

# JOYING IN GOD AND WAITING FOR CHRIST.

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By J. N. D.

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# JOYING IN GOD AND WAITING FOR CHRIST.

2 THESSALONIANS III. 5.

THERE are two things, which constitute the joy of a Christian, to be his on the road, and the object constantly before his heart. The first is, the hope of the coming of the Lord ; and the second is, present communion and fellowship with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these two cannot be separated without loss to our souls ; for we cannot have all the profit without both of them. If we are not looking for the coming of the Lord, there is nothing whatever that can separate us in the same from this present evil world ; neither will Christ Himself be so much the object before the soul ; nor yet shall we be able, in the same measure, to apprehend the mind and counsels of God about the world.

Again, if this hope be looked at apart from present communion and fellowship with God, we shall not have present power, the heart being enfeebled from the mind being too much occupied and overborne by the evil around ; for we cannot be really looking for God's Son from heaven without, at the same time, seeing the world's utter rejection of Him, and that the world is going wrong ; its wise men having no wisdom, and all going on to judgment ; the principles of evil loosening all bonds, etc. ; and the soul becomes oppressed, and the heart sad ; but if through grace, the christian is in present communion and fellowship with God, his soul stands steady, and is calm and happy before God, because there is a fund of blessing in Him which no circumstances can ever touch or change. The evil tidings are heard, the sorrow is seen, but his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, which carries him far above every circumstance. Brethren, we all want this. To walk steadily with God we need both this fellowship and this hope.

I do not believe that a Christian can have his heart scripturally right unless he is looking for God's Son from heaven. There could be no such thing as attempting to set the world right if its sin in rejecting Christ were fully seen, and moreover there never will be a correct judgment formed of the character of the world until that crowning sin be apprehended by the soul. To a Christian who is looking and waiting for Christ to come from heaven, Christ Himself is unspeakably more the object before the soul. It is not only that I shall get to heaven and be happy, but that the Lord Himself is coming from heaven for me, and all the church with me. It is this that gives its character to the joy of the saint. As Christ Himself says, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also"—when I find my delight, then shall you find yours also, I with you, and you with me,—“For ever with the Lord.” You may think to find good, or to produce good in man, but you will never find waiting for Christ in man. In

the world, the first Adam may be cultivated, but it is the first Adam still ; the second Adam will never be found there, being rejected by the world. And it is the looking for this rejected Lord which stamps the whole character and walk of the saints.

Then again, there is another thing connected with my waiting for God's Son from heaven. I have not yet got with one I love, and while waiting for Him I am going through the world tired and worn with the spirit and character of everything around me ; and the more I am in communion with God, the more keenly shall I feel the spirit of the world to be a weariness to me, although God still upholds my soul in fellowship and communion with Himself. Therefore Paul says in 2 Thessalonians i., "To you who are troubled, rest with us." So then I get rest to my spirit now in waiting for Christ, knowing that when He comes He will have everything His own way. For the coming of the Lord, which will be trouble to the world, will be to the saints full and

everlasting rest. Still, it is not that we are to be "weary and faint in our minds." It is not a right thing to be weary of the service and conflict. Oh, no! rather let us be victorious every day. Still, it is not rest to be fighting.

However, when walking with God, it is not so much thinking of combat, as joying in God Himself.

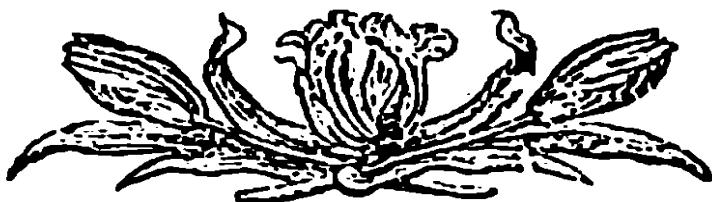
This I shall know all the better when I am in the glory; my soul will be enlarged, and more capable of enjoying what God really is, but it is the same kind of joy I have now as I shall have when He comes to be glorified in His saints; only greater in degree. And if this joy in God is now in my soul in power, it hides the world from me altogether, and becomes a spring of love to those in the world. For though I may be tired of the combat, still, I feel there are people in the world that need the love I enjoy, and I desire that they should possess it, as it is the joy of what God is for me that sustains me, and carries me through all the conflict. So that our souls should be exercised

on both the fellowship and the hope ; for if I look for Christ's coming apart from this fellowship and communion with God, I shall be oppressed, and shall not go on. When the love of God fills my heart, it flows out towards all those that have need of it, towards saints and sinners according to their need ; for if I feel the exercise of the power of this love in my heart, I shall be going out to serve others, as it is the power of this love that enables me to go through the toil and labour of service, from that attachment to Christ which leads to service, though through suffering for His sake. If my soul is wrapped up in the second Adam, attachment to Christ puts its right stamp upon all that is of the first Adam.

When this love has led out into active service, then the conflict, doubtless, will be found as in 2 Corinthians i., there it is present blessing in the midst of trial. But in 2 Thessalonians i., it is tribulations, and not rest out of it, until the Lord comes ; "that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom

of God, for which ye also suffer." In 2 Corinthians i. 3, 4, there is present blessing in the midst of the trial—" who comforteth us in all our tribulation ;" so that if the sufferings for Christ's sake be ours, there are at the same time, the comfortings of God in the soul. How rich a spring of blessing is this in return for this poor little trouble of mind! I get God pouring into my soul the revelation of Himself; I get God communicating Himself to my soul; for it is really that. I find it to be a present thing; it comes home to me, to my heart, the very joy of God, God delighting in me, and I in God. He identifies Himself with those who suffer for Him. There is no time for God's coming into a soul like the time of trial, for in no way does He so fully reveal Himself to the soul as when He is exercising it in trial. There is astonishing power in this; for the amazing power with which Christ is to us present power and consolation is by His coming in, in present living power, even whilst these poor

mortal bodies are unchanged. Ours are not yet redeemed with power, though they are bought with a price ; but we have in Christ the life and the power ; and, in spite of all, God is pouring in these consolations when we are in tribulations, shewing the kind of power in Christ by which I am lifted up above every circumstance of trial. “ The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.”



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