

F.B. Meyer:

It is meet that the largest church in the greatest Gentile city in the world should be dedicated to the Apostle Paul, for Gentiles are under a great obligation to him as the Apostle of the Gentiles. It is to him that we owe, under the Spirit of God, the unveiling of two great mysteries, which specially touch us as Gentiles.

The first of these, glorious as it is, we cannot now stay to discuss, though it wrought a revolution when first preached and maintained by the Apostle in the face of the most strenuous opposition. Till then, Gentiles were expected to become Jews before they were Christians, and to pass through the synagogue to the church. But he showed that this was not needful, and that Gentiles stood on the same level as Jews with respect to the privileges of the Gospel-fellowheirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph. 3 : 6) .

The second, however, well deserves our further thought, for if only it could be realized by the children of God, they would begin to live after so Divine a fashion as to still the enemy and avenger, and to repeat in some small measure the life of Jesus on the earth.

This mystery is that the Lord Jesus is willing to dwell within the Gentile heart. That He should dwell in the heart of a child of Abraham was deemed a marvelous act of condescension; but that He should find a home in the heart of a Gentile was incredible. This mistake was, however, dissipated before the radiant revelation of truth made to him who, in his own judgment, was not meet to be called an Apostle, because he had persecuted the Church of God. God was pleased to make known through him "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in You, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

"Master, where dwellest Thou?" they asked of old. And in reply Jesus led them from the crowded Jordan bank to the slight tabernacle of woven osiers where He temporarily lodged. But if we address the same question to Him now, He will point, not to the high and lofty dome of heaven, not to the splendid structure of stone or marble, but to the happy spirit that loves, trusts, and obeys Him. "Behold," saith He, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." "We will come," He said, including His Father with Himself, "and make our abode with him." He promised to be within each believer as a tenant in a house; as sap in the branch; as lifeblood and life-energy in each member, however feeble, of the body.

THE MYSTERY

Christ is in the believer. He indwells the heart by faith, as the sun indwells the lowliest flowers that unfurl their petals and bare their hearts to its beams. Not because we are good. Not because we are trying to be wholehearted in our consecration. Not because we keep Him by the tenacity of our love. But because we believe, and in believing, have thrown open all the doors and windows of our nature. And He has come in.

He probably came in so quietly that we failed to detect His entrance. There was no footfall along the passage. The chime of the golden bells at the foot of His priestly robe did not betray Him. He stole in on the wing of the morning, or like the noiselessness with which nature arises from her winter's sleep and arrays herself in the robes which her Creator has prepared for her. But this is the way of Christ. He does not strive, nor cry, nor lift up nor cause His voice to be heard. His tread is so light that it does not break bruised reeds. His breath so soft that it can reillumine dying sparks. Do not be surprised, therefore, if you cannot tell the day or the hour when the Son of Man came to dwell within you. Only know that He has come. "Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless ye be reprobate?" (2 Cor. 13:5)

It is very wonderful. Yes; the heavens, even the Heavens of heavens, with all their light and glory, alone seem worthy of Him. But even there He is not more at home than He is with the humble and contrite spirit that simply trusts in Him. In His early life, He said that the Father dwelt in Him so really that the words He spake and the works He did were not His own, but His Father's. And He desires to be in us as His Father was in Him, so that

the outgoings of our life may be channels through which He, hidden within, may pour Himself forth upon men.

It is not generally recognized. It is not; though that does not disprove it. We fail to recognize many things in ourselves and in nature around, which are nevertheless true. But there is a reason why many whose natures are certainly the temple of Christ, remain ignorant of the presence of the wonderful Tenant that sojourns within. He dwells so deep. Below the life of the body, which is as the curtain of the tent; below the life of the soul, where thought and feeling, judgment and imagination, hope and love. go to and fro, ministering as white-stoled priests in the holy place; below the play of light and shade, resolution and will, memory and hope, the perpetual ebb and flow of the tides of self-consciousness, there, through the Holy Spirit Christ dwells, as of old the Shekinah dwelt in the Most Holy Place, closely shrouded from the view of man.

It is comparatively seldom that we go into these deeper departments of our being. We are content to live the superficial life of sense. We eat, we drink, we sleep. We give ourselves to enjoy the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. We fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Or we abandon ourselves to the pursuit of knowledge and culture, of science and art. We make short incursions into the realm of morals, that sense of right and wrong which is part of the makeup of men. But we have too slight an acquaintance with the deeper and more mysterious chamber of the spirit. Now this is why the majority of believers are so insensible of their Divine and wonderful Resident, who makes the regenerated spirit His abode.

It is to be accepted by faith. We repeat here our constant mistake about the things of God. We try to feel them. If we feel them, we believe them; otherwise we take no account of them. We reverse the Divine order. We say, FEELING, FAITH, FACT. God says FACT, FAITH, FEELING. With Him feeling is of small account-He only asks us to be willing to accept His own Word, and to cling to it because He has spoken it, in entire disregard of what we may feel.

I am distinctly told that Christ, though He is on the Throne in His ascended glory, is also within me by the Holy Ghost. I confess I do not feel Him there. Often amid the assault of temptation or the fury of the storm that sweeps over the surface of my nature, I cannot detect His form or hear Him say, "It is I." But I dare to believe He is there; not without me, but within; not as a transient sojourner for a night, but as a perpetual inmate; not altered by my changes from earnestness to lethargy, from the summer of love to the winter of despondency, but always and unchangeably the same. And I say again and again, "Jesus, Thou art here. I am not worthy that Thou shouldst abide under my roof; but Thou hast come. Assert Thyself. Put down all rule, and authority, and power. Come out of Thy secret chamber, and possess all that is within me, that it may bless Thy holy name."

Catherine of Siena at one time spent three days in a solitary retreat, praying for a greater fullness and joy of the Divine presence. Instead of this, it seemed as though legions of wicked spirits assailed her with blasphemous thoughts and evil suggestions. At length, a great light appeared to descend from above. The devils fled, and the Lord Jesus conversed with her. Catherine asked Him: "Lord, where wert Thou when my heart was so tormented?"

"I was in thy heart," He answered.

"O Lord, Thou art everlasting truth," she replied, "and I humbly bow before Thy word, but how can I believe that Thou wast in my heart when it was filled with such detestable thoughts?"

"Did these thoughts give thee pleasure or pain?" He asked.

"An exceeding pain and sadness," was her reply.

To whom the Lord said, "Thou wast in woe and sadness because I was in the midst of thy heart. My presence it was which rendered those thoughts insupportable to thee. When the period I had determined for the duration of

the combat had elapsed, I sent forth the beams of My light, and the shades of hell were dispelled, because they cannot resist that light."

THE GLORY OF THIS MYSTERY

When God's secrets break open, they do so in glory. The wealth of the root hidden in the ground is revealed in the hues of orchid or scent of rose. The hidden beauty of a beam of light is unraveled in the sevenfold color of the rainbow. The swarming, infinitesimal life of southern seas breaks into waves of phosphorescence when cleft by the keel of the ship. And whenever the unseen world has revealed itself to mortal eyes, it has been in glory. It was especially so at the Transfiguration, when the Lord's nature broke from the strong restraint within which He confined it and revealed itself to the eye of man. "His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light" (Matthew 17:2, ASV).

So when we accept the fact of His existence within us deeper than our own, and make it one of the aims of our life to draw on it and develop it, we shall be conscious of a glory transfiguring our life and irradiating ordinary things, such as will make earth, with its commonest engagements, like as the vestibule of Heaven.

The wife of Jonathan Edwards had been the subject of great fluctuations in religious experience and frequent depression, till she came to the point of renouncing the world, and yielding herself up to be possessed by these mighty truths. But so soon as this was the case, a marvelous change took place. She began to experience a constant, uninterrupted rest; sweet peace and serenity of soul; a continual rejoicing in all the works of God's hands, whether of nature or of daily providence; a wonderful access to God by prayer, as it were seeing Him and immediately conversing with Him; all tears wiped away; all former troubles and sorrows of life forgotten, excepting grief for past sins and for the dishonor done to Christ in the world; a daily sensible doing and suffering everything for God, and doing all with a continual uninterrupted cheerfulness, peace and joy.

Such glory-the certain pledge of the glory to be revealed-is within reach of each reader of these lines who will dare day by day to reckon that Christ lives within, and will be content to die to the energies and promptings for the self-life so that there may be room for the Christ-life to reveal itself. "I have been crucified," said the greatest human teacher of this Divine art; "Christ liveth in me; I live by faith in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20).

THE RICHES OF THE GLORY OF THIS MYSTERY

When this mystery or secret of the Divine life in man is apprehended and made use of, it gives great wealth to life. If all the treasures of wisdom, knowledge, power, and grace reside in Jesus, and He is become the cherished and honored resident of our nature, it is clear that we also must be greatly enriched. It is like a poor man having a millionaire friend come to live with him.

There are riches of patience. Life is not easy to any of us. No branch escapes the pruning knife; no jewel the wheel; no child the rod. People tyrannize over and vex us almost beyond endurance. Circumstances strain us till the chords of our hearts threaten to snap. Our nervous system is overtaxed by the rush and competition of our times. Indeed, we have need of patience!

Never to relax the self-watch; never to indulge in unkind or thoughtless criticism of others; never to utter the hasty word, or permit the sharp retort; never to complain except to God; never to permit hard and distrustful thoughts to lodge within the soul; to be always more thoughtful of others than self; to detect the one blue spot in the clouded sky; to be on the alert to find an excuse for those who are forward and awkward, to suffer the aches and pains, the privations and trials of life, sweetly, submissively, trustfully; to drink the bitter cup, with the eye fixed on the Father's face, without a murmur or complaint:-this needs patience, which mere stoicism could never give.

And we cannot live such a life till we have learned to avail ourselves of the riches of the indwelling Christ. The beloved Apostle speaks of being a partaker of the patience which is in Jesus (Rev. 1:9). So may we be. That calm, uncomplaining, unrelenting patience, which made the Lamb of God dumb before His shearers, is ours.

Robert Hall was once overheard saying amid the heat of an argument, "Calm me, O Lamb of God!" But we may go further and say, "Lord Jesus, let Thy patience arise in me, as a spring of fresh water in a briny sea."

There are riches of grace. Alone among the great cities of the world, Jerusalem had no river. But the glorious Lord was in the midst of her, and He became a place of broad rivers and streams, supplying from Himself all that rivers gave to cities, at the foot of whose walls the welcome waters lapped (Isa. 33: 21).

This is a picture of what we have, who dare to reckon on the indwelling of our glorious Lord, as King, Lawgiver, and Saviour. He makes all grace to abound toward us, so that we have a sufficiency for all emergencies, and can abound in every good work. In His strength, ever rising up within us, we are able to do as much as those who are dowered with the greatest mental and natural gifts, and we escape the temptations to vainglory and pride by which they are beset.

The grace of purity and self-control, of fervent prayer and understanding in the Scriptures, of love for men and zeal for God, of lowliness and meekness, of gentleness and goodness—all is in Christ; and if Christ is in us, all is ours also. O that we would dare to believe it, and draw on it, letting down the pitcher of faith into the deep well of Christ's indwelling, opened within us by the Holy Ghost!

It is impossible, in these brief limits, to elaborate further this wonderful thought. But if only we would meet every call, difficulty, and trial, not saying, as we so often do, "I shall never be able to go through it," but saying, "I cannot; but Christ is in me, and He can," we should find that all trials were intended to reveal and unfold the wealth hidden within us, until Christ was literally formed within us, and His life manifested in our mortal body (2 Cor. 4:10).

Be still each day for a short time, sitting before God in meditation, and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the truth of Christ's indwelling. Ask God to be pleased to make known to you what is the riches of the glory of this mystery (Col. 1: 27).

Reverence your nature as the temple of the indwelling Lord. As the Easterner bares his feet, and the Westerner his head, on entering the limits of a temple, so be very careful of aught that would defile the body or soil the soul. No beasts must herd in the temple courts. Get Christ to drive them out. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God? The temple of God is holy, and such are ye."

Hate your own life. "If any man hateth not his own life," said our Lord, "he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26). And the word translated "life" is soul, the seat and center of the self-life with its rest less energies and activities, its choices and decisions, its ceaseless strivings at independence and leadership. This is the greatest hindrance to our enjoyment of the indwelling Christ. If we will acquire the habit of saying "No," not only to our bad but our good self; if we will daily deliver ourselves up to death for Jesus' sake; if we will take up our cross and follow the Master, though it be to His grave, we shall become increasingly conscious of being possessed by a richer, deeper, Diviner life than our own.