

JESUS ONLY

Mark 9:8

Matt. 17:8

On one occasion Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him and went to the top of a high mountain. This probably was on Mount Hermon which was north of Caesarea Philippi. There before their eyes He was transfigured. His outward appearance was changed. His raiment shone with an unearthly lustre. Two illustrious men, Moses and Elijah, made a miraculous appearance on the top of the mount before them and talked with Jesus. The disciples were thrilled. They were in an ecstasy. Peter exclaimed, "Master, it is good to be here." It certainly was good for them to see Christ transfigured with the representatives of the law and prophets. Peter then suggested, "If thou wilt, let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." When he said this a bright cloud came over them and a voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Hearing this message the disciples fell prostrate on the ground and were much afraid. Immediately Jesus came to them and touching them said, "Arise and be not afraid." "And when they had lifted up their eyes they saw no man, save Jesus only."

This sounds like a note of disappointment. The disciples seem dejected. They have had a rapturous experience, but it has ended tamely. After standing on the mountain top of privilege gazing into the glory of the open heaven and listening to celestial voices, they must go down and back to the world for service and toil. The glory of it all had passed away. Moses and Elijah had vanished. The voice had died down into dumb silence. The heavens look like any common day. They rub their eyes and look around and see no man save Jesus only. The glory of the great occasion is dead and it is useless to linger longer on that barren peak. Still there was no reason for defection.

Think of what might have happened to the three disciples after they had seen the transfiguration:

1. They might have seen nobody with them on the holy mount but have found all gone but themselves. In such a case they would have been in a sorry plight. They would not have gone down the mountain side that day asking questions and receiving instruction, for they would have had no teacher left them.
2. They might have seen Moses only. This certainly would have been a very sad exchange for what they did see, to have seen Moses only. Moses whose name is synonymous with law was a great man and leader, but cannot compare with Jesus the Son of God whose name is synonymous with love.
3. They might have seen Elijah only. Instead of the gentle Jesus, they might have been standing by the side of the rough-clad and stern-spirited Elijah.
4. They might have seen Moses and Elijah with Jesus. At first it seems that this sight would have been superior to the one which was theirs to enjoy. However, it is vastly better to see Jesus only as a matter of perpetuity than to see these other two with Him.

What really did happen was that they "saw no man save Jesus only".

He was with them and with Him they could afford to go back to duty, to work, to trial, to the sick, to the weary world, to the suffering, to persecution, and to martyrdom. They can do all things through Him. He was all they wanted and needed to see for their comfort. He was all the Saviour they wanted. He was the only Master they needed. He would care for them in the future and reward them for their services.

In these words we find a clue to the power of their preaching as apostles. That majestic figure they saw on the mount became the central figure to the eye and heart of the apostles. This One Person occupied their thoughts and inspired all their most effective discourses. They saw in Him "God manifest in the flesh", an infinite Redeemer, a divine Model of Life, a constant Intercessor, a never-failing Friend.

When Peter delivered his first sermon at Pentecost, and when John described his sublime visions on the Isle of Patmos, they directed all eyes to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. God owns with the richest success those who present most prominently, "No man save Jesus Only".

Often it is given to His followers to come to some hour that exalts Him, to behold some display that glorifies Him, to share in some experience out of which flashes the

splendor of His divinity. As we look and listen we glorify the hour and exalt the scene. We say, "It is good to be here". We recite the splendors of the church, the power of its message, the sweep of its influence, the wisdom of its creed. Amid it all we sometimes forget that quiet figure on the far horizon, the Son of Man who had not where to lay His head. Amid all the splendors, and triumphs of the day, amid the power, the pomp and progress of the Church, we sometimes forget Jesus. We are so fascinated by the frame we fail to see the picture. Take Him away and there is nothing left. The church collapses, the cult dies, and civilization withers. We succeed only as our work reveals, honours, exalts, and glorifies Him.

That night long ago when Jesus and His disciples gathered around the table and He instituted the simple feast known as the Lord's Supper, He said, "Do this in remembrance of me". It seems to me that this command means whenever you keep the supper I want you to think of Me. As you gather in the communion service you must see no man save Jesus only. [It is with the hope that we may see no man save Jesus only in this service that] the speaker will now try to picture Jesus only.

As I attempt to praise him a sense of woeful inadequacy falls oppressively on my heart. This is especially true as I remember that:--
Architects, straining their powers to the utmost, conceive no cathedrals great enough for his worship.

Painters, holding cargoes of wonders in their brushes, paint no pictures beautiful enough to depict Him.

Sculptors, searching through all quarries, find no marble white enough for His brow. Musicians, create no compositions sweet enough for His hymns of praise.

Orators, whose words are flights of golden arrows, reach only the outskirts of His greatness.

Poets, sweeping their thoughts together in poems and dramas, measure Him but feebly.

Writers, wielding pens that are fountains of a Niagara, express only a meagre measure of the honor due Him.

Jesus only is literature's loftiest ideal, philosophy's highest personality, criticism's supremest problem, theology's fundamental doctrine, spiritual religion's cardinal necessity.

Jesus only is our necessity in three realms of life namely:---

1. Material
2. Mental
3. Moral

For a power effectual to the attainment of the highest life all serious souls yearn---

Power not from the earth, but from the earth's Creator

Not from the sea, but from Him who walked upon their waters.

Not from the winds, but from Him who rebuked them into peace

Not from the sun, but from Him who lit its fires.

Not from the clouds, but from Him who will return in the clouds.

Christ is our only necessity for passing from the feverishness of living to the more blessed experience of life and victory in the realm of:-----

I. THE MATERIAL or physical

The Bible casts glory upon the body. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" "I beseech you to present your bodies, etc." "Glorify God in your bodies". "He is the Saviour of the body."

By Him who was made flesh, whose every muscle was a pulley divinely swung, whose every nerve was divine handwriting, whose every bone was divine sculpture, the body has been made an instrument of Christ.

Through the human mouth God in authority spoke.

Through the human eyes God in pity looked.

Through human hands God in love wrought.

Upon human feet God on errands of mercy went.

Through a human heart God had compassion.

Through human ears God hears humanity's cry...

Christ's physical feet no longer press the highways and bypaths of earth. We must be his feet.

His physical eyes no longer look upon our cities. We must be His eyes.

His physical voice no longer cries "Come unto Me". We must be his voice.

His physical hands no longer minister. We must be His hands.
His physical heart no longer beats in compassion on earth. We must be his heart.
If Christ has a physical or material presence today, He has it through us.

The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords has a message of infinite peace for the world, but it must pass, to be most effective, through our bodies. Read Rom. 6:12-14

II. THE MENTAL

you can still live

Jesus only opens the door of high thought and mental achievement to us. He makes it so that no matter what man and circumstances do to you outwardly in the companionship of high thoughts. He opens the door which nobody can shut.

The Roman Empire could put narrow limitations around John's body, but not around John's mind. Marooned on Patmos, he saw a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

In prison John Bunyan's mind roved earth and heaven. And he wrote a book that escaped that jail and spoke in power to millions in their own tongues. Christ made it so.

In the mental realm Christ sets before you an open door to high and effective thought, and no man can shut it--a door to straight thinking. You cannot afford to think crookedly. A farmer cannot--if he does he will reap scant harvests. Nor can the builder--if he does his structure collapses. Nor the artist of his picture will be out of proportion. Doctor cannot give medicine correctly or use knife rightly and do so. The strength of character of Jesus is seen in the great minds He dominated:---

1. Gladstone was great but in Christ:---
His mighty intellect found anchorage.
His impetuous temper found restraint.
His versatile personality found fulfillment.
2. Luther was daringly wise and courageous but Jesus dominated him.
3. Calvin told the libertines in Geneva to shoot him in his pulpit if they dared, but that he would gladly fall on his open Bible for his Lord's sake. Courageous Calvin, but Jesus dominated him.
4. Knox had great wisdom and power and his preaching made the Queen declare that she feared him more than all the armies of Scotland. But Jesus dominated Knox.
5. Spurgeon, intellectual giant, soared like an eagle, sang like a lark, preaching God's Gospel. But Jesus dominated his mind.
6. Carroll, Mighty among the mightiest, reached from pole to pole with his mighty mental wings. But Jesus dominated Carroll.
7. John the Baptist, was a seer who saw clearly, a hero who dared valiantly a great heart who felt deeply. But to Jesus he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee."

Jesus is our only necessity for fruitfulness and power in the kingdom of---

III. THE MORAL

A sound body with a sound mind and a sound heart is a trinity of power in the exercise of which you will find life's highest and largest success. What food is to the body, air to the lungs, numbers are to mathematics, the sun is to this universe and a thousand times more Christ will be to your life. He will not only be our Saviour but leader and comrade. Following His leadership will unify, concentrate, satisfy and conserve life.

"What the hand is to the lute,
What the breath is to the flute,
What is fragrance to the smell,
What the spring is to the well,
What the flower is to the bee,
That is Jesus Christ to me.

What the mother to the child,
What the guide in pathless wild,
What is oil to troubled wave,
What is ransom to the slave.

What is water to the sea,
That is Jesus Christ to me."

JESUS ONLY.

He is enough, He saves, inspires, directs, sustains, enriches, shares, and when our work is over rewards us. After toil is finished it is enough if at the end of the journey in the haze of the twilight we shall see Jesus only and hear Him say, "Well done, welcome home."

As in this service we now gather around His table, may the face and form of the best friend we have discovered ourselves to our faith. May we see no man save JESUS ONLY.