

OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON.

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.”—PSALM xxvii. 4.

“**I** WANT to be familiar with the place where the Lord is at home” is the thought of the believer to whom He is precious, and, as it was with David, amidst the many occupations of life one great desire holds sway in his heart, and that is to be in the constant enjoyment of the Lord’s company. “My soul thirsteth for Thee,” David could say, “my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is ; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.” (Psalm lxiii. 1, 2.)

How slowly we learn that this fair earth, though it may furnish all that can gratify nature, is indeed a dry and thirsty land to one who has tasted heavenly things, and often our Lord must hide its attractions from us that our thoughts may be more at leisure for Himself.

We may see God’s power and beneficence in nature, and trace His acts in history ; but if we thirst for the beauty and glory of the Lord, we must inquire in His temple, and see Him in the

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sanctuary. There, where all is divinely suited to Himself, and the fragrance of Jesus' name pervades all, we have boldness to enter by the blood of the Lamb once slain, and learn, not God's works alone, but His ways—Himself. Not only what He has done, but *why* He has done it. Not alone what He purposes in grace, but why He has purposes of grace at all. And there to worship; the heart overflowing as it discovers what our God must be to so desire our company, and to fit us in such a divine way for His.

“Not to shield my path from sorrows
Is His care and thought,
Not to make the dark world brighter
Where Himself is not.
But to have me *there* beside Him
In the love and light,
There to tell my heart how precious
Am I in His sight.”

Christ is our life, its source, its sustenance, and its object; and the longer we tread our pilgrimage pathway the more really we know our need of Him. It was not at the beginning of his course, but when nearing the journey's end, that the great apostle of the Gentiles expressed his deep longing to KNOW HIM. Not wealth, nor ease, nor honour, was his desire, but more of Christ.

Communion with God is not merely a doctrine, it is a fact; not a sentiment, but a reality. A correspondence in thought and feeling with the eternal God. Reader, in what way does this com-

munion influence your life and conduct? How could you bear the thought of having to pass one week out of communion? May God's people find His company more than ever a necessity to them, and precious seasons of intercourse with Him a constant enjoyment in every-day life.

Men astonish their fellows by wonderful periods of fasting. May not angels wonder at the way some Christians can go on for days without even desiring the bread of life?

The existence of a personal intercourse with God will alone sustain spirituality. No increase of intelligence or zeal will have the same effect. If we trace effects to their real causes, we shall find spirituality is the direct result of communion with the Father and the Son. How is it that we know so little of this wonderful reality which yet we hear so much about?

With the Lord Jesus no earthly distractions could interrupt His constant dwelling in the Father's bosom. Though angry tempests might rage around Him, a divine calm reigned within. Even when His favoured people were plotting their Messiah's death, He could speak to His disciples of His joy and peace, which He would give to them.

About what subjects are you in fellowship with the Father and the Son? This may be an unusual question, but it is an important one. It is possible to be in full fellowship with the Lord about some

of His interests, and yet care nothing at all about others equally dear to Him. Do I ever little value what He values greatly? Do I highly esteem anything which is abomination in the sight of God? Can we be content that there should be a difference of opinion between God and ourselves?

I need not ask, Do I like this saint? but, How has the Lord shewn His love for him? Not, Will this interest *me*? but, Does it interest *God*? I should like to think that the Lord can count on my sympathy with *all* His interests. Whatever has His attention deserves mine.

The Father's counsels and affections all centre in the Lord Jesus Christ. He looks upon that well-beloved Son with a perfect, unfailing satisfaction, and can say, "In Him I have found My delight"; while the believer responds, "All my fresh springs are in Thee."

It was to make known the Father that Jesus lived amongst men. He would have us know that Father as He knows Him; and with what holy joy He could speak of the Father's home and love and glory to which He was guiding the pilgrim footsteps of His people.

If we are thus called to share all the Son's joy in the Father, and the Father's delight in the Son, do the transient interests of time so engross us that this communion is little valued

and seldom sought? Does our Lord ever sadly turn from our door because we are too busy to heed His knocking or want His company?

For a little while we may know the fellowship of our Lord's rejection—the riches of the reproach of Christ; but soon we shall have fellowship in His glory. The distractions which hinder our joy in God will be forgotten, and our oft failing faith be needed no more. We shall be for ever at home; but all that makes heaven home to us will be that “Where I am,” which has made His presence here a foretaste of heaven to our souls. At last we shall *see* our Lord, whom we have loved with a love begotten of His own, and the Saviour's glad words of welcome will fill our hearts with rapture; but, as we essay to join in the chorus of adoration to the Father, above all the voice of Jesus will sound a deeper, richer note of joy as He leads His people's praises in the great congregation.

“Here, who follows Him the nearest
Needs must walk alone;
There, like many seas the chorus,
Praise surrounds the throne.
Here, a dark and silent pathway;
In those courts so fair,
Countless hosts, yet each beholding
‘Jesus only’ there.”

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