

Milk & Honey

Vol. XIX July, 2004 No. 7

Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

The Secret of Success

-by And. Fyfe

(Adapted from an article that appeared in "Knowing the Scriptures", May-June, 1936)

You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11).

I was somewhat struck with this remarkable and thought-provoking statement which I read sometime ago: "The practice of the presence of God is one of the lost arts of the Church of God." Surely a sweeping statement, yet nevertheless one which is amply vindicated by the noticeable proneness among the people of God to wander and stray in the alluring yet sinful paths of unrighteousness. One cannot close one's eyes to such a sad catastrophe, to such a true fact.

I know that you will agree with me when I say that the great basic and foundational truth upon which the whole structure of our lives must be built, if they are to be successful in the things of God, is the art of secret communion with God. For after all, if the foundation is faulty, it follows that the whole fabric will be insecure. A firm and reliable foundation is essential for a sound substantial building. So it is then, if what is seen of me, that is, my life before men, is to be a credit to my Master, I must pay very strict attention to that part of my life which is not seen, the seasons I am engaged in communion with the Most High in the secret of His presence. "You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence." (Psalm 31:20)

Do I know what it is to practice the presence of God. In other words, is the practice of the presence of God a reality in my life, something tangible, something concrete, or on the other hand, is it something abstract, something unfamiliar, an experience I know little or nothing about?

Take for example a little flower growing in arid soil. Because of the parched nature of the ground it is bent and drooping, any life being almost extinct. It is unable to derive sufficient nourishment to ensure its existence. Plenty of stalk perhaps, much to be seen above the ground, but the concentrated rays of the sun focussed upon it, are soon too

much for it, and ultimately nothing remains but a sapless, shrivelled weed. Is my life well-balanced? Is it proportionate? Or is it unbalanced? Plenty to be seen, much in view, but what about the nourishment, the foundation, the source? How long do I spend in the place where strength can be renewed, and where spiritual vitality can be obtained to equip me for sanctified service in God's vineyard? That is the true basic fact, the only sure foundation for real Christian living. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me." (John 15:4)

There may be plenty of outward activity, undue display in public, but if that expenditure of energy is not derived from hours alone with God, it will be powerless, and will go for nothing. Let us see to it then, that the foundation is laid in the secret place, and the structure will be solid and beautiful. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psalm 91:1)

What a transcending joy it is when we cut the cords that bind us to this world, and climb the hill which leads to God; when we sever entirely our connection with this scene and find ourselves in the Sanctuary; when earth recedes and Heaven becomes nearer and more real. When we are lifted from the depths of despair, or trial and trouble, to the highest pinnacle of joy, to the plains of indescribable bliss, to the very presence of God Himself. Then if my soul yearns after these glorious experiences, how much of my time do I spend in the isolation of His presence? Do I reserve a set time each day which nothing must usurp and thus disallow me of intercourse with my Father? The fact is evidenced today in the lives of many, that too little stress is placed upon a consistent (not spasmodic) waiting upon God. Is it a wonder, in consequence of such negligence, that there are so many spiritual "laggards," those who have made but little headway on the path of spiritual success? May we go in more and more for practicing the presence of God, an act which will undoubtedly produce healthy Christian characters. "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." (Psalm 27:4) *

The Preeminence Of Christ

-by William MacDowall

(Adapted from an article that appeared in "Knowing the Scriptures", Jan.-Feb., 1937)

And He is the head of the body, the church; Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. (Col. 1:18)

We may have difficulties in our minds regarding many things, but there is one thing we are absolutely certain of, and that is, the Greatness of Christ. The Christian ought always to have Christ as the object of his soul's vision. He will lift his mind and soul above the things of time, and enable him to enjoy the good things that he has here and now in Christ, and to reach out to the glorious prospect that opens up. Untold bliss is in store for those who are Christ's, and the higher we rise in spirit as we contemplate Him, the greater will be our range and power of vision. Clear vision is essential in our apprehension of the great truths relative to the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I would like to point out some aspects of the Preeminence of Christ as revealed in the Word of God. "That in all things He might have the preeminence." (Col. 1: 18) This term "all things" is most comprehensive and who can compass all that is involved. This is not a passing phase. He is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever." (Heb. 13:8) We can never compare our Lord Jesus with anyone or anything. It is when we contrast, we find that He is far above all.

1. **PREEMINENT AS TO HIS GLORY.** We think of the glories of the sun, the moon and the stars, and from the glories of these great planets down to the smallest detail of the smallest creature. He created all. He upholds all, and all speak of His glory. His glory is the glory peculiar to Deity. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn. 1:14)

2. **PREEMINENT IN HIS COMING INTO THE WORLD.** The first man was created and all afterward came by way of natural birth. Christ came by way of the virgin birth. Others had their beginning at birth, but Christ ever existed and came as the One sent by God. "I come to do Thy will O God" and "A body hast Thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:5,9)

3. **PREEMINENT IN HIS WORDS AND WORKS.** This One sent by God spoke the words of God and did the works of God. His language is gracious, pure, clear, and powerful. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowl-

edge. "Never man spake like this man." (Jn. 7:46) His actions were gentle, blessed and miraculous. Everywhere He went He spoke with authority accompanied by acts of power so that the blind, the lame, the deaf and dumb, and the unclean, were healed and cleansed and even the dead were raised. "He hath done all things well." (Mk. 7:37)

4. **PREEMINENT IN POVERTY.** When we think on this we can only wonder. "Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." (Mt. 8:20) Born in a stable, He trod this scene homeless, had no money with which to pay the tribute, died on a malefactor's cross and was laid in a borrowed tomb. How poor He became that "we might become rich." (2 Cor. 8:9)

5. **PREEMINENT IN HIS DEATH.** Men work during their lives and die, but Christ in His death performed a mighty work of God and for men. Men die, but Christ laid down His life. By His death He defeated "him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14,15).

6. **PREEMINENT TODAY.** Words fail us to describe the exalted position that Christ occupies today. We cannot do better than quote Philippians 2, where after tracing step by step the humiliation of our Lord Jesus we read, "God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth." (Phil. 2:9,10)

7. **PREEMINENT IN THE FUTURE.** When we think of the events foretold in the Word of God which will assuredly come to pass, we rejoice to find that Christ is Preeminent. Eternity alone will reveal His greatness and glory. "For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For He has put all things under His feet." (1 Cor. 15:25-27)

Last Call!

Spread The Word Conference

Lord willing, the Spread The Word conference will be held at Greenwood Hills Bible Conference, July 24-31, 2004. Speakers: Bill Gustafson, Rex Trogdon, Bruce Hulshizer, and Tom Irwin.

Greenwood Hills is located 17 miles west of Gettysburg, PA, and is a great place to bring the family on vacation. The new dining room provides excellent meals and great fellowship. If it is your first time you could try a mini-conference rate of 4 nights and 12 meals. Call (717) 352-2150 for registration information and room availability.

