# Coming to Christ.

**Andrew Bonar:**

**The natural man is exceedingly perverse, and Satan knows how to wield this perversity of the heart. We, in our day, are ready to excuse ourselves for slowness to believe in the Lord Jesus by saying, 'How much easier it would have been, had we seen Him in the flesh, and been with Him when he wrought His gracious works, and when He spoke His words that were such as never man spake!' Now, in reality, they who then lived had by far the greater difficulties in the way of their faith. One whom no man honoured claims this service, - 'Follow me.' One whom man despiseth says, 'I and the Father are one.' That rejected One, the bye-word among the people, the song of the drunkard, stands in the temple and cries, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink!' and promises, 'He that believeth in me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water!' In those days, the difficulty felt by His hearers, and by His very disciples, was to believe without a doubt that this was the right person; this Jesus the real Immanuel, the Saviour of the world. To these men there seems never to have occurred the thought that there that there was difficulty in the act of coming, or in knowing what coming to Him meant; the difficulty they felt was the being sure that Jesus was the Christ. Only let that point be settled, and their souls are at rest.**

**Such was the state of things then. But now it is altered. Satan has shifted his ground, and tries to puzzle us with the questions, 'How are we to come?' and 'What is meant by coming to Christ? We are in the habit of admitting that Christ's claims are beyond dispute; that He is God-man, and sent by the Father to be the propitiation for our sins. The reproach heaped on Him when first He came is so far rolled away, that all professing disciples agree in never doubting for a moment (as they suppose) that Christ, and no other, is the Saviour to whom they are to come. But then the natural heart finds out a new hindrance in the way of at once resting satisfied in Him. 'What do you mean by coming ?' is a question often asked and dwelt upon and many a soul says, 'If I only knew how to come aright, I would rejoice!'**

**Let us, then, ask what is the true state of the case ; whether or not there be any barrier put in our way by this expression, 'Come.' Is it a mysterious act of the mind ? Is it some very delicate feeling ? Is it a great experience, or a high attainment, that must precede the enjoyment of Christ as ours ?**

**In reply to such questions, I remark that nothing but a self-righteous tendency in the heart would ever have led us to mistake a matter which in itself is very simple. We repeat it - it is the self-righteousness of the natural man that leads him to think that there is anything perplexing in words which Christ thought so simple that He never once has given an explanation of them. For it is a fact, that just as our Master knew there was no need of explaining to any one what He meant when He said 'Hearken !' so did He consider 'Come !' to be a term that needeth no explanation. Any one that has an ear knows the former : why should any one who has a I soul that can think and feel not know the latter? It is self-righteousness that entangles us here ; it is a want of sufficient appreciation of Christ. The hesitation arises from our sight of what Christ is being still very dim ; not attractive enough to fill our heart and conscience.**

**For, in truth, this 'Coming to Christ' is simply the soul's state when occupied with thoughts about Christ, so occupied therewith as to have left behind it all other things. The soul in such a state of engrossment, is said to have come to Him. It has no other whom it cares for, no other that fills up its desires, no other that meets its case ; and so it has left all others for this One, and in doing so is said to have 'come to him.' His person and work have met the cravings of both conscience and heart.**

**If you are at all troubled with this 'Come,' I do not hesitate to say that your eye is averted from its proper object. When Jesus says, 'Come unto me' (Matt. 11:28), He never meant you to stop short at the first word ; He meant you to put all the stress upon 'ME.' Indeed, He has used a form of expression that is purposely fitted to produce this result ; for He has used a word for 'Come' which [in the Greek original] is neither more nor less than 'This way,' or 'Hither' - not a verb, but an adverb. He cries, 'All ye that are heavy laden, leave off trying other means and try me! This way to me ! Hither to me !' It is thus that He speaks, putting the whole stress upon the 'me.' 'All ye that labour, says the gracious Master, 'look this way ! look hither ! to me - to me - to none other but to me!'**

**It is the same word used (John 21:12), 'Come and dine,' where surely He meant not to say more or less than, 'Leave off now your other engagements, and let us dine.' It is the woman's word at Sychar, 'Come, see a man that told me all' (4:29). It is the master's word in the parable (Matt. 22:4), 'Come to the marriage ;' that is, 'Let us go off to the marriage! All is ready; away to this feast!' It is the angel's word at the tomb (Matt. 28:6), 'Come, see the place where the Lord lay;' that is, 'Here is the spot, see for yourselves ; this way, down here ! So that the emphasis all lies in the object presented to us; never in the act of our minds. But we, self-righteous as we are, would fain delay and linger, excusing ourselves by saying, 'I do not know how to perform the act aright.' The**

**real truth, however, is that we are not quite satisfied, or perhaps not very fully occupied, with the object. We would not thus tarry on our own feelings, and acts, and states of mind, were we very fully engrossed with the Christ who is set before us, and who stands in the abundance of His grace beckoning us to advance and enjoy infinite love. 'This way, O sinner! - this way! To me, and to no other!'**

**Yes, this is all. He beckons you to Himself! Why turn in your eye on yourself? why gaze on your wounds? why gaze on your temptations? why look at waves, and listen to winds? The Master cries, 'To me, to me!' He says, O soul, up! forsake your schemes, your thoughts, your ways, and away at once to me! 0 precious soul! do not be detained by inquiries into the acts of your mind, but at once think of me; me whom the Father sent to save sinners, even the chief ; me who came to seek and save the lost ; me, whom the Spirit delighteth to glorify ; me who have satisfied the law, who my own self bare your sins in my own body on the tree ; me who have done all that a sinner needs for righteousness ; me who am come to give you myself, with all I have doe and suffered, to be your ransom. Take me for your conscience; take me for your heart.**

**The case might be stated thus. When I, a sinner, am brought to be willing that Christ should come to me and give me all I need, this is my soul's conuing to Christ. My coming to Christ is, in other words, my soul satisfied with His coming to me ! When my soul is letting alone and forsaking other things, because taken up with Christ's coming out of the Father's bosom to save sinners; this is my soul's coming to Christ! My conscience was asking, 'Wherewithal shall I come before God?' Shall it be by bringing rivers of oil ? Shall it be by offering my soul's sorrow and bitterest grief, as well as my body's penance? I find that it is not thus; nor yet by my prayers, nor by the help of any priest, nor by the aid of any creature's merit, nor by any thing that is not to be found in Christ. What is in Christ is all that my soul needs. Perplexed soul, the Holy Spirit brings all such difficulties as yours to an end by fixing the attention and staying the mind upon this glorious truth, viz. :- That Christ, 'His own self' (1 Pet. 2:24), is the only atonement for sin, the only propitiation. Do think of Christ, His person, His heart of love, His words of grace, and all this in connection with His finished work, His sacrifice accepted; and while thus engaged, 'ere ever you are aware, your soul shall be as the chariots of Amminadib.'**

**Most blessed word, 'Come!' but let it not be misunderstood. It is not itself the Leader, but only the waving of His banner, and the streaming of its folds to the four winds of heaven, as if saying, 'Gather to Shiloh, all ends of the earth.' Blessed word, 'Come!' only remember it is not the Person, but His kind voice drawing off my attention from other objects. It is not the sacrifice, but it is the silver trumpet summoning me to the sacrifice. Blessed word, 'Come,' for, instead of the tremendous 'Depart!' of the judgment-day, spoken to rejecting and rejected sinners, it sends forth the proclamation of the gate still open, the heart of God open, for me a sinner.**

**But perhaps you object - Surely I have something to do, for does He not go on to say, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls'? (Matt. 11:29.) Yes, He does; hut He does not say that this taking on of His yoke is the same as coming to Him. Far otherwise ; it is what follows upon your coming to Him ; it is the service you engage in after having come to Him. You come to Him at once, and find rest at once; and on the spot He makes your soul as white as snow: and then, the next step is your drawing His plough, 'taking on His yoke.' In thus serving and 'learning of Him,' you get another rest - viz., rest from former corruptions, passions, unholy impulses, tormenting desires. This second rest is the rest of Sanctification, and is not to be confounded with the first rest, which is that of Justification.**

**At once, then, fellow sinner, hasten to Him. All you need is here. Here is full salvation ; for He says, 'All things are delivered unto me of my Father.' Here is free salvation ; for the Father reveals it to whom He will, and nothing whatsoever in the sinner can be a barrier to Him. It is a salvation all plain ; for 'He reveals it unto babes.' It is a salvation all for sinners ; for the persons invited are 'heavy-laden ones,' persons who have a load of sin, whether they feel it little or much or not at all ; and 'labouring,' that is, trying in vain to save themselves, trying in vain to swim to shore.**

**Surely, then, I and Christ must meet. Why should we not? He beckons me off self and all else, and says, 'To me, to me alone!' This day, then, let it be so! Father, I see Thee pointing me away from ordinances, from the Bible, from my faith, as well as from my unbelief, to Christ alone, that I and He may meet ! the sinner with the Saviour ? no one between ! Jesus, Master, in Thee, in Thee is peace ! Holy Spirit, thou hast bathed my weary soul! And here I rest, until the day arrive when I shall hear Him say, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world.' I get rest the moment I come to Him. I get rest again when I become somewhat like Him, and the troubled sea of my passions sinks into a calm. I shall get a third rest when I die in the Lord (Rev. 14:13); and soon I shall enter on the final rest that remains for the people of God, when He to whom I now come shall come from heaven to glorify all who here came to Him (2 Thess. 1:7.)**