

Contemplating Christ's Glory

by Octavius Winslow (1808-1878)

An Exhortation

I. An Exhortation on Christ's Glory

A. What shall we think of Jesus Christ?

1. What do you think of Christ?
 - a) What are your apprehensions of His glory as it has thus far been placed before you?
 - b) Do you see beauty, surpassing beauty, in Emmanuel?
 - c) Has His glory broken upon your view?
 - d) Has it beamed in upon your mind?
 - e) Has a sight of Jesus, seen by faith, cast you in the dust, exclaiming, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," (Job 42:5-6)?
2. Your honest reply to these searching questions will decide the nature and the ground of your present hope for eternity.
 - a) On the confines of that eternity you are now standing.
 - b) Solemn consideration!
 - (1) *It is of infinite moment, then, that your views of the Son of God should be thoroughly examined, sifted, and compared with the inspired Word.*
 - c) A crown now lowered on your brow, a kingdom stretched at your feet, a world gained and grasped, were as infants' baubles compared with the tremendous interest involved in the question, "What do you think of Christ?"
 - (1) *And what do you think of Him?*
 - (2) *Is He all your salvation and all your desire?*
 - (3) *Have you laid sinful self and righteous self beneath His cross?*
 - (4) *And in all your poverty, nakedness, and vileness, have you received Him as made of God unto you, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," (1 Cor. 1:30)?*
 - (5) *Does His glory dim all other glory, and does His beauty eclipse all other beauty in your eye?*
 - (6) *Can you point to Him and say, in the humble confidence of faith and joy of love, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend," (Song 5:16)?*
 - (7) *Eternal God! But for the righteousness of Your Son, I sink in all my pollution! But for the atoning blood of Emmanuel, I perish in all my guilt! Holy Father, look not on me, but behold my Shield, and look upon the face of your Anointed! And when Your glory passes by—the glory of Your majesty, Your holiness, and Your justice—then put me in the cleft of the rock, and cover me with Your hand while You pass by.*
3. Cultivate frequent and devout contemplations of the glory of Christ.
 - a) Immense will be the benefit accruing to your soul.
 - b) The mind in this way preoccupied, filled, and expanded, will be enabled to present a stronger resistance to the ever advancing and insidious encroachments of the world without.
 - c) No place will be found for vain thoughts and no desire or time for carnal enjoyments.

- d) Oh, how crucifying and sanctifying are clear views of the glory of Emmanuel!
 - e) How emptying, humbling, and abasing!
 - f) With the patriarch, we then exclaim, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."
 - g) And with the prophet, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips...mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5).
 - h) And with the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," (Gal. 6:14).
 - i) Oh, then, aim to get your mind filled with enlarged and yet expanding views of the glory of the Redeemer!
 - j) Let it, in all the discoveries it affords of the divine mind and majesty, be the one subject of your thoughts, the one theme of your conversation.
 - k) Place no limit to your knowledge of Christ.
 - l) Ever consider that you have but read the preface to the volume, you have but touched the margin of the sea.
 - m) Stretching far away beyond you, are undiscovered beauties, and precious views, and sparkling glories, each encouraging your advance, inviting your research, and asking the homage of your faith, the tribute of your love, and the dedication of your life.
4. Go forward, then! The glories that yet must be revealed to you in a growing knowledge of Jesus, what imagination can conceive, what pen can describe them?
- a) "Thou shalt see greater things than these" is the promise that bids you advance.
 - b) Jesus stands ready to unveil all the beauties of His person and to admit you into the very arcade of His love.
 - c) There is not a chamber of His heart that He will not throw open to you; not a blessing that He will not bestow upon you; not a glory that He will not show to you.
 - d) You shall see greater things than you have yet seen: greater depths of sin in your fallen nature shall be revealed; deeper sense of the cleansing efficacy of the atoning blood shall be felt; clearer views of your acceptance in the Beloved; greater discoveries of God's love; and greater depths of grace and glory in Jesus shall be enjoyed.
 - e) Your communion with God shall be closer, and more the fruit of adopting love in your heart; your feet shall be as hinds' feet, and you shall walk on your high places.
 - f) Your peace shall flow as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea (Isa 48:18).
 - g) Sorrow shall wound you less deeply; affliction shall press you less heavily; tribulation shall affect you less keenly—all this and infinitely more will result from your deeper knowledge of Jesus.
 - h) Ah, wonder not that the heaving, panting, thirsting soul of the apostle exclaimed, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," (Phi 3:8, 10).
 - i) "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD," (Hos 6:3).
 - j) Let your life be a clear reflection of the glory of the Redeemer.

(1) The saints of God are the only witnesses to this glory—the only reflectors the Lord has in this dark and Christ-denying world. Holiness, springing from the fount of the Spirit's indwelling grace, cherished and matured by close views of the cross and imparting a character of sanctity and beauty to every act of your life, will be the highest testimony you can bear to the Redeemer's glory.

(2) That glory is entrusted to your hands. It is committed to your guardianship.

5. Seeing, then, that it is so, “what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,” (2 Peter 3:11)!

a) How exact in principles, and upright in conduct—how watchful over temper and how vigilant where most assailed, how broad awake to the wiles of the devil, and how watchful against the encroachments of sin, how strict in all transactions with the world; and how tender, charitable, meek, and forgiving in all our conduct with the saints!

b) Alas! We are at best but dim reflectors of this great glory of our Lord.

c) We are unworthy and unfaithful depositories of so rich a treasure!

d) How much of clinging infirmity, of unmortified sin, of carelessness of spirit, of unsanctified temper, of tampering with temptation, of a lack of strict integrity and uprightness, dims our light, neutralizes our testimony for God, and weakens, if not entirely destroys, our spiritual influence!

e) We are not more eminently useful because we are not more eminently holy.

f) We bring so little glory to Christ because we seek so much our own.

g) We reflect so faint and flickering a beam because our posture is so seldom that of the apocalyptic angel, “standing in the sun,” (Rev 19:17).

h) We realize so imperfectly our oneness with and standing in Christ; and this will ever foster a feeble, fruitless, and drooping profession of Christianity.

(1) “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me,” (Joh 15:4).

6. Oh, to know more of this abiding in Christ!

a) See how Jesus invites His saints to it.

b) Are they fallen?

(1) He bids them take hold of His strength.

c) Are they burdened?

(1) He bids them cast that burden on His arm.

d) Are they wearied?

(1) He bids them recline on Him for rest.

e) Does the world persecute them?

(1) He bids them take refuge within the hallowed sanctuary of His own pierced and loving heart.

f) Do they need grace?

(1) He bids them sink their empty vessel beneath the depths of His ocean fulness and draw freely “more grace,” (James 4:6).

g) Whatever corruptions distress them, whatever temptations assail them, whatever adversity grieves them, whatever cloud darkens them, whatever necessity presses upon them—as the watchful Shepherd, as the tender Brother, as the faithful Friend, as the great High Priest, He bids His saints draw near and repose in His love.

7. Oh, He has a spacious heart: there is room, there is a chamber in that heart for you, my Christian!

- a) Do not think your lot is desolate, lonely, and friendless.
- b) Do not think that all have forsaken you and that in sadness and in solitude you are threading your way through an intricate desert.
- c) There is One that loves you, that thinks of you, that has His eye upon you, and is at this moment guiding, upholding, and caring for you: that one is Jesus!
- d) O that you could but look into His heart and see how He loves you; O that you could but hear Him say, so gently, so earnestly, "Abide in my love!" (Joh 15:10).
 - (1) *Cheer up; you are in Christ's heart, and Christ is in your heart.*
 - (2) *You are not alone: your God, even your Father, is with you.*
 - (3) *Your Shepherd guides you; the Comforter spreads His wings around you, and heaven is bright before you.*
 - (4) *Soon you will be there.*
 - (5) *The pilgrim will repose his weary limbs; the voyager will be moored in his harbor of rest; the warrior will put off his armor and shout his song of triumph.*
 - (6) *Then look up! Christ is yours, God is yours, heaven is yours.*
 - (a) *If God is for you, who can be against you? (Rom. 8:31).*
 - (b) *And if you find disappointment in created good, it will but endear Jesus; and if you know more of the inward plague, it will but drive you to the atoning blood; and if you have storms and tempests, they will but shorten the voyage and waft you the quicker to glory.*
 - (c) *"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift," (2 Cor. 9:15).*