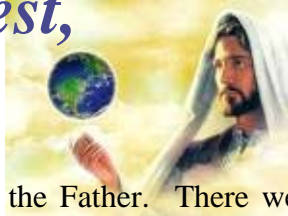


Oh, His Love, His Rest, His Peace...

By Dee Stribling



Who among us doesn't want to be closer to the Father. There we have His rest, His peace. So, being closer to Him is a quest that every serious Christian desires.

In the early hours following the resurrection of Jesus, Mary Magdalene heard Him call her name. Stunned, she turned to face the risen Lord. Ponder that scene for a moment. See the drama there as Mary was struck by the instant awareness that the one she loved, who had died, now stood close calling out her name.

Her love was met by the love of Jesus, and she found Him, the living Lord, in all the power of His resurrected life. She now understood what He had said about ascending to the Father, to the life of divine and omnipotent glory. In her morning watch, she received the commission from her Lord to go and tell His brethren what she had heard from Him.

What are we to learn? That nothing can prove a greater attraction to our Lord than the love that sacrifices everything and rests satisfied with nothing less than knowing Him and His abiding presence. To this type of love Christ will manifest Himself. Christ wants our love, so He can reveal His love. To our love He speaks the word, "and surely I will be with you always." True love, accepts, rejoices in, and lives in His word.

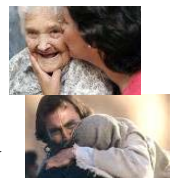
*If anyone loves me,
he will obey my teaching.
My Father will love him,
and we will come to him
and make our home with him.
John 14:23*

Brother Lawrence in his book, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, said, "if you want to accustom yourself to a continual conversation with Christ, with freedom and simplicity, you must begin in one hearty renunciation of everything which you know does not lead to God.

"You only need to recognize God intimately present with you to address yourself to Him every moment. You may ask for His assistance in knowing His will in things that are doubtful, and for rightly performing those duties which you plainly see He requires of you. God always gives us light in our doubts when we have no other design but to please Him. Offer to Him everything you do, and thank Him for everything you have done when completed.

"Your sanctification does not depend upon changing your works, but in doing for God's sake what you commonly do for your own. Do not confuse the means with the end! Do not become addicted to 'works' performed with selfish regard."

In our devotional life we experience His love so we may go into the world to love others. We are equipped during the quiet times to be His representative among those He puts us in touch with. The lonely, the hungry, the desperate people who can only find joy when one of us brings the love of God to them.



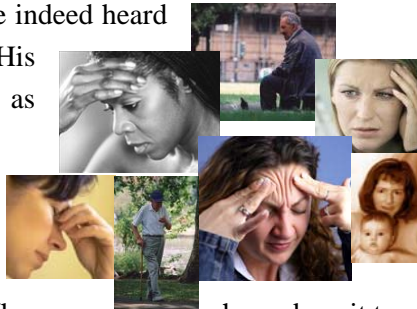
God has already prepared the works of love He will do through each one of us. He is ready to love people through His servants, and we get our preparation for compassionate action during our private time with Him.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10

God inspires us and prepares us to mingle with the needy. The thousands of lonely, hungry, depressed and desperate people of our city await the love of God. They are the ones Jesus died for. We are His messengers of love who will bring relief to their material suffering and provide the words of life from the Holy Spirit. ***With His Spirit alive in us we can go to the ungrateful, the unworthy, the people who are entrapped by their own style of life.*** They will know His salvation, His peace only from Christians who have died to self and are willing to love as Jesus loves, expecting nothing in return.

They are waiting, and we are the ones to go. In fact, we cannot do otherwise when His love resides in our hearts. Even the basic gifts of food, clothing, a letter to a prisoner or a visit to the hospital... these will show the Master that we have indeed heard Him and that we have obeyed His commission to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 24:34).

We can get closer to God by having those quiet times alone with Him and in loving others unconditionally. When we have done it to one of the least of these we have done it unto Him. He is there at the point where we answer the cry of a suffering person.



The Daily Challenge



by D. E. Stribling
(1930-2009) Founder of IHNM

Where Do You Go To Church?

In the world's eye, a strong church may seem to be the one with the most charismatic preacher, large offerings and great programs. Many in our day would say, "Important spiritual things happen at the church building."

However, I believe, that it is Jesus Christ in each individual that is the hope of glory. The church who teaches its people

- to know God
- to hear Him and
- to obey Him and
- to rely on His direction

will build a strong body who will glorify God seven days a week.

In the marketplace, at sporting events, and social occasions of all kinds, the evidence of their life in Christ will draw people to God. People will be curious, some compelled to find out what happened. When the whole flock represent God well in the community, people will be asking about the one they call Master, not "where do you GO to church."

Wisdom guides us to have no heroes but Jesus Christ, and to be wary of anything that would take away our God given liberty, or divide our loyalty. The church organization is a means not the end.