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"CHRIST THE ONLY HOPE"

John 6:68

There are many pathetic situations revealed in the earthly ministry of Jesus. Angry Jews followed him with stones in their hands.

Whom do men say that I am?

Whom do ye say that I am?

He began his ministry in Judea -- then went to Galilee. Some of the crowds began to leave him. He said to the twelve will ye also go - V. 67. Peter answered V. 68 "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The twelve remained at His side. He was their hope.

Albert Schweitzer made a study of Christ at the Seminary at Strasbourg. He had books crammed from the floor to ceiling with books about Jesus in German, French, and English. When he wrote his own book "The Quest Of The Historical Jesus" he ended with these words --

He comes to us as one unknown,
As of old, by the lakeside,
He came to those who knew him not.

He speaks to us the same word:

"Follow Thou Me!"

And sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfill for our time.

He commands,
And to those who obey him,
Whether they be wise or simple,
He will reveal himself in the toils,
The conflicts,
The sufferings
Which They shall pass through
In his fellowship, and,
In an ineffable mystery,
They shall learn in their own experience --
Who he is.

I. THERE ARE AT LEAST FOUR THINGS THAT TEST OUR ATTACHMENT TO CHRIST.

1. Intellectual - what if we should give up on Christ. What is there for us then? *Charles S. Hook with 1st CR - All Star Rand - 4*

What if through our intellect we dispose of the question on certain mysteries --
what can we gain by turning from Christ?

Did you know it is easier to spoil a picture than to paint one -- to pluck a flower than to put one back on the stem -- to demolish a statue than to carve one out of marble.

Everything in our religion appeals to reason. Joseph Parker said "Religion is reason on her knees, faith is reason on wings. Christianity is reason on the cross on the way to the crown."

Do not give up on the person with intellectual difficulties, even though he cannot understand, wait, trust, and pray with him.

Some of the doctrines of the church have not always been clear to you, but today you have belief and great joy in God's majesty and power.

2. [7] Trials a means of testing.

We cannot understand men turning away from Christ because suffering must be faced.

Great souls have always graduated at the college of Hard Knocks.

It is like tuning the instrument for sweeter music.

What if our plans have been changed, our hopes blighted, our distress indescribable. We need not forsake Christ. For to whom shall we go if we depart from Him.

3. [7] Sin is a test.

Slowly yet surely the cord of fellowship has been strained. It was in the beginning one brief moment of pleasure, but in the pursuit of it we sold our birthright, and if we go away from Christ, what could we gain?

Nothing but an accusing conscience -- long sleepless nights -- distressing days -- an awful experience in the end.

Backsliding is an old sin -- it began in the days of Adam; continued until the time of the flood and broke forth in the nation of Israel.

Nothing more pathetic -- God's cry over his wandering people when he exclaims, "How can I give you up?"

We are not surprised to see men drifting in these days -- In Old Testament Enoch walked with God, others lost step with him. In New Testament Peter denied him, Judas betrayed. In this present time sin has touched us.

4. Religious privilege is a test.

If ever a man had an opportunity it was Judas. He was called, a constant attendant, witness to miracles, hearer of sermons, a friend of Peter, James, and John yet ship wrecked for eternity.

You have had privileges -- recollection of a noble father, a perfect mother, good training. But these are not enough. Do you really know God?

You may lose fellowship with Christ because you follow afar off -- peace and power are gone.

Practice of sin will rob us of fellowship.

Neglect of the Bible will take joy out of our experience.

Indifference to prayer will take from us the power of holy living.

These are some of the things that test our attachment to Christ --

intellectual, trials, sins, and privileges!

II. TO WHAT DO WE OWE OUR ATTACHMENT TO CHRIST?

1. Parental Consecration.

Many owe their present position to their birth. We have been brought into relationship with Christ because of some saintly mother or Godly father.

John McNeil heard a great preacher preach and determined to be a Christian. Went home and found his mother sleeping. Entering her room he aroused her and told her he had become a Christian and that he hoped to preach. Putting her arms about his neck she said to him, "Johnny, my lad, I prayed for this before you were born."

Parental consecration -- many owe much to the fact when they were small parents placed them before God on the altar. Nothing could be more beautiful than the faith of a parent asking God to direct and control.

An Evangelist was preaching to the Indians. He made a strong appeal of a collection to be given to other Indians. He asked them to make the very best gift they had. When the baskets had been passed down the aisle there came to the front a big Indian, his wife walking by his side and a little boy between them. The Indian said, "You told us to give the very best we had to God. Our best is not money but it is this little child. And without a smile he said, we could not put him into the basket, so we brought him to you. You may take him away if you please, and we will never see him again. Only remember he is God's child."

There are many blessings of life if we traced them back, we would find the source

Parental Consecration.

2. No where else to go a second reason for our attachment to Christ.

Peter could find no one else to turn. Some have tried the world and pleasure -- tried sin -- but were forced to say "what can wash away my sin? And they had no answer to this -- "Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Sad to sell what we have for mess of pottage.

III. WHAT OUR ATTACHMENT TO CHRIST WILL DO

1. Give me the answer to suffering.

This mystery receives light from Isa. 43:2-3. "When Thou passest through the waters, I will be with Thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow Thee; when Thou walkest through the fire, Thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon Thee. For I am Jehovah, Thy God, the Holy one of Israel, Thy Saviour; I have given Egypt as Thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in Thy stead."

I cannot account for suffering away from him.

2. Give me the answer to disappointment.

Every plan of mine that is broken today, I can hear him say "Thou knowest not now, but Thou shalt know hereafter."

Every turn of the way we meet those with sorrow and I have but the tenderest sympathy. I have often said the words of Jesus to the sick "My grace is sufficient". Christ is the only hope! 2 Cor. 12:9.

Dr. John L. Hill led a strong man, who was simply broken hearted, by the loss of his only son. Finally, the man grasped that verse "My grace is sufficient for Thee." He found peace. Years later he told Dr. Hill, my daily prayer is one of Thanksgiving for grace for the past day -- and a petition for grace for the day ahead. He found his way out of grief. He left his concerns in the hands of Jesus and rested all upon grace.

Those who depart from God have no Bible, no shepherd, no refuge, no peace, he goes hopeless into eternity. Sin has rendered him helpless. No hope is death. Unbelief has rolled a stone against the door and said goodbye forever.

God's spirit enters a person when he becomes a Christian. So long as he lives, he is the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

✓ But when he dies his spirit goes to God who gave it.

And the body is placed in the tomb to wait the coming of the Lord.

This same Spirit of God keeps watch over that tomb until the resurrection morn, guarding it. The grave has lost its terror and death has been robbed of its gloom.

To whom shall we go? If we turn from Christ -- He is our only hope for the future -- He is our only hope for today.

Without him life is not worth living. Trust him now; serve Him to the end and by and by we shall see him face to face. Jesus is standing now with outstretched hands, saying "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Stranger in The straw - is Jesus!