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# Lowly • Loyal • Loving

*A BRIEF MEMORIAL*

*OF A*

*GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT*

Stamant  
— 12

“He that waiteth on his Master shall be honoured.”  
—PROV. xxvii. 18

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**Dedicated to his Widow**

**THE DEAR FRIEND**

**WHO HAS BEEN AND IS SO VERY**

**MUCH TO THE WRITER**

# Lowly • Loyal • Loving

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## I

## True

WHAT is a true Christian ?

One who believes all, receives all, obeys all : believes all that God says ; receives all that God offers ; obeys all that God commands. That man is true to his God, true to himself, and true to his brother-man.

I am going to speak to you of one whose single aim it was to be thus true. And beyond a few incidents relating to his early life which have been furnished me, all I am saying to you has come within



the range of my own personal observation.

Joseph Stancomb was born at Trowbridge in the year 1818. At a very early age indeed, whilst yet a child, God taught him that lesson which some of us so slowly learn : the lesson that he was a sinner. And whilst still very young, the gracious Hand that pointed out to him his personal sinfulness led him to a personal Saviour. When he was about fourteen or fifteen he made confession of his faith, and was baptized by Mr. George Müller, of Bristol. At the age of twenty or thereabouts he was led to prayer and study with a special view to the Lord's service ; and from that day to the very day of his death his heart's desire was that God might be magnified through him.

Now, having just sketched this

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slight outline of his early life, let me go on to speak of what I myself saw in him during the last few years of his pilgrimage, when it was my privilege to live near him and observe the gracious things God had done for His servant.

## II

“My Christ is all in all”

“WITHIN my heart reigns alone [and it ought thus to reign alone] faith in my Lord Jesus Christ, who is the beginning, middle, and end of all the thoughts that occupy my mind by day and night.” A remarkable saying this, and well worthy of the remarkable man who uttered it! \* None could say it whose heart and mind and will were not surrendered to the Lord.

Let us think for a moment what would be the special marks of such a Christian. I have thought of four :—

I. Love of the Holy Scriptures which testify of Christ.

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\* Martin Luther.

2. Love of access to the throne in the name of Christ.

3. Love of being nothing for the sake of Christ.

4. Love of walking in the footsteps of Christ.

And since all these marks were very conspicuous in Mr. Stancomb, I think we may apply to him the words of Luther.

Let us now consider one by one these several marks of a true disciple.

### III

#### The Bible

I. LOVE of the Holy Scriptures which testify of Christ. What was the Bible to Mr. Stancomb? Just what the literal sword was to the builders at Jerusalem: "The builders every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded."

Neh. iv.  
17, 18.

Such was the sword of the Spirit to him, a weapon of defence that was never laid aside. With him the Bible stood in all its unique glory as the one infallible book in the world ; as the living Voice of the living God ; as absolutely wise, holy, and true, because its source is Him who is the fountain of wisdom, holiness, and truth ; as the wonderful Book which, though

Eph. vi.  
17.



assailed on every side by the mists of error, superstition, and infidelity, rises majestically above all, bearing on its unsullied page "the infinite, unalterable veracity of God," just as we see some lofty mountain height towering above the clouds that gather round it, pure in its own pure crown of perpetual snow. To this Book he surrendered all : his intellect, his will, his heart, and his life. From this Book there was no appeal. He honoured the Word, studied the Word, loved the Word, meditated on the Word, and eminently was the Word fitted in his lips. He was a man of whom it might truly be said, he took, and ever had girded by his side, that "sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God."

Prov.  
xxii. 18.

Go and do likewise. Give the Bible the very first place : first in

your heart, first in your mind, first in the order of time in which you read it. Before you open any other book, or open the newspaper, or open your morning letters, open your Bible. Gather the manna while the dew is falling. Even if you have but a few minutes only (no time which you can call your own in the early morning), devote those few minutes to this sacred study. The Word will help you all through the day. It will be a strain of Heavenly music whose "linked sweetness long drawn out" will linger with you hour after hour, counteracting by its Divine harmony the too often discordant notes which earth's many voices present to your ear. But do not be satisfied with these chimes of the morning. They are all very well, but they are not enough. Ask God to give you a quiet time ere your busy day

closes, in which, like Mary, you may sit at Jesus's feet, like her, "forgetting all else but Him who spake as none else had ever done." \* There in the calm of that Holy Presence, the world outside, you will grow in the knowledge of Him whom to know is life and liberty, peace and power.

Love the Old Testament. Remember it was your Lord's entire Bible, the Bible He read and revered, loved and followed. In a life whose lofty standard—complete conformity to the will of His Father—was uniformly reached, we find the Bible everywhere : in His wilderness conflict ; in His public ministry ; in His death agony ; in all the glory of His resurrection triumph. The Incarnate Word and the written Word were inseparable.

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\* Edersheim.

Luke  
39.

Matt. i  
4, 7, 1  
Luke i  
17.  
Psalms  
xxii. 1  
xxxi.  
Luke  
xxiv. 2



Learn to see Christ in the Old Testament. How it will deepen our love for these inspired compositions when, in addition to all the beauty we find on the surface, we fetch up from the depths of type and prophecy, psalm and proverb, the Pearl of great price ! The intrinsic glory of our Lord's Bible is veiled from our eyes unless we see Him there.

Just imagine, by way of illustration, a lovely landscape lying in the dim twilight of early morning. Look at the same landscape after the sun has risen. What a difference, one reminding us of beauty in death, the other of beauty in life ! Now, no one who has any pretension to intellect can be blind to the beauty of the earlier Scriptures ; but only Christ's instructed disciples, only those who ask the Lord by His Spirit to draw near and

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make the walk to Emmaus a personal, present experience—only those can know what Moses and the prophets are after the Sun of righteousness has arisen upon them, when from Genesis to Malachi all is quickened and transfigured, because bathed in the golden sunshine of Redeeming Love!

Love the New Testament. Put yourself back into New Testament times when you are reading it. Worship Him at Bethlehem ; stand by His cross ; go to His empty sepulchre. See the risen Lord ; hearken to His twofold word of promise and command, and thus become a witness to His resurrection. Receive the Apostolic epistles as written to you, telling you what God has wrought in you (perhaps it is yet to be done!), telling you what to believe and what to do, shaping your conduct in school-

room, parlour, kitchen, and neighbourhood.

Then anchor in Patmos. Behold with St. John the "rolling back of the veil," which till then had shrouded the future of the world's dark history and the Church's radiant hope.

One word of warning. Do not try to fathom mysteries. Much God reveals; much God conceals. And woe to the hand that seeks to open a door Divinely barred! The door remains as fast as ever, and the poor hand gets a sad wrench, sometimes is permanently disabled. To drop figures, the faith that would presume to open what God has shut is damaged in the attempt, if not destroyed. To adore where it cannot explore is the faith that honours God, and is honoured by Him.

To accept as true all God says,



*because He says it*, not because we understand it, is the only attitude for the finite mind to take as it reverently approaches through the Scriptures the Infinite Mind of God. To be satisfied to “know in part,” till the time come that we shall know as we are known, befits the creature, the servant, and the child.

## IV

### Prayer

2. LOVE of access to the throne in the name of Christ.

What was prayer to Mr. Stancomb? The habit of his life. He <sup>hess. 17.</sup>prayed "without ceasing." Anything that is habitual, we know, is not intermittent. It stays by us always. Prayer to the spiritual life is just what breathing is to the natural life: indispensable. The first and last moments of consciousness are given to prayer. Prayer is often on the lip and always in the heart of a devout believer. Where the spirit of prayer is lacking, there the spiritual life lacks vigour. The Christian whose example I am bringing before you

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was emphatically a man of prayer. "This is the man for prayer," said Mr. Moody one day as he summoned him to the platform. What a testimony this was! Positively there could be no higher one.

Supposing you were at Windsor Castle, and you wished to present a petition to the Queen, and some one by your side, pointing to a gentleman, said, "Oh, that is the man for speaking to the Queen!" What would you think of him? Why, that he was one whom her Majesty delighted to honour, and that your petition would be favourably received at his hands! Now, though we know that the only ground for acceptance of the petitioner or petition is Jesus, His precious Name and Mediation, still we know that answered prayer is largely promised to those who, through Divine grace, keep the



i John  
iii. 22.  
Psalm  
lxxxiv.  
II.

commandments. And there is no doubt that filial liberty of access and abundant returns to prayer are accorded by our loving Father to the dutiful members of His family. Not that I mean that answers come on account of our obedience. No, but refusals come on account of our disobedience. Let me repeat myself. We are heard solely on the ground of what Jesus is, of what Jesus has done ; but when God sees any child of His plucking the forbidden fruit, that child must have his back to the fatal tree, and his face towards his Father, before the parental hand can be laid on his head.

Psalm  
xvi. 18.  
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Is disobedience in our case staying the bountiful hand of our responding Lord? Let us search and see. And let us learn with Mr. Stancomb the deep secret of so abiding in Christ, so living in

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fellowship with Him, that we may be honoured with the royal Friendship, ever standing in the court and touching the golden sceptre of the Great King.

Did you ever hear the old fable that where "the glittering feet" of the rainbow touch there is treasure underneath? A mere fancy, of course, but it serves my purpose now. Prayer is like the beautiful bow. It spans heaven and earth, connects them together; and wherever it lights, whether on green pastures or desert places, whether on life's joys or sorrows, there will be treasure underneath.

Pray about everything, even the petty thorns, the tiny vexations. The dressmaker has spoilt your dress. Before you meet your dressmaker, meet your Lord. *Whatever tries the child may be committed to the Father.* Lay that down



as a rule that admits of no exception. "If the buzzing of a fly annoys me, I carry it to Jesus," said John Newton. Grave afflictions try the faith ; small vexations try the temper. Nothing will so tend to keep you sweet and calm as the habit of carrying everything to the Lord.

Yes, and invest even your joys with prayer. Ask that this joy—a pleasant day or a lifelong happiness—may be a golden link between your Lord and yourself. There may be joy-links as well as sorrow-links binding you closer to Him. We should get more happiness, I verily believe, if we used it as a link, and not a barrier ; and the way to do this is just to bring our sunny places under the magical touch of prayer. The "treasure-trove" will be the Divine companionship "more closely felt, more intimately nigh."

## V

### Humility

3. LOVE of being nothing for the sake of Christ.

What was self to Mr. Stancomb? Something to be set up and worshipped? Oh, no! Something to be laid in the dust and kept there by the power of God. He humbled himself. Of all the triumphs the Spirit of God wins in the human soul, I believe none is so great as when He conquers pride, vanity, and self-conceit. When we are so lowly in our own eyes that we do not mind being little in the estimation of others; when we so uniformly seek the lowest place for ourselves that we are willing to accept it when a neighbour's hand

selects it for us; when our language is, "My Lord first; my neighbour next; myself nowhere," then self is in the dust, and "Dagon has fallen on his face to the earth before the Lord."

1 Sam.  
v. 3.

Amongst the Divine favours so abundantly showered on the Christian of whom I am writing, one was humility in a remarkable degree. I hardly ever saw one so humble. Oh for more of this Christlike grace in the Church of Christ! Humility is the royal road to peace. "My soul continued sweetly engaged with God, though the praises of the people of Calcutta were in some degree an interruption of that sweet peace which is only to be found in being nothing before God." Thus wrote the sainted missionary Henry Martyn. Humility is the royal road to joy. "Awoke cast down



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by reason of my unprofitableness ; but, as is my wont, went out to look at God's works and meditate on Him. I sat on a stone in the garden, at my feet a bed of chrysanthemums of many colours. The Lord spoke to me by them. He had made them all of one kind, though diverse in colour and size. So in His Church various graces and degrees of grace. I marvelled which I liked best, scarlet, pink, yellow, white. All were beautiful. Which grace would I have, if the Lord gave me my choice : faith ? wisdom ? knowledge ? courage ? After much thought I chose the white—humility. 'Yea, Lord, give me this grace : to be humble ; to be like Thee ; to be content to be white in Thy holiness, and nothing more. Thou wilt serve Thyself by me.' My soul was instantly filled with joy. The cloud vanished,

and has not since returned." Thus wrote the "devout soldier" Major Malan. Humility is the royal road to service. Why? Because God loves to hold in His hand of power those men and women who never exalt themselves, and it is by them He does His work. He does not require talent, education, rank, nor riches (He will use them if He find them), but He WILL HAVE HUMILITY. This He never dispenses with. If you wish God to serve Himself by you, remember, you must never exalt yourself.

Oh! let us ask the Holy Ghost to work in us genuine lowliness, and let us meekly yield to the process, however painful it may be.

Who had the place of honour at the Last Supper? Not St. John. The chief place at an Oriental feast

Prov.  
xv. 33;  
xviii. 12.

John  
ii. 23.

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was at the host's left hand. St. John must have been at his Lord's right Hand, or he could not have reposed on His Bosom. For you know, according to Eastern custom, our blessed Lord, as He reclined at that supper-table, leant on His left Hand ; and this would, of course, prevent the guest at His left from enjoying the privilege accorded to the beloved disciple.

No, not the first place as ruled by the usages of Oriental society, and yet the highest Archangel at that moment might have envied the position of the Galilean fisherman. Perhaps he took a lower place to be nearer to his Lord.

Will you do the same ? "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Oh for such humility and such exaltation !



## VI

### The Christian's Walk

Col. iii. 6. 4. LOVE of walking in the foot-  
I John ii. 6. steps of Christ.

What were the footsteps of the Lord? He walked in habitual dependence on, and habitual submission to, His Father. Trust and self-surrender marked the one perfect life that ever was lived on earth. And just in proportion as we live the life of simple trust and simple self-abandonment do we walk where He walked and follow Him. Of course, there is all the measureless difference that must exist between a perfect Leader and a poor, frail, and most imperfect follower. Still the road is the same : the Highway of Holiness ;

the object is the same: the glory of the Father. At such a life, at such a walk, our friend aimed. No doubt he was conscious of much shortcoming; no doubt he was conscious of his deep need of the moment-by-moment cleansing of the precious blood. The most saintly disciple falls very far below perfection. Still this was the purpose of his life, this his one desire: to walk in Christ, "to walk even as He walked"; and those who knew him best can magnify that grace of God in him which made his daily life so conformable to this holy aspiration.

"Their works do follow them." Truly such is the case with Mr. Stancomb. Not only the members of his own especial communion, but others also—those who, like the writer, differed from him in matters of comparatively minor



importance (whilst seeing eye to eye in all points essential to salvation)—all can testify to the blessed example left behind by the singularly consistent walk of this highly-favoured servant of the Lord.

Go and do likewise. Follow him as he followed Christ. The Good Shepherd will lead you in the paths of righteousness—trust and self-surrender—for His Name's sake, and He who leads upholds. Remember, the upholding always goes with the leading. If we wish to be upheld by Him, we must lay our proud wills at His feet, and consent to be led by Him. Then, after yielding all, commit all in simple trust to Him. Commit your walk to Him, just as long ago you committed your soul to Him. Thus all will be well. He will keep your feet; He will keep you even from stumbling.

Have you reached the point of self-despair? Happy are you. Now go on to self-surrender and God-reliance. He is waiting to hold in His hand of power as a trust just what you commit to Him.

Give Me the keeping of thy feet,  
And they shall never stray,  
But calmly, safely, tread the path  
Where once My shadow lay.

## VII

### Home

<sup>2</sup> Cor  
v. 6, 8  
(R.V.).

“WHILST we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord : we are . . . willing rather to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord.”

At home with the Lord ! On March 8th, 1893, the summons went forth. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, this good and faithful servant was ushered into the joy of the Lord. Up to the very last he stood at his post. On the morning before the very day he died he conversed with a fellow-labourer respecting some especial service for the King which they had in view, he purposing (D.V.) in a few days to join in this

service, although at the time in a very suffering condition of health. Little did he think that, so far as he was concerned, the curtain was so soon to fall on all earth's ministries of love.

Yet so it was. At noon the following day the Master came and called for him, and he arose up quickly, and went to Him. And now, for ever with his Lord, he awaits with Him the glory of the Resurrection morning.



## VIII

### Conclusion

AND now one word more, and I close.

Hitherto I have spoken to the converted ; but, my dear reader, perhaps this does not describe you. Perhaps you have not yet turned to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Why not do so now ? The way of salvation is so simple. Just believe what God says concerning His beloved Son. Accept the great salvation purchased for you by the Lord Jesus, lay the heavy burden of your sins at His cross, cry for pardon, and you are saved.

Remember, the cup of salvation is a very full one, overflowing and covering all your needs. Take the

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full cup, the cup that runneth over. Do not take part only ; do not be content with half. People act thus when they forget that salvation frees from sin's power and dominion, as well as from its penalty and doom, and imagine it has only to do practically with sin's sentence. Thank God, salvation cancels our sentence ; but thank God, too, it also sets the prisoner free ! Frees us from sin, and what for ? That we may be free to serve.

Dissolves all other bonds,  
That we may be  
Bound to the Lord, whose grace  
Has set us free.

Bought with a price, no longer  
your own, henceforth this one  
thing do : " Glorify God in your  
body and in your spirit, which are  
God's."

