

# Milk & Honey

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*Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ*

## The Amazing Sensitivity Of Christ

Bob Gessner

So often the world thinks of a “holy man” as one who segregates himself from the affairs of men and has a very stoic appearance in the midst of the often emotional climate around him. This is certainly a very unrealistic and false viewpoint. The life of the Lord Jesus, the only One who was truly holy, completely contradicts this notion. He never reacted to people or circumstances because He knew beforehand what they were thinking or what was going to happen. On the other hand, He often responded with deep feelings, displaying the innermost depths of His sensitivity toward those around Him.

1. **His Compassion.** “And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean” (Mk. 1:41). Often, those who spend much time in the midst of sickness and suffering, learn to surround themselves with a shell so that they are not affected by what they see. Many who work in the midst of terminal patients sometimes become cold and indifferent to their suffering in order to survive the daily exposure to this routine. Christ not only saw the suffering around Him, but He understood, as no one else was able, the awful consequences of sin and disease. Yet He never became cold or indifferent toward those sufferers that He saw. In the verse above, His pity reaches out to a leper, who in those days was generally forsaken by the masses. In compassion He reached forth and touched “the untouchable.” It was probably the first human touch this man had experienced in a long, long time.

On another occasion, after spending time in a desert place for privacy, He was mobbed by a multitude of suffering people. Rather than being annoyed, He was moved with compassion toward them (Mk. 6:34). On yet another occasion, as He departed from Jericho, two blind men cried out to Him. Jesus again was moved with compassion and touched their eyes (Mt. 20:34).

These are recorded events. It is beyond our ability to understand how much pity poured out of His heart, every step of His way on this sin-cursed earth. This same Jesus, living

in heaven, is still moved with compassion when we cry out for His mercy and His help (Heb. 4:16).

2. **His Love.** “Then Jesus beholding him loved him....” (Mk. 10:21). Every human being by nature is capable of loving someone other than himself. Generally, our love is contaminated with the selfish elements that make up so much of our response to others. The Lord Jesus expressed His love to others in a manner that would only be capable of One who possessed the divine nature. He loved the rich young man in the verse above, even though He knew that because of his riches, he was going to reject Him and walk away from Him. He loves us all first, even though many never respond to that love (1 Jn. 4:19).

He loved His disciples to the end even though they had disappointed Him on many occasions and He fully knew that they were going to forsake Him at the time of His trial and execution (Jn. 13:1). He loves us without receiving anything in return.

The sincerity and purity of His love was also demonstrated when Lazarus was sick. Much of human love, as demonstrated in our present society, exhibits shallowness in the midst of adversity. The Lord Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus (Jn. 11:5). Even though He had the power to cure Lazarus of his illness, He allowed Him to die. His love extended beyond the immediate present and its comforts. He was more concerned about their future welfare and He knew this depended on their inner ability to comprehend His victory over death. Divine love permits present adversity to prepare us for the future. Real love always has in mind the future welfare of the recipient (Rom. 8:35).

3. **His Anger.** “And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts...” (Mk. 3:5) It almost seems disrespectful or irreverent to speak of the Lord Jesus as being angry. We too often think of anger in the sinful sense of a feeling of extreme indignation toward someone because they insulted us, rejected our counsel, or injured us in some way. Yet the word, anger, is used over 200 times in the Old Testament and many of these references refer to the anger of God. In fact, it tells us that He is angry with the wicked every day (Ps. 7:11). The Lord Jesus never became angry because He was maltreated by unjust men (1 Pet. 2:23). He became angry when religious

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leaders hardened their hearts against the truth and power of God. He became angry when they sought, in the hardness of their hearts, to distort the truth and the glory of God. On two occasions, both near the beginning and end of His ministry, He drove the money changers out of the temple (Jn. 2:15; Mk. 11:15). Indifference or acquiescence to the deliberate abuse of God's Word is not a sign of godliness but rather of weakness. It requires courage and fortitude to stand up against those who seek to discredit God's Word and His glory. Christ often stood alone against the angry mob of religious leaders.

**4. His Joy.** "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit...." (Lk. 10:21) The rejoicing expressed in this verse was in His spirit which is the seat of real joy. It never tells us in the Gospels that Jesus laughed or even smiled. This is not to suggest that He did not smile, but He was never characterized as One who went about laughing and joking. Levity and joking do not harmonize with the character of the "Man of sorrows" who was acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3). As He stood in the presence of those who were grieving at the grave of Lazarus, even though He knew that Lazarus would be raised from the dead, he stood by the mourners and wept with them (Jn. 11:35). There is a vast difference between inward joy and outward levity. Depending on the feelings of those around us, jesting can often be cruel and disturbing. The inner joy of the Spirit is inside the believer and is not necessarily expressed outwardly in a jovial manner. A closer examination of our verse above, shows us that the Lord's joy was expressed by thanksgiving for that which God was doing according to His own delight and pleasure. Thus joy is really the opposite of a murmuring and complaining attitude. It is rather a wholesome thankfulness for all that God is doing in my life and in the life of others. It is expressed by a positive attitude of service to God and to others. It is evidenced by a quiet acceptance of disappointment and adversity. Paul and Silas were not filled with laughter when they were in the stocks in the inner prison at Philippi. Neither did they moan nor complain. Their inner joy was expressed by praying and singing praises to God, and the prisoners heard them (Acts 16:25).

**5. His Amazement.** "And He marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mk. 6:6). "When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Mt. 8:10). It is hard for us to imagine that the One who brought the world into being could possibly marvel about anything that happened down here. In the above verses there were two attitudes displayed that caused Him to wonder or marvel: the unbelief of those who had seen His miracles and the faith of one Gentile who believed He had the power to do anything

He wanted. It is astounding to realize that we can be so full of unbelief that He is filled with amazement or wonder. To His own disciples He had to say: "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" (Mt. 17:17) We fail to realize the terrible effect on Him that our unbelief often brings. On the other hand, what a thrill to realize that great faith causes Him to marvel. In the midst of all the unbelief and complaining of our day, there are cries that go up to Him that bring delight to Him. They are shouts of great faith that reach out to the One who is willing and able to do great things for those who believe. What does our life bring forth for Him? Does He marvel at our unbelief or does He marvel at our great faith in Him? "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away...And NOW I exhort you to be of good cheer; ...for there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:22-25). \*

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We can think on Christ's **Loveliness**. Here there are multiple avenues of thought that lead to worship, not just due to His work, although certainly that is proper, but also of Him personally. "Remember me" was His request. "Do not forget Me." Not only what He has done, as amazing and wonderful as it is, but remember "Him" as well.

We see His love, meekness, humility, purity, compassion, graciousness, kindness, devotion, obedience, righteousness, sincerity, and so much more. So much that we have no justification to be silent. We can fall at His feet and worship for many reasons. He has many glories that we can call to mind. Certainly that He purchased our redemption with His blood, but also for the humble mind that was behind His coming to earth and going to Calvary. He is altogether lovely. Let's remember Him! \*

## York Bible Study Program

<b>October 10</b>	Rob Sullivan - Archeology and the Bible*
<b>November 14</b>	Bruce Hulshizer - Ephesians
<b>December 12</b>	Tom Irwin - John's Epistles
<b>January 9</b>	Bob Spender - Joshua
<b>February 13</b>	TBA

10 AM - 3PM Lunch served.

Let us know how many will be coming.

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# Focusing On Christ

Steve Hulshizer

*And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

1 Cor. 11:23-25

The institution of the Lord's Supper could not have been in a more simpler fashion. A small group of men sitting about a table in an upper room away from the busy world without any distractions. There was no pipe organ. There was no priest in elaborate garments, no altar of any kind, no stained glass windows, no worship leaders, no formal prayers, no bells, no incense, nothing, except Christ.

Christ used simple and common items, bread and a cup filled with the fruit of the vine. Perhaps using the practice mentioned in Jeremiah, "Nor shall men *break bread* in mourning for them, to comfort them for the dead; nor shall men give them the *cup* of consolation to drink for their father or their mother," the Lord Jesus used bread and the cup as a way for His disciples to remember Him. (Jer. 16:7 NKJV)

It should be noted that Christ did not say, "Remember me in my death." We so often use those words, "Remembering Christ in His death." His request was that they would remember *Him*. It was a Person they were to remember, not so much an event. Now when they broke the bread which Christ said represented His body, and drank of the cup which represented His blood, they "declared" the Lord's death until He come. Too often we remember only His death, but have little memory of the Lord Himself.

When we grow cold and have given little time to remembering Him in our daily course of life it is often reflected at the Lord's Supper. Not all times of silence are a reflection of coldness, but frequent periods in which the brethren are silent can well be an indication we have "forgotten" the Lord during our daily life. Sadly, instead of confessing our coolness, we install external "props" in an effort to produce worship. It may be by having a "worship group" provide music, it may be ornate surroundings, it may be liturgy, anything that appeals to the natural senses, our ears, eyes, touch, smell, etc. All of these only mask the real internal condition of our hearts.

When in truth we are gathered in simplicity to remember the Lord there are no props and the true condition of our hearts is clearly revealed. It is soon evident, individually and collectively, that this is why our wise Savior instituted this supper. *We are prone to forget!* At times such as these we often revert to the hymn book and sing words that other godly

saints have written. (Do not misunderstand, the right hymns sung from right hearts convey many proper thoughts.) In addition to the hymn book we can drift into a "thanksgiving" meeting in which the wonderful truth of our salvation takes center stage. We become "we" centered. We concentrate on the gifts, not the Giver. Like the assembly at Ephesus we can do many good things, but lose our focus. (Rev. 2:2-4)

I would like to suggest four words that might help us keep our minds focus on *Him*. Now there is plenty of latitude associated with these suggested words and so they will in no way infringe on the work of the Holy Spirit in orchestrating the worship of His saints.

The first would be His preincarnate "**Loftiness**." He was God! (John 1:1) He was eternal! (John 1:2) He was the Creator! (John 1:3) He is "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power," (Heb 1:3) and of course much, much more could be added.

Second would be His incarnate "**Lowliness**." He who was God took upon Himself humanity. (Phil. 2:6) Additionally He was a servant! (v. 7), a humble and obedient servant, even to the point of dying a "cross death." He was *rich* but for our sakes became *poor*. (2 Cor. 8:9) How rich was He? How poor did He become? His life was perfect, without sin. He did always those things that pleased the Father. (John 8:29) He was "a friend of publicans and sinners," and "went about doing good." (Matt. 11:19; Acts 10:38) Volumes have been written in attempts to speak of His *lowliness*, and there is plenty of room for our hearts and minds to ponder and adorn.

Thirdly, we could think of His "**Lordship**." Not that He is to be Lord of our lives, but that He was gained the victory over death and now sits enthroned "on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:3) Because of His submission to His Father's will He has "highly exalted him" and "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." (Phil. 2:9-10) We declare the Lord's death, but we worship a living glorified Lord! Certainly as we do so we cannot forget what He has accomplished for us, but let us not forget what He accomplished for God. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36)

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## Milk & Honey Information

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## Thy Speech Betrayeth Thee

Donald Norbie

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine.”

1 Tim. 4:16, NKJV

Our words reveal our thinking. Accurate, clear thinking will be evidenced by a careful use of terms and language. We cannot think without words.

If one should say, “Red China is a democracy,” we would say he reveals careless thinking. Either he does not know what the word democracy connotes or else he is ignorant of the true condition of mainland China. In either case his thinking is in error, and his words reveal that.

Today in some areas sloppy thinking is coming into assemblies. It is revealed in the terms we use. Some may say, “Let’s not be picky about words!” But words reveal our thinking, our concepts. The accurate use of words reveals our thinking, our concepts. The accurate use of words is important in the definition and teaching of doctrine in our fellowships. It would be folly to say that “justification and “sanctification” mean the same thing.

For example, the word “assembly” in times past was commonly used for the local congregation. It is a good word, the most literal translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*. (Cf. Acts 19:39-41.) The word “church” has a different origin coming from *kyriakos*, “belonging to the Lord.”

Today, according to the dictionary the word “church” can mean “a building used for worship,” “a religious service,” “a denomination,” “the clergy,” “a congregation,” or “all Christians.” Of these various definitions only the last two can apply to our word *ekklesia*. If you use the word “church,” use it only of the people, the congregation. Call your building a chapel, hall, or whatever, but do not call it a church. The building is where the assembly or church meets.

Some are now calling their main auditorium a “sanctuary.”

Shades of Rome! The word “sanctuary” is from the Latin *sanctus*, sacred. It is defined as a “holy place,” a building set aside for the worship of a god or gods. (It can also mean a place of refuge or protection, as a bird sanctuary.)

Do we really believe our building is a place more holy than others, a place where God is localized, “the house of God?” Solomon knew better than that (2 Chron. 6:18). Our Lord emphasized the spirit of worship is important, not the place (John 4:21-24). The “house of God” today is His people, not a material building (1 Cor. 3:16). The living Church is God’s “sanctuary.”

Titles are being used freely by some today. In the religious world many evangelicals have felt a little uneasy with the title of “Reverend,” the common title for clergy. (The term is only used once in the King James translation and that of God, Ps. 111:9.) But a title is necessary to maintain the clergy distinctiveness and the title “Pastor” is a more friendly, caring term. The “Reverend” is now often called “Pastor.”

But a pastor or shepherd is a gift to the Church; it is not an ecclesiastical office (Eph. 4:11). Since every believer has a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:7), should we title every Christian to be consistent: Pastor Smith, Teacher Jones, Helps Anderson, etc.?

This love of the flesh for prominence and recognition has no place among those who follow the Lord Jesus, Who humbled Himself for our sakes (Phil. 2:5-8). He warned strongly against the use of titles, but the religious world is full of such: Reverend, Pastor, Doctor, and Bishop. He said, “But you do not be called Rabbi for one is your Teacher and you are all brethren” (Mt. 23:8). Gifts are to be used, but titles are to be refused.

The words we use articulate our thinking. Think accurately then. Think Scripturally and you will live Scripturally. Beware of sloppy thinking and thereby avoid the sloppy speech that results from it. \*