

THE LIVING WORD

by Charles S. Price

CHAPTER XIII, FROM "THE REAL FAITH" ©1940

Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, godly men of old looked to the Written Word. So it was that God revealed Himself in supernatural ways to a chosen few, in order that they might write the inspired Scriptures for others to read and walk by the light of the Written Word thus given.

The day came when the WORD WAS MADE FLESH and dwelt among us! As the written Word was the THOUGHT of God, so the Living Word became the EMBODIMENT OF THAT THOUGHT, expressed through the Miracle of the Incarnation, in the Person of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

That is why every throbbing, vital statement, which left the lips of Jesus, was impregnated with this truth: "I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, AND THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY." (John 10:10). The words He spoke were SPIRIT AND THEY WERE LIFE! He was the "true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world:" (John 1 :9), for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" (I John 1:5) and those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the LIGHT OF LIFE!

We have read what He said, and counted it beautiful! We have read about what He did, and have called it wonderful! We have--but, Oh, that our eyes might see the divinely appointed purpose of His ministry and that we might embrace with our hearts the fullness of His redeeming grace! The written word can never be read aright without the revealing light of the Living Word-The Word made flesh. The Word which came once to live AMONG us now has come to dwell WITHIN us!

Happy that day for us when in the history of eternity God reached up to the four corners of the realms supernal-infinite and eternal-and caught all of the glory, all of the grace, all of love, mercy, and truth, and then by the Miracle of the Incarnation, He wrapped them all up together and put them in a virgin mother's arms in a bundle of pink babyhood and called His name JESUS, for He was to save a lost world from its sins!

He is our Life. He is our Healing. He is our strength. Not the word of the printed page; not our faulty interpretations of that written word; but the WORD MADE FLESH—THE LIVING WORD—The Word of God which once dwelt among us, but now is the Living Word who dwells within us! It is the Ford which He is, and which we too can become, as He lives within; for by the flow of His life divine we are changed from glory to glory. When we *awake*, we will be in His *likeness*!

Many have taken a few of His sentences and built marvelous sermons around them. He has become, to a great extent, an Ideal-a Pattern for our living, and an Example for our conduct. Now that is all very well as far as it goes, but it certainly misses the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What He said was a divine revelation of what He is. The things which He said and did were only the outward manifestations, the effulgent glory of the great dynamic Cause, which He Himself is.

Paul did not cry for wisdom to know more about Him; but from the hungry depths of his innermost being, he cried: "I count all things but loss ... that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection!" It is this VITAL UNION with Christ which is necessary in our lives. We must stop our struggling to become "like Him." There is no need to spend long hours reading the biography of a king when you are, at last, in his royal presence!

The woman by Samaria's Wayside Well was greatly concerned as to which mountain it was, in which they were to worship God. Was it in the mountains of Jerusalem, according to the Jews; or in the mountains of Samaria, as contended by the Samaritans? Jesus with unto her ... "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father ... the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

HE IS OUR LIFE!

He Himself is the Way. He Himself is the Truth. He Himself is the Life! It is not the mental understanding, or the intellectual approbation of this fact, which brings joy unspeakable to the heart of the Christian. It is the EXPERIMENTAL realization of it that floods our spirits with the unleashing of His divine power and life. It is the flooding of the spirit of lives surrendered to Christ with the Light of the World, Himself!

All creation is groaning for its promised liberation! "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God . . . The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Romans 8:19-23). When at last our "pitchers" have been broken, His light will shine forth more gloriously than the light of the noonday sun! It will be the revelation of the Light of the World, which is Jesus, manifested through the lives of His surrendered and yielded children!

Time was when the presence and power of God was symbolized by a wooden ark. That day has gone. The Lord has written His law within our hearts. The Incarnate Christ has been enthroned in the lives of the children of obedience. The shout is already beginning to well up from within, and when at last the cry goes forth, the walls of the Jericho of this world will come tumbling down! Just as there was amazement and consternation on the faces of the inhabitants of Jericho, so the world will stand in wonder and amazement at the manifestation of the Sons of God!

The manifestation is not of them; it is of Christ! The written Word proclaims it, and every type and shadow declares it! The ancient prophet saw it by inspiration, as through a telescope, and spoke in clear and plain language of the triumph of the Lord, and the glory of the manifestation of the Sons of God. John, the Revelator, saw it as he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, on the lonely Isle of Patmos. The revelation, which bums within the spirit of man, infinitely surpasses any glory or manifestation borne without, for it is from within that the light shines! God Himself is His own interpreter, and He is making it plain!

The promises, concerning Jesus, include not only what He would do, but also what He would be. The miracle of His grace is not merely what He would do for us, but what HE WOULD BECOME IN US. It would have been wonderful, indeed, had He come to show us a plan whereby we could find Salvation, but it is unspeakably precious when we realize HE DIED TO BECOME THAT SALVATION! Could a man receive Salvation and refuse the Saviour? Is there such a thing as Christianity, without Christ? Could one ever be spiritual, without the Spirit? That is why our ecclesiastical rituals avail us nothing; though man has made them substitutes for His lovely, indwelling presence, and has tried to find sanctuary for his wounded spirit within the ceremony. He has oftentimes thereby closed the door against the entrance of the King of Glory!

One truth, which stands out in bold relief in the ministry and life of our Lord, is the privilege of progression and growth in grace and in the knowledge of the things of God! The Apostle Paul, in whose spirit the Living Christ was dwelling, proclaimed the same glorious truth, and admonished us to go on to maturity. That maturity is not the development of human understanding; neither is it an increase in our intellectual knowledge concerning prophecy. It is, however, the *unhindered outflow of the knowledge of Christ Himself*, giving us understanding of the heart commensurate with our spiritual ability to receive Him.

The growth of the Christian life is, in reality, the increasing manifestation of HIS LIFE. As in the natural world the identity of the bride becomes lost in the bridegroom, so it is with the Bride of Christ! She literally becomes a partaker of the Divine Nature. "He that believeth in (into) Me, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of Living Water." The surge of this Divine Flow of Resurrection Life will cover body, soul and spirit; and the Divine virtues of our adorable Lord will nullify and abrogate absolutely everything we have received under the Curse of the Law. This provision includes HEALING. It means more than HEALING, it is the perpetuation of HEALTH! It means the continuous operation in us of the DIVINE LIFE.

CHRIST IS ALL

Oh, that the sheep of His pasture, so cruelly beaten about by the forces of circumstance and environment, could once again hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, saying, "Come unto Me!" What an innumerable host of cults surround us, and with what insistence do they proclaim their dogmatisms and their private interpretations! Divine healers advertise their wares; and this method and that method are sold, until the atoning sacrifice of our Lord is well-nigh measured out in classes and treatments-as if men could sell the sunlight by the

bottle-full! Is not one fairly bewildered with the multitude of contentious voices which sound on every hand and side, in proclamation of this or of that virtue!

In the days of old, what demands the Pharisees and Sadducees placed upon the people before they would be accepted by the powers that be! They were required to give tithes where it could be proved that they had given. They must pray in public. They must do this and they must not do that. With legalisms they bound them and with chains of ritualism they enslaved them. But when Jesus came, He swept aside their traditional belief. He upset the "apple-cart" of their preconceived and pre-established prejudices. He showed His disdain for their Sabbath laws and healed men, because they needed His touch, whether it be on this day or on that. His tender appeal was directed to the hearts and spirits of the Suffering, the Sinful, and the Oppressed!

"Come unto Me!" He said. That was all. They were to lay their heads upon His breast. There was no need to go through this gate or that door, for there was only one Door, after Jesus came. There was only one Way. There was only one Life. There was only One Salvation, and that was in the Saviour! Directly they came to Him, there flowed from Him-into them-from His illimitable fountains of virtue. Life, Health, Strength, Joy and Peace! He was their Everything! They needed nothing beside Him. Whether one be a self-righteous Nicodemus or a poor, broken Mary of Magdala, He was the illimitable Source of Eternal Supply, and in Him they found all their need!

How intellectual we have tried to be! With what dignified phrases and meaningless platitudes have we Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:37-39).

In their blind ignorance and superstition they knew not what He said, let alone what He meant. He spoke of the Bread which He was, and all they could think about was the manna which fell from heaven on the burning sands of the wilderness centuries ago. He spoke of Rivers of Living Water-the Water which He Himself was-but they could visualize nothing beyond the pouring of some water from a pool upon a pile of stones they called an altar. How like man -even today he would do anything but simply RECEIVE HIM!

THE WELL OF GLORY

Receiving Him means giving up to Him the right to the right of one's self! The heart which opens to the REIGN OF THE CHRIST enters into the reality of His Presence. It is, as it were, that in the heart the lion and the lamb lie down together. We walk with Him in Heavenly places. He speaks, and the sound of His voice is so sweet, that the birds hush their singing!

The living, pulsating reality of His Divine Indwelling springs up within our innermost being like an artesian well of heavenly glory! It is effortless; it just FLOWS. It permeates every fibre of the nature; and we do not have to wait until the Gates of Pearl unfold before we are lost in wonder, in love, and in praise!

As the human spirit runs up the flag of unconditional surrender, the flesh capitulates, and the Lord of Life is Sovereign. Christ is all, and in all; and throughout our being all that Christ was, He now becomes in us! We drink of His Life, His Healing, His Saving Grace, and His Strength. His perfect Love has cast out all fear, and we learn to know HIM as the Only Wise God, the true mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus!

It is in Him we find our completeness; and we turn from agonizing, imploring petitioning to the realization that in finding Him is not only Life and Peace, but that it also brings the continuous assurance that he, in whom dwelleth this Christ of God, knows His felicity, bliss, and heavenly joy, as out of his innermost being he is privileged to enjoy the flow of those Rivers of Living Water which proceed out of the Throne of God, and whose ultimate destiny is that flowing back into God.

If, perchance, the trials of the road become heavy; we learn to find our sufficiency-not in human attainment-but in that Faith, THE FAITH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, which worketh by love; and which will surmount every difficulty, be it physical, material, or spiritual. This sufficiency can be found only in the outworking of the Indwelling Christ, for it is in Him and through Him that all our needs are met.

