



*More  
Abundant  
Life*

Four Words for Christian Growth  Charles E. Orr



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**More Abundant Life**  
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Charles E. Orr

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Feed thou today upon the Bread of Life;  
Be strong to conquer 'midst the raging strife;  
Help other struggling souls to win today,  
For thou shalt never pass again this way.

Feed thou today upon the holy Book;  
Be sure to make thy path without a crook;  
Lend thou a hand to others lest they stray,  
For thou shalt never pass again this way.

O soul of mine, be ever wide awake;  
Do all within thy pow'r, for Jesus' sake,  
To feed some hungry, fainting soul today,  
For thou shalt never pass again this way.



***“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”*** (Jn. 10:10).

These words of Jesus furnish the foundation on which this booklet is built. Because of sin, the great Judge of all men had passed the sentence of death upon the whole race of man (Rom. 5:12). Jesus came to revoke this death sentence and to bring us back to life. He says to all, ***“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life”*** (Jn. 5:24). Passing from death unto life is a wonderful experience, and millions have experienced it. Nature furnishes many an illustration of this marvelous transition. We see it all around us in the springtime. We behold it when we see the caterpillar pass from its coma state in the chrysalis and emerge into the butterfly life. For us, Jesus calls this experience being ***“born again”*** (Jn. 3:7).

The angel who spoke to the virgin Mary said, “***Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus***” (Lk. 1:31). He told her that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and the power of the Highest would overshadow her, and Christ would be born of her. She willingly yielded her life to this wonderful and miraculous work. The Holy Spirit took the seed of God and brought it in contact with the seed of the woman and Christ was born of her.

All of us are highly favored of God, for He sends the Holy Spirit to visit each one. And all those who yield their will and life to Him will find their spirit brought in contact with that power of the Highest, and Christ will be formed in them. Certainly it is a marvelous experience—and it is the one and only way to get possession of that life that Jesus came to give. This is the all-important event for your life and mine. Unless we be born of the Spirit it would be far better had we never been born of the flesh.

In the words of our foundation text, Jesus teaches not only that we can have life, but also that we can have it more abundantly. It is to be constantly increasing. When we receive this life, if it is allowed to develop according to its nature, we will daily grow up into the more abundant life. The purpose of this little book is to help you to grow into more abundant life as the days come and go. May God bless it to do so.

Our spirit must be brought into contact with the Spirit of God that we might have life. This is what constitutes a Christian. Our spirit must be kept in close contact with God’s Spirit that we may retain this life. Just as the branch must constantly receive the living sap from the vine, even so we must receive a constant flow of the life of God through Christ into our soul that we may live and grow. Jesus is the link uniting God and man. He touches God on the one hand, and man on the other, and thus in and through Christ we are kept in

adjustment with God. In Christ we are made new creatures; we have a new life, and a fresh start in humanity. Christianity is not a cold, staid, formal, and exact exterior, but an inward life force. The external may by culture be brought into quite a degree of perfection, but this will only be delusive except it flows joyously from the perfect life of Christ in the soul. We may be very zealous for the cause of God, and this zeal may serve as a cloak to hide the coldness of the inward life. God wants the worker more than the work. He wants our love more than our labor, our hearts more than our hands. His kingdom is advanced far more by what we *are* than by what we *do*. We may *do* ever so much, but if our doing is not the outflowing of the cheering, joyous, hopeful life of Christ at the center of the heart, our work will be destructive instead of constructive. If we would reproduce the life of Christ in our life, the inner spiritual union with God must be sustained and intensified in our souls.

Those who walk close with God tell us that there is a woe-ful lack of spiritual power among the people of God today. That there are but few who enter into that spirit of prayer that filled the life of Jesus in those early morning hours when praying in that solitary place. Yet a few rare souls are found panting after God, and who are lifted up by grace into the atmosphere of a sincere, devout life. There are those who know how to leave all earthly things behind and in the Spirit find heavenly sweetness in a quiet hour with God. These are earth's choicest jewels upon which God has set His love. These are the souls that make God their first end, and their service to God their second end, and because of this they keep themselves unwearied and unworried in their service. They seek to be good more than do good, for they know that except they be good their doing is not as good as it should be. These are the souls that go apart from the world and in the solemn

hush of prayer fill their souls with God, and then every act of their service is fragrant with His presence.

All life was created with an end in view. God has garnered in every seed hidden principles of life which will develop after its kind. There are forces in all life which strive to bring that life to its designed end. There is power in life. It is a mistake to seek after power; it exposes the soul to deception. Seek after life. The measure of your spiritual life is the measure of your spiritual power. Where there is little life there is little power. If you do not have power with God in prayer, if you cannot lift your soul up into the presence of God and commune with Him in closest intimacy, you are wanting in spiritual life. Something has hindered the development of those life-forces born into your soul at regeneration. If you are not living a victorious life amid the annoyances and provocations of everyday life, you need more of that abundant life which Jesus came to give. You are allowing something to prevent the inner life from developing as it should. The contact with God is broken at some point; the channel is clogged somewhere. Maybe there has entered into your soul an inclination to go after earthly things. Maybe you are adorning the body for its own sake. Maybe you are getting worried and fretted by some of earth's losses, or seek enjoyment from the creature rather than the Creator. O soul, flee earthly things, and lay hold on eternal life.

A seed is sown in the ground. It springs into life. There are forces in that life that push it upward through the crust of earth. Every day it is on its march toward the end for which it was created. Those life principles bear it onward and upward instinctively to its designed end. It rises into the stalk, the blade, the tassel, and the full ear. The soul in which has been born the life of Christ contains those principles and forces that struggle for growth and development. They are ever



reaching up and taking hold on that which will bring them to maturity. Life links itself with life. The soul that has the life of Christ is linked with Christ and longs to rise to the fulness of Him. That life contained within the eggshell has power to burst open the door of its prison house and come forth to a higher state of existence. The soul in which has sprung up the life that Jesus came to give, is imprisoned here in the body of flesh. While here, it is ever struggling for that higher liberty for which its life calls. Heavenly life in the soul is not reaching out after earthly things; it is ever reaching out after that which will carry it on to the fulness of its type, which is Jesus. That soul is not spending much time, nor is it so greatly interested in its “**earthly house.**” It groans and longs for that “**house which is from heaven**” (2 Cor. 5:1-2). There is a glorious liberty awaiting the children of God (Rom. 8:21). It is that liberty the soul will have when it lays aside this mortal body to be clothed with an immortal body—when this vile body shall be changed and “**fashioned like unto His glorious body**” (Php. 3:21).

O child of God, make sure that you have left all earthly things behind, and are reaching forth to those things that are before; that you are pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Php. 3:13-14). That “**high calling of God**” is the call to that glorious body in which you will not be seeing through a glass darkly, and shall know even as you are known (1 Cor. 13:12). Give diligent heed to cultivate your life. See that you are rising higher every day into more abundant life. Beware lest you admit something into your life that would hinder the growth of your spiritual life. Give full liberty to those principles and forces of eternal life in your soul, that they be not hindered in their reaching out after God. Give full freedom to the Holy Spirit to work around in your heart producing in you that which is well-pleasing in God’s sight (Heb. 13:21). See that your spirit is ever the throne room of

God, and that you enter often into that innermost seclusion and fertilize your spiritual life by His virtues. If you would be constantly growing up into more abundant life, you must hide your life with Christ in God. You must dwell with the Most High in that secret place where the voices of the world cannot disturb the sweet, solemn hush of your soul's communion with eternal things, and where there is such a sacred calm that you can hear the whisperings of the Holy Spirit as He is instilling every thought and desire into your life. O man of God, flee earthly things; go often into that solitary place and sup in holy communion with the gentle Lover of your soul.



Do you desire more abundant life? Jesus' words are the words of life, so take heed to these four words He spoke, and make them part of your daily life:

# “Come”

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*Come unto me... and I will give you rest. —Mt. 11:28*

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To find life and rest, the sinner must first come to Jesus. Yet He said to the Jews, “**Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life**” (Jn. 5:40). Reader, is that true with you?

Coming to Jesus to obtain life is only the starting point in the race along the narrow way to a fuller life in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1-4). After you have first received life, you must continue coming to Jesus for the daily bread of life. In a child, the physical life forces call loudly for such food as will enable them to develop into higher and stronger life. The same is true of your spiritual life. It seeks after the necessary nourishment to expand into more vigorous life. This is the only way to soul rest. If your spiritual life is denied being fed for even a day, you will suffer some loss of the full assurance necessary to perfect rest. The growing child is a heavy feeder. The healthy, growing soul requires much at the bosom of God. It can become so habituated to regular hours for feeding that it will experience an unrest if the time is passed by. This is true in the life of a child, and why should it be less true in the spiritual life? And if regular feeding of the child is necessary to the best development of its life, why is not the regular feeding of the soul necessary to its development? We beseech you, do not neglect the proper feeding of your spiritual life.

What is the best soul food? Jesus says, “**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God**” (Mt. 4:4). As the body feeds on bread, so the soul on the Word of God. It was in those early morning hours in

the solitary place and those all night on the hillsides in prayer to the Father that Jesus fed His spiritual life. If it was needful for Him to do this, can it be less for us? Jesus says to us, “**As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me**” (Jn. 6:57). The words “**hath sent me**” teach us that Christ lived constantly in the knowledge that He was sent of God, and that He must always be about His Father’s business. To do this He must live by the Father—He must live by His Father’s strength, by His Father’s will, by His Father’s life. To feed on Christ is to not live of ourselves, but for Christ to live in us. We live by His strength, we triumph by His power, we pray in His name, and we do all things for His glory.

To be constantly growing into the more abundant life there must be a prompt obedience to His every command to “come.” If you would walk on the water—if you would keep above the cares of the world and the storms of life that would pull you under—you must heed His word, “Come.” Christ has the words of eternal life. In those words are just such nourishment as our spiritual life demands for its growth and development. “**As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby**” (1 Pet. 2:2). Moffatt renders this, “**Thirst for the pure, spiritual milk to make you grow up to salvation.**” The word “salvation” here means maturity, or to the fulness of Christ. To neglect feeding on the word of God is to neglect cultivating the soul, and the consequence is to soon become weak and powerless in the Christian life. To have power to live a holy life the word of God must be brought into the heart (Psa. 119:11). The words of Jesus must be eaten in the heart, digested, assimilated, and injected into our soul-life. When the oxygen in the air is taken into the lungs and there injected into the blood it kindles a fire and fills us with a physical energy. There are just such elements in Christ’s word

as are adapted to the needs of our spiritual life. When these elements are brought in contact with our spiritual life they kindle a fire and fill us with spiritual energy and power. The great mistake multitudes are making is that they are feeding their intellectual life instead of their spiritual life.

“How can I feed my soul on the word of God?” you may ask. We shall tell you in the simplest way we know how, and that is the way God has taught us. Let there be a daily reading of the Bible and meditation upon it. Do not neglect the meditation. You will suffer in your spiritual life if you do. In proportion as we neglect to meditate on the word of God we shall be weak in our souls. Remember, I do not say that you must simply study your Bible. Thousands are studying it by one and another method, and are growing powerless in their soul life. There is a vast difference between simply studying the Word, and meditating upon it. Study will bring it into the mind, meditation brings it into the heart. Beware of those schools and correspondence courses which require a fee for your instruction. The Holy Spirit must be our Instructor and His instructions are “**without money and without price**” (Isa. 55:1).

We shall give five general rules for getting God’s word into the heart. Be cautious of following any prescribed course of Bible study, for if you follow man’s selection of Scripture you may miss the portion your soul needs most at the time. Doctors may recommend a diet that is good in a general way, but this is not necessarily safe for everyone to follow, for what one needs may be the opposite to the needs of another. We may write books that are good in a general way, but we cannot select the Scripture portions that are the best for nourishing your spiritual life. What you need now, another may not. Pray God to guide you in the portion of Scripture for your meditation. You and your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, know best what will meet the current needs of your life. Whatever portion of

Scripture God leads you to read, we shall give you five rules for the reading of it. The Holy Spirit may give you more; this is what the Spirit has given me.

For an example of applying these rules of meditation, let us take Matthew 6:24-34.

**First—seek revelation.** Read your Scripture selection over carefully and prayerfully, inviting the Holy Spirit to reveal its hidden treasures and interpret them to your understanding. Considering our text in Matthew 6, there are depths in these words that few, if any, have ever descended into. They need to be read slowly and prayerfully while you ask God to give you light on their meaning.

**Second—pay attention.** Gird up the loins of your mind. Concentrate your thoughts on the words. Do not let your mind wander. If it starts wandering, bring it back. This is the same road any student must take to understand his lesson. You must exercise your will power. If your will power is not exercised it will not increase, and if your will power is not increased by the reading of the Bible, you are not reading it rightly. Do not think that you can get much out of reading this Scripture without great labor. The schoolboy must labor to get mental food, and you will have to labor to get soul food. It will cost you some effort to concentrate your mind upon your reading, especially if you have not developed good habits of study.

**Third—have purpose.** You must do more than give the close attention of your mind to your reading—there must be *intention*. Do not forget this. *Attention* is to study; *intention* is the purpose of your study. You are not now studying the Bible that you might be able to preach it, or teach it, but for the purpose of feeding your spiritual life that you might grow up into the fulness of God. Turn your heart as well as your mind to the reading. By your spirit take hold upon the words in such

a way as to make them a part of your life. Christ's words are spirit and they are life, and it is only by your spirit that you can feed on those spiritual words. Keep your soul lifted up to God in prayer while you read. Your mind and your heart are to feed at the same time. You are to read in the spirit. Reading the Bible is the listening side of prayer. You pray when you talk to God, and it is no less prayer when you listen to God talk to you through His word. Reading in the spirit deepens the union of your spirit with the Spirit of God. It will loosen the hold earthly things may have upon you, and deepen your interest in things eternal. It will bring God near, and reveal Him in wondrous beauty to your soul. It will fill you with renewed courage and make you strong on the battlefields of life. It will infuse into your inmost being a sense of holy fear, and make each act of life an act of worship.

**Fourth—practice what you read.** Set your will by God's power to reproduce in your life what you read in the Book. It will do you but little good to read the Book if you do not practice what you read; it is the practicing that makes you strong. The physical food you eat gives life to your muscles, but if you do not exercise, it will all be lost. You had better not read the Bible at all than read it and not practice it. Reading the selected passage, we come to these words: "**Take no thought** [*Be not anxious*<sup>RV</sup>] **for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on**" (Mt. 6:25). See that you put into practice what you have read. So consider: how much time did Jesus ever spend worrying about what He should eat and wear? You may say that He had divine power to get what He needed. But Jesus never used that power out of God's ordained way. He refused to turn stones to bread merely for His body's sake. At times He took His disciples into the fields for wheat when they needed it, as granted by the law. At times when they had money, He sent them into the town to

buy food. He gave enough consideration and thought to send them on this task, but He did not concern Himself with what sort of food it would be. He did nothing for His body that He will not do for yours. If you are God's consecrated child, your body is just as much His own body as the body He had while here. He will love and care for your body as certainly as He cared for His own, for it belongs to Him. Jesus never became anxious about the things of tomorrow; He never borrowed any future trouble. Though at times the battle to keep this consecration became so intense as to bring forth sweat like blood, He always came through with victory. He sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and God gave Him all He needed for His body. If you will make God's business your business, God will make your business His business, and He will see to it that you succeed in that business. Do not leave God out, but make it your business to extend God's kingdom and righteousness in your business. This is the way the Book reads, and you should set your whole heart to reproduce in your life the truth taught in the Bible.

**Fifth—be wholly consecrated to God.** This perhaps should have been our first rule for reading the Bible. It should be our attitude of heart at the close of each reading. If you have read the Bible prayerfully and in the spirit—if you have listened in your heart to what God has been saying to you through the Bible—you will feel like renewing your consecration to Him. If you do not get a clearer vision of God as you read His word, you have not received the good you should have. The Gospel of Christ is a mirror in which we are to see the face of God. If you have looked into it, and have not seen the face of God, there is some veil of the flesh over your eyes. Oh, that flesh! It hinders multitudes from seeing God in His Book.

As we get a clearer vision of God through the reading of His word, our hearts will respond with a deeper dedication to



Him, with a prayer that His beauty might be upon us. When we come to see more clearly the beauty of God's holiness, our hearts will reach out longingly, pleadingly for that beauty to grow upon us, and it will. Every prayerful, meditative reading of the Bible makes us more like God.

Jesus said, "**Come unto me.**" Let there be a daily coming to Jesus through His word. There can be no substitute for the Bible in building yourself up in the more abundant life. It is the Gospel of Christ that nourishes spiritual life. By prayerful reading, the Bible leaves an imprint on your soul. Go to your Bible with as full intention to feed your soul as you go to the table to feed your body. The Word in the heart is the secret of a holy and victorious life. If you will spend time each day feeding your soul upon the living Word, you will be strong to triumph over every temptation. It will be a power in you causing you to live above both the petty annoyances of everyday life as well as the greatest storm of attack, and it will fill your soul with peace from heaven.

There needs to be a keener relish for the word of God in many hearts. Those who sit at the feet of Jesus and hear His word are not numberless. There are so few who pant after God's commandments (Psa. 119:131). Oh, that there might be a greater panting for the Word of Life! There are not many who are rising at midnight to give thanks to God for His judgments (119:62). It is not the multitudes, even among the holiest of God's saints, whose souls are breaking because of the longing they have for God's Word at all times (119:20); not too many today that are esteeming the words of God above their necessary food (Job 23:12). How our souls are grieved to hear of the religious conventions of the present day where the banquets, the watermelon cuttings, and sight-seeing trips are the greatest enticements. Rivers of water run down our eyes because they esteem the banquet and feasting and

socials more than they do God's word. But our heart is still more grieved to see some of God's own children so neglectful of the blessed Bible. God Almighty, give Thy people a more ravenous appetite for Thy Word!

God's word is a lamp to guide our feet as we are making the journey of life (Psa. 119:105). It is a sword to enable us to conquer the foes that will meet us on our way to heaven (Eph. 6:17). It is a mirror to reveal ourselves to ourselves (Jas. 1:23-25). It is water to cleanse the soul and keep it pure (Eph. 5:26). It is milk to nourish (1 Pet. 2:2), it is meat to invigorate (Heb. 5:14), it is honey to delight (Psa. 119:103).

We beseech you, holy brethren, keep an intense love in your heart for the Bible. Do not neglect to feed daily upon its sustaining food. Pray the Holy Spirit to bring it into your heart with power as you read it. You should be greatly alarmed if your heart is getting calloused so that the Word of God does not make much impression upon it. The finger of God formerly wrote His laws on tablets of stone, but now under grace the Holy Spirit inscribes God's laws only on melted and tender hearts. Jesus, help us.

# “Learn”

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*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. —Mt. 11:29*

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To come unto Christ is not merely to come near Him, or into His presence, but to come *into* Him—into His heart. To “learn” of Him is not to merely learn *about* Him, or even *from* Him, but to learn *Him*. The apostle spoke of the sad state of the ungodly Gentiles, and reminded the saints at Ephesus, **“But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus”** (Eph. 4:21-22). Learning Christ changes things. The better we learn Him the more we are changed. Those who learn Him do not walk as do the Gentiles in the ways of the world.

Peter exhorts us to **“grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”** (2 Pet. 3:18). This is the way up into the more abundant life. To be a strong, vigorous saint there must be a constant learning of Christ. We must ever be knowing Him better. To the soul that values its spiritual life, this is worth more than all else in the world. Paul says, **“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord”** (Php. 3:8). Keep this text in mind, for we will look at it again later.

To learn Christ is not to have Him revealed *to* us, but *in* us (Gal. 1:16). No one can learn for another anything of Christ. We may *teach* each other, but we cannot *learn* each other. Each must learn Him for themselves. You must put your mind and heart in such a prayerful, spiritual, receptive attitude toward God that the Holy Spirit can come and reveal Christ to you in the secret depths of your soul.

“There is a blest pavilion,  
A sacred inner court,  
The place of God’s own dwelling,  
With all the world shut out.

“Oh, sweet and tranquil home  
Where only God is known.”

God can make Himself known to us only in the “inner court” of our own spirit. It is there and only there that the Holy Spirit can give you a sense of Christ’s purity; only there that you can have sweet tastes of His love; only there that you can behold His glory. O soul, it is there and only there that you can truly know Him; and to know Him is life eternal (Jn. 17:3).

A sister gives this testimony of her experience as she sat holding the hand of a dying saint:

As her happy spirit took its flight, there came into my soul a sense of God’s glory and of His pleasure in the death of this saint such as I cannot describe. For several days I was constantly sensible of the presence of heavenly beings; and it seemed that the veil that divided me from them was exceedingly thin. I seemed to hear in my soul the songs of an innumerable company of angels as they welcomed this happy saint into her eternal home.

In this experience, this sister learned Christ as He cannot be learned in the seminary, the college, the correspondence course. It is not our purpose to discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of these different channels of teaching Christ and His Word, only to say that the general tenor of the Scripture tells us that these courses have a tendency to hide Christ,

rather than reveal Him to the soul. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, but he must needs get to the backside of the desert to know God. Paul was schooled at the feet of Gamaliel, but he must needs spend three years in the desert of Arabia to learn Christ. It is only when the Spirit of the living God imprints Him on the fleshly table of our heart that we can know Him.

Let us study the words, “**Take my yoke upon you.**” Jesus tells us that this is the way we can learn of Him. You can learn what Jesus is—learn His nature, His character—only by taking His yoke upon you. You may be told and you may read in the Bible that “**God is love**” (1 Jn. 4:16), but you can only know this for yourself by taking Christ’s yoke upon you. What does it mean to take His yoke upon us? It means yokeship, and yokeship means fellowship. It means that we are to have a like nature or life with Him so that we can be fitly joined with Him, and pull with Him in all His interests. It means to work *for* Christ and *with* Christ to further His interests in this present world. Do you grasp the thought? You can learn Christ only as you pull with Him. As you yoke up with Jesus and pull with Him in His great work of saving souls, of healing the sick, of helping the poor, of spreading the Gospel, and leading the saints on to more abundant life—you will learn more of Jesus in one day than you could ever learn in theological courses. When a company of people are yoked with Christ, and all pulling with Him, they are all pulling together. This is the church of God. Every member in the church of God is yoked with Christ, and they are pulling together with Him, and pulling together in His ways. When one or more begin to pull their own way, then there is trouble and confusion. Every project of any importance has some organized system of association to further its interests. Just so, Jesus has organized His church for the purpose of furthering His interests in the

world among men. Please make a note of this. To learn Christ is to learn His interests, and to work heart and soul with Him in fulfilling them. As we learn more of Him we learn better how to serve Him.

“I am learning how to serve Him,  
With my hands, my heart, my feet;  
And each day my Master’s service  
To my soul becomes more sweet.”

When we enter the church of God we leave self-interests on the outside and then shut the door to them. There is no living to self in the church of God; it is all for Christ. We no longer live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us. He died for us; we live for Him.

Now the devil has been allowed to set up his kingdom in the earth, and he has a great number of interests. He also has many who are working in his interests. A surprising thing is that many are working in his interest who fancy that they are working in the interest of Jesus Christ. They think they are working for Christ, yet all the while are endeavoring to have God’s people distrust Him.

Most everyone has an interest in something. The primary interest of the saint is to further the interests of Jesus. They live to this end. This is their meat and drink. The deeper their interest the harder they work. The truly devoted saint goes to bed thinking and praying how he can advance the cause of God. He awakes in the morning with the same thought in his mind and prayer in his soul. This is what makes for more abundant life. When you thus live for Jesus you will taste a glory the world knows not of, and a divine glory will shine forth out of your life that can be found nowhere else in all the world. When you get to living in the interest of Jesus with all

your soul, you have found heaven on earth. Show me a man who lives in word, thought, and deed in the interest of Christ, and I will show you a man who can teach others the right ways of God more perfectly than all the doctors of divinity.

It would require a large volume to express all the thoughts given us on the subject of learning Jesus. But before we leave this subject, let us briefly study one trait in the nature of Christ: His separation from the world. He makes the positive declaration, “***I am not of this world***” (Jn. 8:23). This is a very simple statement, but who comprehends the depth of its meaning? In what sense and to what extent was Christ not of this world? To get any good conception of Christ’s separation from the world, you will need to get into some solitary place, close your closet door, and in the hush of your soul, get in the Spirit. You will truly need to shut out every earthly thing from your mind and soul, and invite the Holy Spirit to come into your spirit and there give you light to behold the life of Jesus. “***The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord***” (Pr. 20:27). God by His Spirit must come into your spirit and light the candle that you may see the nature of Christ. Multitudes of professed followers of Jesus are talking of Christ’s and the Christian’s separation from the world, yet they have but little real knowledge of what it means. We might be able to tell you something of what it means, but unless the Spirit gives you understanding, you will still be in ignorance.

God loved the world, and Jesus loved the world—meaning the souls of men. Jesus never loved any material, earthly thing. He never loved money or anything that money could buy. While doing His Father’s business in the body, He did have need of a few earthly things, but, oh, how few! Can you find anywhere in His conversation that implies any concern or any affection for material things? He had meat to eat that the world knew not of. His meat was to do His Father’s will

(Jn. 4:32,34). When He looked upon any earthly thing, He did not see that material object so much as He saw what it typified in the spiritual world. When we look on earthly things and see nothing of the unseen things which they are meant to represent, we have not fully learned the precious secret of Christ's separation from the world. When Jesus looked at a vine and its branches, He saw the church of God. When He looked at a field of grain ripening for harvest, He saw the harvest of souls. When He looked at the birds of the air or the lilies of the field, He saw His heavenly Father's care for His people. When He looked at the water the woman came to draw, He saw the "**living water**" (Jn. 4:10). When He saw a flock of sheep, He thought of His own flock. When He saw a hen gathering her brood under her wings, He thought of gathering His people under His wing. His conversation and His life plainly show that He was concerned in the unseen things rather than just the seen. If He had seen someone in a fine car, He would not have admired the car, but thought of the way a soul may ride gloriously to heaven. Alas, how prone we are to see only the seen things!

We must close this subject, but let us close it with a "**hard saying,**" and "**who can hear it?**" (Jn. 6:60). Jesus, in all His teaching, preaching, work of healing and going about doing good never desired any earthly compensation. You as a follower are to be as separate from the world as He was from the world (Jn. 17:14-16). He took no heed of the praise of men, nor of their criticisms. A mountain of gold dollars would not influence Him one iota from His path of duty. Instead of seeing the mountain of gold, He would see the riches of God's grace. He never used banquets and sight-seeing trips as a drawing-card to His religious gatherings. Those who require compensation or charge for their Bible teaching, whether by preaching or correspondence, do not see Jesus in His separation from



earthly things. Instead of seeing the glory of the material temple, He saw its destruction. Instead of admiring the world or anything in it, He saw its destruction, and admired only that which was to endure forever.

Do not be hasty to condemn the above words, but go into your secret closet, and with the door shut ask God to reveal to you Christ in His separation from the world. Since it is the poor who are to have the Gospel preached to them, how dare we make a charge?

In your learning of Jesus, study His prayer life, and seek to live in that same spirit of prayer. God's people need a greater spirit of prayer. They need to walk in the atmosphere of prayer.

# “Follow”

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*If any man serve me, let him follow me. —Jn. 12:26*

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What does it mean to follow Jesus? Many are singing—

“I will follow Thee, my Savior,  
Wheresoe'er my lot may be;  
Where Thou goest I will follow,  
Yes, my Lord, I'll follow Thee.

“Though I meet with tribulation,  
Sorely tempted though I be,  
I remember Thou wast tempted,  
And rejoice to follow Thee”—

yet they have but little comprehension of what it means to follow Jesus. There can be no following of Jesus except there be a denying of self and the bearing of a cross. Jesus bore a cross—not only a wooden one up the hill to Golgotha, but also another and heavier cross from the day He entered His public ministry (Mt. 16:24; Mk. 8:34, 10:21; Lk. 9:23). Note that this cross is to borne “daily.” Examine the ministry of Jesus, and see the cross He bore. This is the cross you are to bear in following Him.

But you have a well-furnished home, you receive a salary for your ministry, people speak well of you, and recommend you as being a good preacher and doing a good work. Where then is the cross of Christ? Ah, you say you have some persecutions. A close examination may reveal that perhaps the

only persecution you have comes from those who envy you in your prominent position and good salary, and are itching to get it.

Jesus did not teach that you cannot hold a legal right to a home, but He did teach that whatever you possess of earthly things must be regarded as being not your own, but merely held in stewardship. You are to take that attitude toward every earthly possession. That word *mine* is not to be found in your vocabulary. Miss Mary Bosanquet (who later married John Fletcher) said of Mrs. Sarah Ryan and herself and the other saints in their community, that “the cold words of *mine* and *thine* were never known between us.” John Wesley, in writing to Mrs. Ryan, said: “To converse with you [...] is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others often lead me to him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you lead me straight into His presence.”

When you hold yourself and what you possess as your own, you rob yourself of the presence and power of God. If you will read 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 you will get some understanding of how to regard every earthly thing—even the wife of your bosom. Your attitude should be such that nothing will hinder you in doing God’s will: nothing used for selfish purposes, but everything done to His glory *purposely*. “**Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor. 10:31). Multitudes of professed followers of Jesus will neglect that scripture, or give it such an interpretation as will allow them to indulge in many of the lusts of the flesh. But “**ye are not your own.... ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s**” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). In all the uses of your body, in all you do with it and for it, there is to be a higher consideration than self-gratification. This extends to all the little things of daily life—to the spending of every penny and of every moment of time. I may

not gratify my appetite without considering the glory of God, and I cannot carelessly lounge in my easy chair. Do all, even these, with God's glory in mind, and whatever God's glory calls for is to be done at whatever cost to bodily comforts. If you will live this sort of life you will surely find a daily cross to bear. That body will needs meet with many denials, and some very severe.

Please read the teaching of Jesus given in Matthew 19: 9-12:

***And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.***

***His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.***

***But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.***

You may say that you do not understand these words. Do you *want* to understand them? Do you pray earnestly that you may understand them? Jesus understood that not all were able to receive this saying, and it was said only to those who are able to receive it—but are you very happy because of it? Are you ready to conclude that it must not apply to you? Have you ever prayed earnestly that you might be able to receive it, and thus live to the greater glory of God? My dear brethren, these words do teach each of us to keep free from any entangle-

ments, that we might serve God more fully and intensely. (See also 2 Timothy 2:4.) Jesus will never give you a cross heavier than you can bear, but beware lest you throw it down long before you get to the breaking-point. There is, oh, so little of going against the flesh, of keeping the body under.

Now please read Luke 9:57-62:

***And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.***

***And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.***

***And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.***

Can you not now feel that following Jesus forbids looseness or carelessness in life? Life is full of meaning, and that meaning is to live wholly unto God and never to the pleasures of the flesh. This is the cross-bearing. Some may say that these Scriptures are beyond human ability to comprehend—and they are, on our own. But if we will get down into the secret place of God's presence in true humility, the Holy Spirit will teach our human intellects through our human spirits and we shall know the meaning of all Christ's teaching. Jesus never taught anything He did not intend us to understand. If we do not understand some of His sayings, it may be because we

are not willing to go with Him into that death and separation from the world, and cease to lean upon our own understanding (Pr. 3:5), that He may teach us of spiritual things.

Jesus says, “**No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.**” Should we not want to know what “**looking back**” means? If it makes us unfit for the kingdom of heaven, should we not diligently seek to understand what Jesus meant, that we may avoid this danger? If you pass by these words, thinking it is of no great importance to understand them, you are running a great risk of missing the kingdom of God.

Jesus is giving us a picture of the Christian life, in which the plow represents the service of God. The Christian enters God’s service; he puts his hand to the plow. He throws the weight of his body upon it to cause it to turn up the soil. He keeps his eye straight ahead to the work he is doing. There must be no backward glances of the eye, no turning of the head, but a constant bending forward of the body, a tight holding of the plow with the hand, and a steadfast eye looking unto Jesus. The apostle forgot the things behind—put them out of mind. He reached forth to those things which are before. Alas, too many are looking back to see if man is giving them any praise, or what they may receive from the world for their service in God’s work, or some bodily comfort, ease, or pleasure. If in your work for Christ, you are taking any thought about what recompense you are going to receive and what help the world is going to give, you are not fit for the work of God. You say that your work is a faith work, but you are telling everybody that it is a faith work. If it is a faith work, have it to yourself alone, and go on with your work. To follow Jesus is to fully depend upon Him. He can and will furnish you with all you need in His work, if you are diligently attending to His work, but if you are casting your eye around upon man

to see where some help is coming from, you are unfitting yourself for the service of God.

Jesus said, “***I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me***” (Jn. 6:38). And He kept looking straight forward to the Father’s will. The devil could never cause Him to look back. Though Jesus was tempted with everything from a loaf of bread to the kingdoms of the world, yet He saw nothing but His Father’s will. He could turn water into wine for others, and increase a few loaves and fishes to be enough to feed thousands, but never an act for Himself solely for His own sake. Here is a hard saying, but we will say it in Jesus’ name: **we are to do nothing for self’s sake**. Alas, how many of the Lord’s own are living too thoughtlessly of God’s will. They eat, they drink, they sleep, they go about the regular routine of life without a thought of God’s will. If we will practice going to our meals, our beds, our work in the thought of doing the will of God, we will find the love of God increasing in our hearts, and life will be sweeter and Christ will be more real to us.

To be a true follower of Jesus the thought of doing His will must absorb every other thought. There is to be not only a perfect denial of self, but there must be a concentration of all our powers in doing His will. To do God’s will from the heart is no cold and indifferent heartedness. We do want to impress this upon your mind, therefore we repeat our warning against thoughtlessness, carelessness, and coldness. Learn to do things *purposely* for God. Take thought about it. Throw your heart into it with an earnestness. Learn to love God’s will and cling to it purposely. Do not go along day after day in a common routine of life and have no particular thought of God.

“***Remember Lot’s wife***” (Lk. 17:32). When brought out of Sodom and ordered to flee, they were forbidden to look back. Surely this will deeply impress your mind.

“I have left all the world to follow Jesus,  
Never backward to its follies will I turn;  
Oh, I’m on my upward way,  
And it’s brighter every day,  
For I’ve left all the world to follow Jesus.”

Mrs. Lot’s offense was only a look. But that look unfitted her for a place in God’s kingdom. Her fate should teach us a lesson. If we look back we are not fit for the kingdom of heaven.

It is possible to be deceived. We may sing—

“We are dead to the world and its pleasure,  
Our affections are centered above”—

and yet we may have our minds largely filled with thoughts of earthly things. We recently read of a minister who says that he has many heartaches because he has been given but little money in the past few months, and has had to live on dry bread and flour gravy. Another says that he has spent many a restless night because his congregation has not kept their agreement with him. And yet they sing that they are dead to the world and its worries.

To be dead to the world with Christ is to have no expectations from it, to be under no bondage to it, to be unworried by it—simply to take no thought about it. None of its circumstances could stop Paul from singing praise to God. No state this world could bring him into brought him any discontent. Peter slept soundly in the face of the chopping block. **“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls”** (Hab. 3:17-18), yet the prophet would



rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of his salvation. Blessed experience. It is for every child of God. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and nothing of this world can disturb that life without disturbing the life of Jesus.

# “Abide”

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*Abide in me, and I in you. —Jn. 15:4*

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This is the deepest and closest experience the soul can find with Jesus. There are no words to fully define it. To abide in Christ is to have a life free from sin (1 Jn. 3:6). To abide in Christ is to bring forth *much* fruit (Jn. 15:5)—such fruit that glorifies God. What wonderful possibilities a child of God has by abiding in Jesus! We also learn that we can do nothing *unless* we abide in Him. How utterly helpless we are! Then we must give Him the glory for all He helps us do. When we are abiding in Him, it is His life springing up in our life that enables us to do all we do. It is not our life, but His life. But we must be dead—so dead that we can do nothing, and cease trying to do anything—and let Christ live in us.

If we abide in Him, and His words abide in us we shall have whatsoever we ask of Him (Jn. 15:7). If we are failing to get what we ask, there is something amiss somewhere. It is possible to think we are abiding in Him when we are not. It is possible to think His words are abiding in us when they are not. In this abiding there is no dependence on self or earthly things. To trust in man or to in any way make flesh our arm hinders the work of Christ in our behalf. There must be an utter abandonment of all to God; a perfect renunciation of self; a concentration of all our powers in Christ's service, and every expectation from Him. Christ is real in such a life; He is as real as life. We are conscious of His presence and of His power. In our dependence, we naturally look to Him for help in all the details of life. We are conscious of arising to the duties of the

day in His strength rather than our own. It is a blessed way to live. If you have lost something, you ask His help to find it, and He does. If you need a penny, a dime, a dollar, you ask Him for it, and He gives it. This all comes about as natural as life when you are abiding according to John 15:7. You move and live and act in conscious dependence upon Him, and in full expectation of His help. Such an atmosphere surrounds you.

In this abiding, the Holy Spirit has through the human spirit brought the human life in contact with the life of God through Christ, so that His life is constantly springing up in the human life, and begets an unceasing prayer. Prayer is suggested by the words of John 15:7—“**Ye shall ask.**” The human life is constantly drinking in the life of Christ, feeding upon it as the child feeds at its mother’s breast. The constant inflowing of the life of Jesus makes life a constant prayer. As the little flower drinks in the dew and the rays of the sun, so the human life drinks in the life of Jesus and takes on all its beauty and strength.

We now come to John 15:10: “**If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.**” All we can do is to sit and marvel. We hesitate to begin to express our thoughts. When we keep Christ’s commandments *even as* He kept His Father’s commandments, then we shall abide in His love *even as* He abode in His Father’s love. In this experience the soul is weaned from every earthly thing. The words of Colossians 3:2-3 have become a glorious, conscious reality in all their beauty and power. “**Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.**” Nothing is loved that is not loved in God. Nothing is done that is not done in God. Natural love is not destroyed, but it is purified, for all things have become pure. The mother loves her child, and the husband loves his wife with more than a natural

love. It is the sweetest and highest form of love. Such a one **“walk[s] in love, as Christ also hath loved us”** (Eph. 5:2). Father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, houses, lands, food, clothing—all are loved in God. We are unable to explain this love. It is far more intense than mere natural human love. It does rob the natural love of its fleshliness, and so to the flesh it may appear as having something of a coldness. However, it is not coldness, but only robbed of the fire of fleshliness. It looks on everything with a something of unconcern—house, lands, relatives, friends—and says, “Lord, Thy will be done with all these.” To those who cannot see the heavenly realities, it may seem cold and heartless, but it is heaven’s purest love. Jesus said to His mother, **“Woman, what have I to do with thee?”** (Jn. 2:4). These words sound cold and almost heartless to a fond mother. They teach us something of the nature of heaven’s pure love. When dying on the cross He called His mother, **“Woman”** (Jn. 19:26). He spoke of her as John’s mother, but not one time does He ever call her “Mother.” He lived in consideration of a higher relationship. In light of this, the things of the flesh were of small concern to Him. Be alert to that sort of sentimental fondness that partakes more of the flesh than of the spirit.

Abiding in Christ forbids trusting in anything but Christ. **“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God”** (Psa. 20:7). We avoid relying on worldly means of security. **“Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots”** (Isa. 31:1). It is a grave danger, for it loosens us from Christ. The god of this world blinds the soul so that it cannot perceive what it means to be free from relying on any and every earthly thing.

The abiding soul is a praying soul. In all abiding in Jesus there is a constant action of the soul, and this action is prayer. He who abides prays, and he who prays abides, for we cannot

have the one without the other. The soul that prays, really prays, abides in a state of quietness, reposing on the bosom of God, and knows no fear, save the fear of God. The slightest reliance upon any earthly thing, or fear of any earthly circumstance, will clog the flow of the life of Christ. Christian freedom is being unbound by anything earthly. And prayer, to be pure prayer, must be untainted by self-love. Self-love clips the wings of prayer so that it cannot ascend to God.

Abiding in Christ deepens the soul's union with Christ. It makes communion more intimate and joyful. It makes Jesus more real in life. It keeps the body, soul, and spirit in a higher state of sanctification and blamelessness. It clears the soul's vision so it can look out upon the glorious realities of the spiritual world.

Abiding in Jesus loosens the hold of all earthly interests upon the affections and centers the heart upon God. It brings God very near. It strengthens the will to go out upon the battlefields of life in the full assurance of victory. It teaches the soul to walk softly before God, and to hold as a treasure every token of His love. It puts force and vigor in the inward life, which enables us to walk with God through the shadows without a fear.

By abiding in Christ we are ever plodding onward evenly through life. Whether our pathway leads through green pastures and is strewn by roses, or through the valleys and over stony places, we are ever tranquil and go singing on our way. For though wild winds may make the waves to rise and fall upon the surface of the sea, yet the great depths remain undisturbed. Just so, though outward circumstances may unsettle our emotions, yet in the depths of our spirit we may remain at rest with Christ.

Abiding in Christ keeps the heart from coldness by the warmth of love and sincere devotion. Again, to abide in Jesus

infuses the soul with a sense of holy fear, and makes every act in life an act of worship to God. It keeps self-love and creature-love out of the heart, and gives us visions of God, enabling us to cry, “**Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory**” (Isa. 6:3).



Come to Christ daily.

Learn of Him daily.

Follow Him daily.

Abide in Him always.