

THE ADEQUACY OF CHRIST

"For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." Romans 10:11.

In this age far too little is made of the Scriptures. The tendency is to undermine the faith of people in the Bible and to persuade them to rest on something else. Thank God, all have not yielded to this tendency. Paul substantiated and enforced his teaching by declaring, "The Scripture saith." In this respect, he followed the example of Christ. Even though He was quite able to speak authoritatively of Himself, our Lord continually referred to the Holy Scriptures. In his statement, "for the Scripture saith," Paul was referring to the general sense of Scripture, rather than to any one passage. Various passages teach that believers shall not be put to shame, such as, "They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed."

Paul disclosed the central note of all evangelical preaching in this clear statement, "For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." Whatever Paul's theme, he always linked it up with Christ. His letters and sermons were always Christ-centered. In writing to the Corinthians he said, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." I Corinthians 2:2. To the Galatians he said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ." Galatians 6:14. And again he said to the Corinthians, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." II Corinthians 4:5.

Paul realized and declared that there is only one adequate hope and help for humanity, and that such hope and help are to be found in Christ and in Him alone. Surely, it is of infinite moment and great wisdom that we follow his example in this great matter of giving our witness for Christ. He always pointed people to Christ as the one and only adequate hope and help for them, for the present and for the unfolding and never-ending future.

Here then is the mission, the business of every friend and follower of Christ: to walk in the steps of Paul and give our testimony, ever so clearly and so urgently, that men and women hearing us shall understand that there is just one way of salvation, and that way is Christ. This matter of reminding people that salvation is by Christ alone is not incidental or secondary; but it is a matter of vital and supreme moment for us all. It is time for us to remind people that they are hurrying through time and into eternity and that there is only one hope for them and that is Christ. Here is our mission. This must be our witness.

The winning of souls to Christ and His service is the primary, central, supreme and unceasing task of every Christian in the world. The early Christians believed that so firmly that they went everywhere bearing their witness, and, within one generation, they had made disciples throughout the Roman Empire in such large numbers that multitudes had to take notice of Christianity.

When Christ came, Oriental mysticism had failed; Greek philosophy had failed; Roman law had failed; all had failed. He was the only remedy then, and He is the only remedy for mankind now. The world has tried big business, diplomacy, war, education, imperialism and communism, but all of them have failed to meet the needs of the human heart. Let us leave off these insufficient and failing remedies offered by the world. Let us try Christ! He will not fail to meet our needs.

However, one is sure to be disappointed if he comes to Christ expecting something which He has never promised. Let us be sure that we know what Christ offers! If you think that He will make life easy and safe and comfortable for you, that He will invariably shield you from temptation and suffering, that He will plane down all the sharp edges of life so that you will not be hurt; then you are in for a disappointment for He has never promised all of that.

Many seem to have the idea that the Christian faith promises immunity from trouble. Some calamity, some bereavement or some embittering circumstance comes, and you can easily see that they are surprised, bewildered and disappointed. They seem to feel that God has let them down. They say with Gideon, "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" But the Lord Jesus never promised that fellowship with Him was sure protection against all trouble. He has not promised that His followers will be shielded from hardship and suffering. He seems rather to promise just the opposite. He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

What Christ promised is something much more wonderful. He promised that His grace and strength can keep us from being spiritual tragedies. He promised that we shall not be inwardly defeated in the midst of our trials. He never promised to free us from trouble, but He did promise to free us from our real enemies--anxiety and fear.

If it is immunity from trouble that you want, then you are sure to be disappointed; but, if it is Christ's courage and hope and strength and heroism that you want, then the half has not been told. Listen to what Annie Johnson Flint said:

"God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through;
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

"But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love."

This is also true; you are certain to be disappointed if you think that when you come to Christ He will leave you alone in your evil habits, your unchristian prejudices, and your complacency about your own moral and spiritual condition, and about that of the world. Christ will take you as you are, but He will never let you stay the way you are. And if you deny Him the right to change your thinking and cleanse and reorder your life, then His presence will be only an irritation, and you will go away disappointed. One simply cannot have the comfort of Christ's pardon without the pain of His surgery.

The trouble with so many professing Christians is that they want to know that they have Christ's forgiveness from the guilt and penalty of sin, but they do not always want freedom from the sin itself. They want what they term "the fun of sinning" without its inevitable consequences. You cannot have Christ on any other terms than unconditional surrender.

The trouble with so many is that they want Christ's peace and power and comfort, but, along with all that, they want also the sins which He has condemned and which He gave His life to destroy. So, the net result is that they do not really get Him. They get church affiliation, but they do not get Christ. It is wrong to want God merely as a convenience. But, when a man comes to Christ wanting and expecting not only freedom from the penalty of sin but also freedom from its grip and power, he will not go away empty and disappointed. When a man comes to Christ expecting Him to do a complete job with his sins, he will not be disappointed. It is exceedingly important that we get our expectations right.

All that you really need, Christ offers. And He never goes back on His promise. He never lets anybody down who puts his complete trust in Him for time and eternity, burning all the bridges and cutting all the moorings. He may ignore some of your cherished wants; He may not fulfill some of your expectations, but if you will commit yourself to Him utterly, you will not be disappointed. What Christ will give you will so completely fill up your life and supply your need that what you previously hankered after and expected will not matter any more. What you need is found in Christ. What it takes to cleanse and sweeten and deepen and empower your life, He freely offers. When you truly and fully know your own case, you will find Jesus Christ triumphantly adequate, and you will be ready to sing

the words of Charles Wesley,

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find."

The way of salvation is to believe on Christ. What is believing on Him? It is trusting in Him. It is not enough to believe in Him, merely as being the Son of God and the anointed of the Lord, but we must believe on Him, just as in the building the builder takes his stone and lays it on the foundation. There it rests with all its weight. There it abides. The faith that brings about salvation is not believing certain truths, nor even believing that Jesus is a Saviour, but it is resting on Him, depending on Him, placing all your weight on Christ as the foundation of your hope. Believe that He can save you; believe that He will save you; trust Him to save you; depend on Him to save you; and leave the whole matter of your salvation with Him in unquestioning faith. Depend upon Him without fear as to your present and your eternal salvation. This faith will enable you to receive and enjoy His salvation.

Notice that this faith must be in a Person. If we believe on Him we shall not be ashamed. "Whosoever believeth on Him" alone shall be saved and not put to shame. Christ will never be a part Saviour. We must not rest in part upon what we hope to do in the future, nor in part upon the efficacy of any outward ceremony. Our faith must rest on Him. Take Christ as the sole Saviour of your soul. As a believer in Christ you will never have any cause to be ashamed.

On that day when Christ shall sit upon His throne as judge, those who have not believed on Him will be ashamed. They will not have any excuse to offer though. In fact, they do not have any acceptable excuse to offer now.

If you will accept Christ as your Saviour and put your case completely in His hands, you will never be disappointed, confounded or put to shame. If you will believe on Him, rest on Him, lean on Him and commit your way to Him, the Scriptures say that you will never be put to shame. Christ meets every test, both of life and of death. Christ also meets the test of eternity. Christ never fails. Try Him for yourself and you will find Him adequate.