

COMPLETE SURRENDER

John 4:34

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34).

Christ never moved to and fro in uncertainty. He never drifted among unknown currents to an unknown end. He had received His commission, and He had accepted it readily. His consciousness was possessed by a sense of mission: "The will of him that sent me."

In the course of His journey through Samaria, Christ and His disciples arrived at Jacob's well near Sychar one hot summer day about noon. They were hot, tired, hungry, and thirsty. Weary from the journey, Christ sat down on the parapet of the well to rest, while His disciples went into the village to buy food.

Ere long our Lord's reverie was interrupted by the arrival of a Samaritan woman, in great spiritual and moral need. With remarkable wisdom and unusual tact Christ engaged this woman in conversation, much to her surprise. He spoke to her about her sin, and He went on to tell her of the water that He could give her, which, if she drank it, would quench her thirst. Christ aroused the desire of this woman for the living water. She exercised faith in Him as her Saviour. Her soul was saved and her life was transformed.

When the disciples returned with the food which they had bought, they urged Him to eat, but they discovered that He was not hungry. Instead they found Him vibrant with energy. He explained to them, "I have food to eat that ye know not of." The disciples did not have the faintest idea about what He was talking. Christ went on to explain, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." In other words, the doing of God's will, and the finishing of God's work, constituted His meat and drink. These were the things that satisfied His hunger and quenched His thirst.

Can you honestly echo the words of Christ: "My meat and my drink are the doing of His will, and the finishing of His work"? What is the thing that satisfies you most? In what do you find your pleasure and delight? Is it in self-indulgence and self-will, or is it in self-denial and in the will of God? Those are the alternatives. We do not find it easy to surrender to what God wants us to be, and to do what God wants us to do. Is there some point in your life in which you know you are not surrendered to God? Maybe there is some sinful practice, some sinful association in your life; you know it is contrary to the will of God, and still you won't get rid of it. Or, is God calling you to some work that you don't want to do, and your stubborn heart rebels? Have you as a Christian worker put your hand to the plow, but you are looking back? The going is hard, and the hill is steep, and you do not want to finish that which you have begun. There are disappointments innumerable, and you are discouraged, and you are tempted to give it up and quit. You may find your meat and your drink in that very will of God against which you are now rebelling, and in that very work of God in which you have become so discouraged. It is in the doing of God's will, and in the finishing of His work alone, that our meat and our drink are to be found.

We should surrender completely to the will of God and do the work of God for the same reasons that our Lord Jesus Christ did. Why did He surrender to the will and the work of God?

I. He was submissive to the authority of God.

Note that Christ called God "Him that sent me." This remarkable title was one of the most common that Christ gave to the Father. Christ was deeply conscious that He was on earth because God had sent Him down from heaven. He recognized the authority of God, and He was submissive to it. All through His earthly life Christ was constrained

by sense of a mission, that there was a will of God that He had to do, and that there was a work of God that He had to perform. That is why Christ said: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30); and "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (John 6:38). What was true of the will of God, was true also of the work of God, in the experience of our Lord. He had a sense of tremendous urgency to fulfil the task that God, Who had sent Him, had given Him to do. Christ said: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day" (John 9:4). All along He was conscious that He was on a mission; He had been sent; He had been given work to do, and a will to obey. He was under authority; and because of that, He knew that it was right to surrender to God's will.

Christ did not hesitate to say that He had been sent to do the will of God, and to finish the work of God. He was under authority. And the apostles did not hesitate to say: "He became obedient unto death, even death on the cross." The very same principle applies to us as His followers. You and I are under the authority of God, and it is our duty to surrender completely to the will of God because He is our Lord. He is our Lord by creation, preservation, and redemption. Therefore, He has authority over us, and it is a wicked thing to rebel.

II. He was confident in the purpose of God.

Not only when Christ spoke of the will of God, but of the work of God also, He realized that God had a purpose in these things. There was a will that He had to do, and there was a work that He had to accomplish. Now these very expressions imply a divine purpose that He was fulfilling; and Christ was confident that it was a purpose of consummate wisdom and love. It was His Father's will; and even in His agony in the garden of Gethsemane He was confident that it was His Father's purpose.

This, too, should be true of us. All our obedience is the obedience of faith. It is an obedience arising out of our faith in God. We obey God because we trust Him; and, if we are disobedient, it is because we are distrustful. It is unreasonable to distrust or to disobey God. He is worthy of our faith and obedience. It is the height of wisdom to obey God.

III. He was satisfied by the will of God.

It is not only right that we should obey God, and it is not only reasonable that we should do so, but it is infinitely refreshing to do so. Oh, that we could believe that! Christ said: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." My meat is in His will and in His work; that is where my meat is found. Not in self-indulgence, but in the doing of His will and the finishing of His work. That is what refreshes and exhilarates, and satisfies me, Christ said.

It was in the satisfaction of His work of harvesting souls, like that of the Samaritan woman, that Christ found His tiredness gone. Talking to a woman about her soul was not fatiguing, but it was invigorating. It is very easy, in the face of disappointment, difficulties, and discouragement, to be tempted to give up; but notice that Christ said: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." It is in the doing of His will, and in the finishing of His work, that the meat and the drink are found.

What did it mean for Christ Jesus to do the will of God, and to finish the work of God? You know what it meant; it meant the cross. That is the will of God that He had come to do; that is the work of God that He had come to finish; and it was only on the cross, just before He died, that He cried: "It is finished!"

God's will sometimes seems hard, and especially when it cuts across our selfish ambitions, and the work of God is exacting. Self-fulfillment is to be found only in self-surrender to the will of God. The road to self-discovery is self-denial.

Give yourself to the doing of the will and the work of God, and you will discover that to be the way to self-fulfillment.

There is no joy like that of being within the will of God. A fish out of water is a miserable creature, because it is out of its element. God made fish to swim, and only in water can they fulfil their destiny. As eagle in a cage is a pitiful and miserable sight. Why? Because it is out of its element. God gave eagles powerful wings and a highly complex flight mechanism to catch the currents of the air and to soar into the sky, and it is only in flight that an eagle fulfils its destiny. Why? Because God made it so. Now any man in rebellion against doing the will and the work of God is out of his element. God created man to love Him, and to obey Him, and to serve Him, and man's whole nature fulfils its destiny only in obedience to the will of God.

To rebel against and to refuse to do the will of God is not only to flout His authority, and to doubt His love and wisdom, but to forfeit our own highest benefit. For this reason the child of God needs to keep saying to himself: "It is right to obey God, because He is my Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Master. It is reasonable, because He is my Father, and therefore will never exploit my surrender. It is refreshing, because it is my meat and drink."