

# Christ's Work for Mankind

Christians are engaged in a warfare. The church militant is not the church triumphant. In his onward march toward heaven, the follower of Christ must fight at every step. Our adversary is the one who once stood in the heavenly courts as the first of the covering cherubs. The ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God once rested upon him continually. But, not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he began to covet the glory with which the Father had invested the Son. Lucifer desired to be first in heaven. Thus he introduced sin into the universe. Why sin was permitted, no man can explain. A satisfactory reason for the existence of sin cannot be given. Nor can any reason be given for jealousy, evil surmising, covetousness, and idolatry. No man can reason out such things. {Ms57-1902.4}

It was because of the existence of sin that Christ came to this earth. He covenanted with God to lay aside His kingly crown and royal robe, clothe His divinity with humanity, and come to the earth to stand at the head of humanity and bear testimony against the assertion of the price of darkness that man could not live without sin. The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, descended step by step to the depths of humiliation. {Ms57-1902.5}

If we should ask Isaiah who Jesus of Nazareth is, He would tell us that He is the first and the last. Of Him he declares: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." [Isaiah 9:6.] Such are the titles of the One who came to our world to save the fallen race. {Ms57-1902.6}

Christ came to subject Himself to all the temptations wherewith man is beset. In His human nature He suffered all the trials and disappointments, the humiliations and afflictions, that man suffers. In our behalf Christ took humanity upon Himself, and stood at the head of humanity. In His humanity He touched humanity; in His divinity He laid hold of the throne of God. {Ms57-1902.7}

Christ came as the representative of His Father, to reveal to the world His Father's character. {Ms57-1902.8}

By giving Himself, Christ offered a complete sacrifice, so that we, by believing on Him, might become sons and daughters of the Most High. What are we willing to do in return for Christ's infinite sacrifice? What sacrifice are we willing to make, that we may be sons and daughters of God, partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust? {Ms57-1902.9}

When I see men and women desirous of worldly pleasure and ambitious for worldly honor, I think of the One who sacrificed so much in order to show them what they may become through His grace and strength. Will those for whom He has died do what they must do to be saved? Will they learn from His life lessons in regard to the character that they must form in order to be prepared to unite with the loyal, holy family that shall rise from the grave and enter in through the gates into the city? {Ms57-1902.10}

When the Pharisees asked the disciples why their Master ate with publicans and sinners, Christ, overhearing the question, turned to His accusers, and, in the dignity of His mission, said: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." [Matthew 9:13.] In His life He has given us a representation of what a repentant sinner may become. He was pure and undefiled. From His lips escaped no word that could leave a stain upon His character. All through the Scriptures He has given us assurances of what we may become. {Ms57-1902.11}

My brother, my sister, do you desire to be a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King? Do you desire to share in the final reward of the faithful? In order to become sons and daughters of God, we must begin work just where we are. It matters not what our surroundings are: if we look to Christ for counsel and strength, we shall be able to withstand every temptation. {Ms57-1902.12}

“Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.” If the affections are set on earthly things, the life is tainted and corrupted. “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” [Colossians 3:2-4.] Precious promise! {Ms57-1902.13}

I am so thankful that Christ came in poverty. No one can say, “He knows nothing about the trials and hardships of poverty.” Although He knew that He was the Majesty of heaven and the Redeemer of the lost race, He worked for many years at the carpenter’s trade. From childhood He did His part toward sustaining a family living in poverty. And in His daily work He taught lessons in regard to the perfecting of character. In every detail of the work connected with the construction of buildings—in every stroke He made, in every piece He prepared and joined to other pieces—He showed the care and exactness with which character should be built. It is He who inspired Paul to declare, “Ye are God’s building.” [1 Corinthians 3:9.] {Ms57-1902.14}

The companions of Jesus often said to Him: “Why need you be so particular? It is unnecessary to work in this way. You could just as well work <with less exactitude> and save time.” Instead of arguing with them, Jesus answered their criticisms by singing. He would begin to sing one of the Psalms in which David taught that faithfulness and integrity must mark the character. The spirit of the song affected the hearts of those who were with Jesus, and almost before they realized what they were doing, they caught the strain and joined with Him in singing. And when a quarrel arose, instead of stopping to argue or to justify His course, Jesus began to sing. Soon His companions would forget their differences of opinion and their angry words. Those who a few moments before had felt provoked with Him or with one another, now joined in singing the hymn of praise. {Ms57-1902.15}

By pursuing the same course, we may hide in Christ. Then we shall be partakers of the divine nature. {Ms57-1902.16}

The fifth of Romans is full of instruction. We read: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Verse 1.] If we do not have this peace, we are in danger of becoming irritable. Brethren and sisters, for Christ’s sake I plead with you to cease fretting and scolding. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I beseech of you to stop and ask yourself, “Am I a Christian?” If you are fretting, scolding, cheating, or lying, you are not a Christian, but are exerting a counterinfluence. {Ms57-1902.17}

The Lord desires that you shall be saved. He is willing to save to the uttermost all who come unto Him. It is through Him that “we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” [Verse 2.] Through Him we have access to heaven’s treasure house. We have no semblance of an excuse for neglecting to draw supplies of grace from this treasure house. With faith centered in Christ, we, as the church militant, are able to stand unmoved by the assaults of the enemy. Continuing to resist the enemy, we shall gain strength and finally become the church triumphant. {Ms57-1902.18}

“Stand, and rejoice.” [Verse 2.] {Ms57-1902.19}

In the daily life we come in contact with those who are full of pettishness. But there is a way to deal with such persons. We are enjoined to “stand, and rejoice.” [Verse 2.] By obeying this injunction we shall be able always to gain the victory. When some one speaks fretfully, simply “stand, and rejoice.” Do not speak one word in reply. If the lips

are opened to speak a word or two, a whole volume of words will flow out. Keep silent. This is the easiest way to gain the victory. Silence will put to shame the one who is full of wrath. I know the worth of this advice. I have proved its value. Follow it, and you will find that you can greatly mortify Satan by keeping the tongue with all diligence. When brought into contention with others, those who “stand, and rejoice,” will not dishonor God in word or action. {Ms57-1902.20}

“Rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” [Verse 2.] We should always rejoice. When our way is crossed, when we meet with criticism and condemnation, or when the outlook is forbidding, let us sing, even if it be one of the simplest of songs. We can sing, “When the Mists Have Rolled Away,” or some other inspiring song that will lift the thoughts from self. {Ms57-1902.21}

The talent of speech is a wonderful gift which should be used only to glorify God. Words spoken in reply to those who are angry usually act as a whip, lashing the temper into fury instead of soothing it. But a song will subdue feelings of anger. Heavenly angels will influence hearts and join in the song because of the victory gained. {Ms57-1902.22}

Not only are we to rejoice, but we are to “glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Wonderful, wonderful love! “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” [Verses 3-9.] {Ms57-1902.23}

The sixth of Romans is closely related in thought to the third of Colossians, where we read: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.” [Verses 3, 1.] In Romans we read: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. ... But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” [Romans 5:12, 20, 21; 6:1, 2.] Brethren and sisters, can you answer this? How can a man dead to sin live the life of a sinner? {Ms57-1902.24}

“Baptized Into Jesus Christ” {Ms57-1902.25}

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?” This is a familiar symbol. “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death.” [Verses 3, 4.] We are not to be buried by baptism while we are alive to sin. We regard with horror the burial of a live person. But how many who have never died to sin have gone through the form of burial with their Lord in baptism! {Ms57-1902.26}

Repentance, faith, and baptism are the three steps requisite to conversion. Christ Himself was baptized of John. When John forbid Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?” Jesus answering said unto him, “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” [Matthew 3:14, 15.] {Ms57-1902.27}

The ceremony of baptism is a most solemn one. Men and women are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This signifies that the three greatest representatives of heavenly authority behold the baptismal service and hear the vows that are made by human agents to walk henceforth in newness of life. {Ms57-1902.28}

In taking the baptismal vows, man unites with the highest powers in the heavenly courts. He covenants to live the life that Christ lived while on this earth. And Christ, on His part, fulfils every promise that He has made in His Word. He molds the character of every one who follows in His footsteps. Wonderful, wonderful is His work in behalf of sinners! {Ms57-1902.29}

We are buried with our Lord in baptism, but we are not left in the grave. We “are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” [Romans 6:4.] {Ms57-1902.30}

“If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” [Verse 5.] As Christ came forth from the rent sepulcher of Joseph, He proclaimed in triumph, “I am the resurrection and the life.” [John 11:25.] Never again is He to lie in the grave. To every believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. This is typified in the baptismal ceremony. We are buried in the likeness of Christ’s death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, henceforth to live a new life. And when at last we enter the portals of the city of God, we shall be welcomed by the One who prayed, “I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory.” [John 17:24.] {Ms57-1902.31}

In order to represent Christ aright, we must reach a high standard, “knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” [Romans 6:6-8.] {Ms57-1902.32}

As I meditate on the privileges of the Christian life, I cannot refrain from exclaiming, “Oh, how precious they are!” I am so thankful to the Lord for His goodness. As I consider what we may escape and what we may become, I am amazed that so few choose to follow the Master. {Ms57-1902.33}

To us the promise is: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” [Matthew 7:7, 8.] We have no excuse for giving way to doubt, despondency, and despair. In the gift of Christ all the treasures of heaven have been placed at our command. If we by faith lay hold of God’s promises, we shall be able to walk in the Saviour’s footsteps. {Ms57-1902.34}