

The Fullness of Christ

"The Christian's Journey," or, "The Patriarch's Emigration to Egypt"

By [Octavius Winslow](#)

When the news reached Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and return to the land of Canaan, and bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land.'

"You are also directed to tell them, 'Do this: Take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father and come. Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.' "

So the sons of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. And this is what he sent to his father: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey. Genesis 45:16-23

This is not the first occasion, as the reader will have noticed, that the patriarch Jacob, the father of Joseph, is introduced in the narrative. We have seen him, amid accumulating and deepening sorrows, bend like a mighty oak before the storm, in bitterness and anguish of soul exclaiming, "All these things are against me!" It is in another and a happier point of light we view him now- summoned to go down into Egypt to see and embrace the son whose supposed death he had so long and so sorely deplored.

Beloved, there is a bright light in every dark cloud of the Christian's pilgrimage from earth to glory. It is not all gloom and dreariness- simple, unmingled, and unmitigated woe. The path is variegated, the stones which pave it are of many colors, the mosaic so exquisite in its combination and form as none but a Divine hand could have laid. Thus was it with Jacob, and thus is it with all the "sons of Jacob." If the Lord breaks up our earthly resting-place, as the eagle stirs up her nest, it is but to lead us by a way we knew not, into a deeper experience of His love, a closer acquaintance with Himself, and a more perfect fitness in grace and holiness for heaven. Thus was it with the patriarch whose history we are now to consider. The three points in this stage of the narrative illustrating Christ and His

people are- the JOURNEY, the PROVISION for the journey, and the COMMAND.

What a new and unexpected chapter in Jacob's history was this! At an advanced period of life, at a time when its sun seemed touching the horizon, when, as one would suppose, all his thoughts and arrangements and feelings would cluster around the last, the final, the most solemn stage of his pilgrimage, lo! he is summoned by the providence of God to leave his country, relinquish his home, and set out upon a long, tedious, and perilous journey. We must suppose, too, that there would be much in this step that was trying to his faith; much that would depress, grieve, and sadden him. It was no light matter for Jacob to abandon this sacred and beloved spot, with all its fond, hallowed associations, and, at his time of life, undertake this long and tiresome journey.

But, beloved, we know not what God may call us to, just at the very time we are supposing that life's weary pilgrimage is about to terminate. Well, be it so; God will not summon you at the close of life, at a period, perchance, when you are sighing for repose, longing for perfect quietude, to any service, mission, or trial, in which He has not purposes of love, and thoughts of peace to accomplish in your history and experience, and for which He will not prove "the Almighty God" - God all-sufficient.

What is our Christian course but a journey? Jacob's was from Canaan into Egypt, but the Christian's is from Egypt into Canaan; and this makes all the difference. God, by His sovereign grace, has brought us out of our moral Egypt, delivered us from the iron furnace, the tyranny of Satan, the bond-service of sin, in which by nature we are involved. By a mighty and strong arm, He has rescued us, and set our face fully towards Canaan, into which blessed land He will ultimately and certainly bring us.

The time of setting out on this spiritual journey differs. Some enter upon it early in life. Blessed, thrice blessed, are they who, through grace, turn their back on this world, its pleasures, its vanities, its joys, its seductions, its sins, and set out on the Christian journey; who in the season of youth are led to taste that earth's sweets are bitter, that all the world's promises are false, and that there is nothing in its most attractive joys that can satisfy the craving of the soul; who, by the blessed Spirit, have been led to see the depravity of their nature, the plague of their heart, the utter worthlessness of their own righteousness, and have gone to the altar of consecration, and dedicated the first, and the best, and the sweetest of their life to God, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt!"

Others set out on this great journey heavenward later in life. They are called in middle age, immersed, though they are, in life's cares and avocations; yet we do find that, by Divine and sovereign grace, the Lord can, in spite of all the worldliness, turmoil, and excitement by which they are surrounded, seek them

out, and bring them to see the utter emptiness and insufficiency of their worldly pursuits to make them truly happy.

Others are led to enter on this new and blessed course in old age. After many long years of unregeneracy, of living to self, to the world, and to sin, electing love and sovereign grace has sought and found its object. Just as the sun of human life was near its setting, the man of seventy or eighty winters has taken the first step towards Zion, setting out on that journey which, though commenced at the eleventh hour, will end in eternal glory. Oh the infinite patience of God! Yet all whom the Father has given to Christ in an everlasting covenant shall come to Him! Long years of rebellion, hoary hairs stained with many a sin, a heart petrified with long-persisted impenitence, unbelief, and worldliness, shall not rob Jesus of one of His crown jewels. He will search them out and bring them home, though the object of His love and the subject of His grace be the "sinner of a hundred years old." He can make a father in sin, a babe in Christ.

Then, beloved, what a view does this present to us of our pathway homeward! It is not through a paradise of beauty that we are traveling to heaven, but it is through a "waste howling wilderness." God found us in it, and through it He leads us home to Himself, and He will make us to know, by daily experience, that the world is but a desert. Not one sentence would I utter calculated to convey a false or gloomy idea of the religion of Christ. I believe that no individual knows what true happiness or real joy is until he knows Christ; and that no individual really enjoys God's temporal blessings, the beauties of creation, the marvellous works of His hands, until his spiritual eye has been opened; and then that new-created soul sees more glory in the works of God, more beauty in nature, more wonder in the marvellous operations of God's hands, than the most profound philosopher with the film of spiritual darkness still on his mental eye. The man who has not an eye, a spiritual eye, to see the beauties of revelation, the glory of Christ, and the kingdom of God, has a veil on his soul, and cannot trace, admire, and adore the wisdom and power, goodness and beauty of God, even in nature.

And yet, beloved, our God will make us see daily that the world through which we are passing is but a waste howling wilderness, a land of drought and peril, in which often the weary pilgrim longs for the wings of a dove that he may fly away and be at rest. It is a wearisome and perilous journey, and the soul of God's children is often discouraged because of the way. Oh, how often are you cast down by reason of the difficulties and straitness of the path. You find every path a strait and narrow one! The path of truth is strait; the path of Christian obedience is difficult; the path of Christian duty is oftentimes intricate and perplexing; the path of your domestic duties is often a very trying-one.

I pity the professed Christian pilgrim who does not find the world a desert, the path a narrow and strait one, and who is not led day by day to learn it out from deep experience that he is coming up out of a wilderness, yet leaning on his Beloved. Be suspicious of yourself, examine your own heart in the light of God's

Word if you find the Christian way to be an easy one, if you find the path to be a smooth one, if you find the world smiling on you, cheering you onward, seeking your fellowship, courting your society; suspect the real state of your own heart, and look well to your way; for, be assured of this, the more a man grows in grace and advances in the path of glory, the more will he learn that the world is a desert, the worldling a trifler, the way is perplexing; his own utter weakness and insufficiency, and that the resources of strength, wisdom, and grace which God has provided for him are all laid up in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another view of this part of the subject. Although the journey of Jacob was a long, wearisome, and perchance a perilous one, yet there was much to look forward to at its termination. The thought of meeting Joseph, of feeling the warm embrace of his son, the prospect of exchanging a land smitten with famine for a land luxuriating in plenty, must have flung many a gleam of sunshine on that dreary road, irradiating it with hope, and cheering it with the melody of song. Beloved; look to the end of the Christian journey. Look not at the roughness of the way; be not swallowed up with its difficulties; do not despond because of its privations. Oh, look to the end of the journey, especially you aged saints. There is a glorious life at the termination of the Christian course; there is "hope in your end:" it is the hope of being with Jesus; it is the prospect of seeing your beloved Lord; it is the glorious anticipation of feeling the embrace of His love; it is the blessed hope, the glorious hope, the certain hope, that when you have crossed the desert, and made the last stage of your journey, you will be forever with the Lord.

Oh, let the prospect, then, cheer and strengthen you! You will be less desponding, less depressed and discouraged by reason of the way, if you dwell more on its glorious, blessed, and sublime termination. Soon you will emerge from an arid desert into a beautiful garden, from a wilderness of storm into a paradise of beauty, from a land of scarceness and famine into a land of luxuriant richness and eternal sunshine. "For the Lord your God brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil, and honey; a land wherein you shall eat bread without scarceness, you shall not lack anything in it."

Observe, now, the PROVISION which Joseph made for this journey of his father and brethren. Let us just take two or three of the prominent points illustrative of the spiritual truths we wish to place before you. You will observe, in the first place, that Pharaoh commands Joseph to send conveyances for his father and his household from Canaan to Egypt. "Take wagons out of the land of Egypt. . . . And Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh." These were conveyances by which his father and his household were to be conducted in safety and comfort in their transit from Canaan into Egypt.

Beloved, God has provided every conveyance for the journey of the soul from

earth to heaven; He has anticipated all its exigencies, and has supplied all the spiritual helps by which we cross this desert world, and arrive safe in glory. Do not, I beseech you, overlook this wondrous unfolding of God's love to, and His care for, His Church. He has not left us to our own resources. In other words, He has not unkindly left us to find our way homeward by our own ingenuity or self-sustaining power. He has provided for the safe, the certain journey of your soul out of this Egypt, across this waste howling wilderness, into the celestial Canaan which the Lord has promised.

Shall I remind you, in the first place, what a divine help, what a powerful conveyance is HIS OWN WORD? God has given you this blessed Book to be the chart, the guide of your soul, passing to eternity. We do not need the light, the wisdom, the teaching of man to conduct us through the darkness, perils, and temptations of our course. Let us be diligent students of God's revealed Word, become more conversant with its glorious contents, dive deeper into its divine instructions, and we shall not then need the crude, diluted views of truth which emanate from human pens, perchance oftentimes bewildering, misguiding, and alluring us by teaching fatal to our spiritual advance, holiness, and comfort.

Oh, that God might make us better acquainted with this precious truth, that the BIBLE, His revealed Word, is our divinely-provided and complete guide to heaven! He that has the truths of this Book written on his heart, inwrought in his soul's experience, shall not miss the way. The Holy Spirit his teacher, he shall not err in the path of holiness, nor be left to his own blind understanding, nor be tossed about "by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive;" but, committing himself to the light, teaching, and guidance of this inspired volume, he will find that his spiritual Joseph has supplied him with a safe conveyance from earth to heaven in the blessed instructions, doctrines, precepts, and promises of God's own revealed Word.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL is another divinely-appointed conveyance for our souls' advance homeward. The Christian ministry is an ordained institution of Christ. It is appointed for the instruction of the Church of God in truth, righteousness, and holiness, and for the calling in of God's people; and he who would wilfully and knowingly ignore this institution of God, would ignore any ordinance or doctrine of the Bible, and would take from the Church in her homeward march one of her most powerful auxiliaries and aids. We read, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Oh, yes, beloved, I need not appeal to your experience how often you have had occasion to thank God for a living, Christ-exalting, holy ministry; how often you have praised Him for the instruction conveyed to your mind, the consolation distilled into your heart, the sunshine reflected on your dark and gloomy way, through this divinely-appointed channel and blessed agency. And thus the

Christian ministry, originating with God, given to the Church by her great Head, has proved one of the divine conveyances for the spiritual transit of the believer across the desert into the glorious Canaan to which God has promised to bring His people.

Evince your gratitude for its appointment, and show your estimate of its value, by sustaining it with your fervent, believing prayers; remembering that your progress in spiritual knowledge and grace will be in the same ratio with that of your minister. He can only instruct and aid you as he himself is taught and enriched of God. Therefore, let both him and his ministry be the constant burden of your prayers. Remember that "a praying people makes a preaching minister." And, oh, how deeply does he need your most fervent and continuous intercessions! He has infirmities and temptations, trials and sorrows, which, perhaps, the deep sanctity of his office veils well-near from every eye. Because he preaches so gloriously of the love of Christ, we think that his own love is never chilled. Because he expatiates so earnestly on the mighty power of faith, we deem that his own is never tried. Because he pours forth such strong consolations, we imagine that his own heart is a stranger to sorrow. Ah! he treads a path of which his flock but little know. For them he is tempted, for them he is tried, for them he is comforted: yes, for their sakes and his own, he is often accounted as a sheep for the slaughter- prepared to sacrifice health, wealth, ease, fame, in a word, his own self, might he present them as his joy and crown in the day of the Lord. Pray, then, for your minister!

And let me add, what a divinely-appointed and blessed conveyance is THE CHURCH of God itself! This may seem a paradox, but it is true. The Church can help the Church, saint can help saint, brother can help brother; and this is one of the wise arrangements of Christ. He has not appointed angels to support, and teach, and strengthen, and sympathize with His saints; but fellow-saints, fellow-believers, fellow-sinners ransomed by grace. Now, the Church is a most powerful agent for the advancement of its members. When the saints of God are walking closely with their heavenly Father, are living in near communion with eternity, and are living under much of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, oh, what powerful helpers are they of the saints; and how often God strengthens, supports, and comforts one weak, timid, desponding, sorrowing brother, by the strength, the grace, the sympathy of another!

Never forget, beloved, what a help you may be to some poor weary traveler across this sandy desert, often desponding and cast down by the weariness of the way- how much, by kindness and sympathy, you may comfort, sustain, and soothe him, and thus smooth and speed him heavenward. The Church of God is to be nourished by the Church of God. Every joint is to supply some ministry for the whole body, every member is to sympathize with the other members, each contributing to the vigor, healthfulness, and advancement of the whole; so that there is not a member of the body, the lowest, the weakest and most insignificant, who may not, and does not, contribute something to the upholding,

the strengthening, and the advancement of the Church of God in its transit from this desert home to heaven. "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

And yet another and a powerful conveyance to heaven is the THRONE OF GRACE. Nothing so advances, I had almost said wafts, the soul towards heaven as prayer. Praise is a mighty help, and when we are full of real praise, we approximate nearer to what our employment in heaven will be than when in prayer. But, nevertheless, prayer is the more appropriate engagement of the Church on earth; and when this divine breath expands its sails, our bark is borne rapidly and safely forward to the celestial haven. Poor, weak, timid brother! God has given you the conveyance of a throne of grace; make great use of it. Often get into this heavenly chariot, with all your burdens, and cares, and griefs, and see how swiftly and gently it will waft your soul towards God. Your prayers will come up to his holy habitation, even into heaven. Your true Joseph has sent it to uplift your mind, your heart, your soul often to Himself; and, ascending in this conveyance, your breathings will touch the throne. The Lord waits to be gracious; and you have but to plead the name of Jesus, to enter into the holiest by His blood, and you will have power with God, and shall prevail.

Oh, what a mighty strengthener and lifter of the soul is prayer! "As the naturally weak ivy, which, if it had no support, would only grovel on the earth, by adhering to some neighboring tree or building, or entwining itself about it, thus grows and flourishes, and rises higher and higher, and the more the winds blow and the tempest beats against it, the closer it adheres, and the nearer it clings, and the faster its fibres embrace that which supports it, and it remains uninjured; so the Christian, naturally weak, by prayer connects himself with the Almighty, and the more dangers and difficulties beset him, the more closely they unite him to his God; he reaches towards, and bears upon, and clings to, the throne of grace, and is strengthened with divine strength."

We come to the PROVISION for the way; it is stated in the 23d verse what that provision was, "To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. And this is what he sent to his father: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey." It was very considerate and kind of Joseph to make this ample provision for the temporal necessities and needs of the whole house.

Is our Joseph less thoughtful, less careful and considerate? Oh, no! Christ has provided for every step of our journey home to His glorified self. You shall not find a difficulty in your path, a peril in your way, there shall not spring up a new need, trial, or affliction, but God will have provided for it in the fulness of his dear Son, and in the supplies of His everlasting covenant of grace. Oh, how should

this cheer, strengthen, and animate us; how should it keep you calm, cheerful, and trustful! Leave your future all with Christ, who has anticipated it all.

Suppose tomorrow you meet some new exigency, confront some new trial, face some new foe; be it so- you will find that your Joseph has gone before you in it all. When trouble comes, the grace will come that sustains it; when perplexity comes, the counsel will come that guides it; when grief comes, the soothing will come that allays it. You will find, beloved, that Christ has gone before you; that He has provided an ample supply for all the spiritual exigencies that may spring up at each step of your journey.

Once more would I remind you of the "good things" which God has provided for the maintenance of His Church in her travel through the wilderness- for the sustenance of each individual saint. Well may we exclaim with the Psalmist, "Oh, how great is your goodness which you have laid up for those who fear you!" All the wealth of the eternal covenant of grace is ours- all the fulness that is in Christ Jesus is ours- all the treasures of the everlasting gospel are ours -all the promises of God are ours. These are our "provisions for the way"- "laden with corn and bread and meat."

Why, then, should we faint, despond, or despair? Shall we in our daily march, in our conflict with new trials, new temptations, new exigencies, succumb to our circumstances, when faith, looking at its inexhaustible resources, may confront them without a fear? "My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory," (or, His glorious riches,) "by Christ Jesus." There is bread in our Father's house, and to spare- plenty of corn in Egypt- all strength, all restraining grace, all constraining love, all human sympathy, and all divine power in our Immanuel, God ever with us, our exalted, enthroned, and glorified Joseph. He who is leading us to heaven will bring us there at His own charge and beneath His own convoy.

But Joseph not only supplied maintenance, but also clothing. This illustrates a very precious and glorious spiritual provision of Christ. Joseph was a liberal man, and he devised liberal things; a wealthy man, and he gave affluently; he was a prince, and he provided in a princely way. Our true Joseph supplies ample clothing for the souls of His saints in their homeward journey; He has provided not one clothing only, but varied raiments; and it is well for us to know what they are, that we may put them on and wear them. The first He has provided is the robe of righteousness, which covers, beautifies, and fully justifies the saints of the Most High; that glorious and perfect righteousness in which we stand forever accepted, and in which, were we to die at this moment, we should appear before God, not only "unblameable" (that is not a good translation, for we are blamable, but unblamed) "and unproveable" (or, unproved) "in His sight," there being against us nothing whatever which the law, justice, or sin can possibly allege.

Now, this is the righteousness that exonerates you if you believe. Christ has

provided it, the Spirit invests you with it, faith receives it, and God justifies you through it. "It is God who justifies." Realizing your investiture in this divine clothing, you may pursue your journey through life with the peace of God ruling in your heart, and the hope of glory shedding a bright halo around its close. No doubt or fear respecting the future need disturb your mind while your faith can enfold itself in the "righteousness of Christ, which is unto all and upon all those who believe." Justified by faith in Christ, you shall surely enter heaven, and be found in Him, "the Lord our Righteousness."

There is another garment provided by our glorious Joseph. Christ freely supplies, not only the robe of righteousness, but the garment of sanctification. Christ himself is our sanctification. As Christ, by the Spirit grows in us, and we become conformed to the image of Christ, He becomes our sanctification. We grow holy only as we approximate to the nature, the spirit, and image of Christ. This is true holiness, and nothing else is. Holiness does not consist in fastings, in prayers, in religious duties, rites, and ceremonies. How many there are in the present day who are religiously and rigidly observing all these external things, dreaming of holiness and fitness for heaven, without one particle of real sanctification! What a fearful and fatal delusion! Your sanctification, beloved, is Christ- Christ growing in you, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

This is the holy clothing Christ has provided for your journey homeward. You have to battle with indwelling sin, and to conflict with outward temptation. But never forget that you are to live upon Christ as much for your sanctification as for your justification; that His grace is pledged to subdue your iniquities, to arm you in the conflict, to give you skill in the holy fight, and the final victory over all your enemies; and in proportion as Christ grows in you, you will grow in a true hatred of sin, in a deepening love of holiness, and thus in real, gospel sanctification.

In addition to the robe of righteousness, and the garment of sanctification, with which the believer is invested, there are the adornments of the Spirit, the ornaments of the Christian character, the divine graces which ever accompany the righteousness of the saints, evidencing and illustrating their high and holy relationship to God. Lovely spectacle! A sinner clothed with the righteousness of Christ, all glorious within through the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and in his external and visible walk exhibiting, in their beautiful combination, the different graces and fruits of the Spirit. Well may the believer exclaim, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels."

Are these sacred graces of the Spirit exhibited in our life, beloved? Is our religion lovely? is our Christian life thus adorned? Are we walking in the Spirit, and not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh? Is Christ's robe of righteousness girdled around us

by the Spirit's graces, thus walking with Jesus in white, and in the joy and comfort of the Holy Spirit? Oh, you temples of God through the Spirit, how holily, and softly, and warily should you walk! A temple of the Holy Spirit!- heaven has not a more sacred and God-loved structure! Yet how shall we preserve it from defilement, or cleanse it when defiled, but by a constant application of the "blood of sprinkling?"

Indwelling sin there must be, outward sin there will be; but the Fountain is open, and in it we must daily wash. His blood alone will keep the conscience clean, the mind peaceful, and the heart in close, filial communion with God.

We thus reach the COMMAND of Joseph to his brethren- "Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours." This command was imperative. They were not to allow their eye to spare any of the earthly possessions they were now relinquishing. Nor were they to repine or regret that they were abandoning their country, homestead, and property, since the land where they were emigrating, with all its wealth and abundance, was theirs. The injunction was wise. To have burdened themselves with the things they were leaving would but have increased their anxieties and care- have retarded their progress and prolonged their journey. One thought was to shed its sunshine upon their way- the thought of seeing Joseph, and of perfect immunity from neediness and toil amid the abundance and repose of Egypt.

Beloved, how deep the spiritual teaching here! How holy and unearthly the precept it enjoins upon heaven's emigrant! We are passing through this world to glory. And the command of our Lord is, that we be constantly forgetting the things that are seen and temporal, nor regard the world, its possessions and attractions, in the anticipation of the world of glory that is before us. Our Jesus says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth. Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on." The follower of Christ is to consider earth's wealth and glory, this world's pleasures and politics, as nothing to him; and constantly detaching himself from the things that are earthly and temporal, he is to be pressing forward to things heavenly and eternal.

How many a child of God, who should be growing in grace and advancing in heavenliness, is constantly clogging his feet with earth's clay, weaving around him the net and the mesh of earthly, carnal, sensual engagements, thus impeding his spiritual progress! How can he grow in grace and heavenly mindedness if this be so? It is utterly impossible. You must become more dead to earth, more crucified to the world, and realize more the power of Christ's resurrection in your soul. This is the apostolic exhortation, "If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth."

Your true Joseph, your blessed Jesus, says to you emphatically, "Regard not your earthly possessions, your belongings, your worldly advantage; regret not the loss and sacrifice of home, friends, and property, that you make for your attachment to me, my service, and my cause; count it all as vanity and dross; gird up your mind to endure my shame, to share my reproach, yes, to deny all ungodliness, to come out of the world and be my cross-bearing disciples. I have laid up for you treasure in heaven, infinite wealth, an inheritance that is incorruptible, riches that perish not, joys that glut not, a crown of glory that fades not away. Count the world as loss, all created good as dross, and the creature itself as vanity, for the glory, and honor, and immortality that will soon be yours."

Thus would our blessed Lord teach, cheer, and animate us in our heavenly journey, by bidding us cease from needless earthly care, and cultivate the spirit, the mind, and the hopes of pilgrims traveling to the celestial city! Consonant with this is the whole tenor of God's Word. How impressive and emphatic its exhortations! "Depart, depart, go out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go out of the midst of her; you be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." "Let us go forth therefore unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach." "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." God give us grace to lay to heart these exhortations to heavenly mindedness! We are but crossing a desert land on our way home to Christ. He has promised that our bread and our water shall be sure, and that we shall lack no good thing. Upon Him, then, let us cast our care, anxious for nothing except how we may so walk as to please Him in all things.

This life of faith, by which thus we become dead to the world, will soon conduct us to the last stage of our homeward journey. He who was with us in all its preceding stages, will be with us in this its last and closing, its most solemn and eventful one. Think not, O weary, trembling pilgrim, that He will abandon you then to resources of your own. Oh no! Jesus has provided for the hour and details of His people's departure. He will send with the conveyance that is to bear you home to glory, grace, strength, and hope for the solemn transit. Christ will be with you then; and, Christ with you, all will be well- seeing JESUS, you "shall not see death."

"When my last hour is close at hand.
My last sad journey taken,
Do you, Lord Jesus, by me stand,
Let me not be forsaken.
O Lord! my spirit I resign
Into Your loving hands divine,
It is safe within Your keeping."

"Countless as sands upon the shore,

My sins may then appal me;
Yet, though my conscience vex me sore,
Despair shall not enthrall me,
For, as I draw my latest breath,
I'll think, Lord Jesus, upon Your death,
And there find consolation."

"Limb of your body, Lord, am I,
This makes me joyful-hearted;
In death's dark gloom and misery,
From You I am not parted.
And when I die, I die to Thee,
Eternal Life was won for me
By Your last hour of anguish."

"I shall not in the grave remain,
Since You death's bonds have severed;
By hope with You to rise again,
From fear of death delivered,
I'll come to You, wherever You are,
Live with You, never from You part;
Therefore to die is rapture."

"And so to Jesus Christ I'll go,
My longing arms extending;
So fall asleep in slumber deep,
Slumber that knows no ending;
Until Jesus Christ, God's only Son,
Opens the gates of bliss- leads on
To heaven, to life eternal!" (Nicholas Hermann)

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