shew it self to be God's own Workmanship, by what the Spirit demonstrates in these Particulars.

The First is. Hereby we do know what is wrought in God: It is discoverable by an Undoing what is of the Serpently Seed, in conjunction with the degenerated Nature that took its Lapse or Descent from the First Adam. For now from this is brought forth a strange Evil and Sinful Birth. And while that liveth, and acteth its part, according to the Brutish Gross Sensuality, as the Offspring of the Earthly Image; there is no place for God's Work to be manifested. Therefore here comes, in order to Building, first throwing down, and Rooting and Razing up the accursed Jericho-Foundation. There is nothing to be spared hereof: every wild

Plant of the depraved Nature's Properties is to be plucked up by an irreversible Sentence. All, even all old Things dissolved are to be, in order to the new Creation: which of a clear, pure, and unmixed Matter is to be the Work of God again in the Creature. A thorough Desolation there must be upon the whole introduced Principle, as it consisteth of the Out-Birth of a Rational Life that Deviated is from the high Principle of its Primitive Essence in God before Time was. A Fiery Purgation of all this evil Matter is that which doth precede the Christ-Formation, as one intire Body and Spirit. Here is to be the true and total Death and Crucifixion of the stubborn potent Earthly-Birth: Which to a violent Death is decreed by him that saith, Behold I come to make all New; and am come to do such a Work, as shall differ from all Works and Workmanship, that in this fallen Creation are.

2dly, When thus the Accursed Thing is removed away, then a perfect new Birth is begotten of GOD, in a Virgin-Humanity, so fitted and prepared by that WORD, which calleth that which is not in a visible Matter, to be brought forth sublime, and highly Magical: according to the Creating-Fiat, that giveth a God-Existency in a Formal Body; That after some space of time shall be changed into a subtil and refined Nature of Spirituality also, according as the Sapphire Flames of this pure Birth-Spirit work all through. Now this is the true evidence whereby we do come to know the Work to be of God, when only his Life and Nature doth clearly and fully act us: and that all in us stands in Harmony and agreement thereunto; and whatsoever is averse and contrary is swallowed up into the Unity of this Heaven-born Life; That now in a Superiour Nature doth manifest it self, in all, and every circumstance, according to the example of our Lord JESUS. Whose Workmanship we are, to accomplish (on this very Earth) the great Works and Deeds, that none other can do: but such as are new made and fashioned, do keep up this Spiritual Frame, until the Lord with his Reward do come.

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