

## Just After Conversion

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*JUST before* conversion we were full of fears and questionings. The fact is, our consciences were at work and well we may thank God that they were. Our sins rose up before our memories. They witnessed against us and we found ourselves impeached by the unerring Word of God, and consequently, conscience spoke against us with an accusing voice.

Every Christian reader has known something of this. There is no such thing as cleansing from sin without there being conviction of sin. First sin is confessed by man, then it is covered by God. As David put it, "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32: 5). The

### ACCUSINGS OF CONSCIENCE

are a very real and pressing thing and once really produced by the action of the Spirit of God there is no true rest until they are silenced.

What silenced them? One thing, and one thing only — the knowledge of the finished work of Christ. We probably turned first of all to our own works. They were but human, imperfect and unfinished. The atoning sacrifice of Christ was divine, perfect and complete. Hence His dying cry,

"IT IS FINISHED" (John 19: 30).

Here was that which presented a full answer to the accusings of our consciences. "Who is he that condemneth?" asks the apostle. Can even our own consciences condemn? NO, for "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom. 8: 34).

Having turned to God and got free of the accusings of conscience many of us, however, fell victims to

### MISGIVINGS OF HEART,

and hence, just after conversion, we found ourselves not as happy as we knew we rightly should be. Some may be a prey to these misgivings today — even as you read these lines. If so, it is because you are in some way seeking a point of assurance and repose in yourself.

You are not seeking any merit in yourself. Doubtless you are clear as to that and have learned to look away from yourself and wholly to Christ in that connection. But are you seeking stability and constancy and fixity in yourself? Something so constant and stable that you might be able to congratulate yourself as being unquestionably one of the people of God because things are so satisfactory in the realm of your feelings!

You are bound to be disappointed in that direction. A far more advanced Christian than either you or I had to write,

"Yet, Lord, alas! what weakness  
Within myself I find,  
No infant's changing pleasure  
Is like my wandering mind."

And just as he could not find any point of assurance or anchorage in himself and his spiritual state and feelings neither can we.

The fact is, God does not want us to find anything in ourselves. Not what we are or can do, but the finished work of Christ silences all accusings; and so also not our feelings, but the definite and abiding Word of God dismisses all misgivings. If we would say goodbye to all misgivings we must know the force of the words,

"IT IS WRITTEN" (John 8: 17; John 10: 34).

The Jews came to the Lord with a false insinuation. "How long dost Thou make us to *doubt*?" said they, "if Thou be the Christ tell us plainly." His answer was, "I told you." He gave them His *spoken* word which was the Word of God. A moment later they accused Him of blasphemy. His reply commenced thus — "Is it not *written* in your law" — referring them to the Scriptures. Today we have not the spoken Word of God. This ceased with the disappearance of the inspired apostles. The written Word of God remains and is the antidote to all doubts. It alone has *authority*.

There is no authority in our **impressions** or feelings — even those which may be produced by the Spirit of God. Nothing that fluctuates and changes *can* be authoritative. A clock which gained yesterday and lost today is not one by which people will set their watches, even if it happens to keep good time to-morrow. Somewhere there is laid up the authoritative yard measure. It is correct to the ten-thousandth part of an inch and deposited where it is beyond the reach of alteration or tampering. It is the authoritative standard by which all good measures may be tested. But then it is **unalterable**.

In things spiritual therefore, we need not have misgivings. He who has not really trusted in Christ should have none as to his position. He is *not* saved and should know it. We who have trusted in Him should have none. The Word of God declares we *are* justified. We know it, taking God at His Word.

Some of you would tell me that you are converted and have the assurance of your justification and place of favour before God, yet you are not really very happy. You have a vague sense of disappointment and emptiness and failure. The fact is, you have

LONGINGS OF SOUL,

and they are not satisfied.

Now listen! They never will be satisfied until you discover in Christ an Object to command your affections, a Master to control your life and service. When His disciples were in the storm on the lake they were filled with fears and longings for land. Jesus appeared and made Himself known to them in the words,

"IT IS I" (John 6: 20),

that was enough. Their fears ceased and their longings were satisfied.

Have you ever yet, by faith, caught a soul-satisfying vision of Christ in His glory? Does He seem to you so attractive that you catch a little of Paul's spirit — "that I may *win* Christ . . . that I may *know* Him... that I may *apprehend* that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 8-12)? Does His service occupy and delight you so that you can also say with Paul, "Whose I am and whom I serve" (Acts 27: 23)? It so you will not be amongst those who drift on aimlessly and unhappily with the world's stream.

The aimless and objectless person is a sorry sight wherever you find him, and never more so than when it is an aimless and objectless *believer* that is before you. Be not thus, good Christian reader, we

besech you. The Lord Jesus Himself is infinitely worthy not only of your heart's trust, but also of your heart's adoration and service. If hitherto you have been asleep as to this do not slumber on another hour. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," or "shine upon thee" (Eph. 5: 9). Oh, what a transformation is wrought in the heart and life of one who comes into the shining of Christ!

Happy indeed it is if this blessedness is ours, not at the end of our careers, but at the beginning of them — just after conversion.