



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

New Testament Holiness

By Thomas Cook

Chapter 14 BEULAH LAND

“Those who have read Bunyan's immortal allegory will remember how he brings his pilgrims, before they crossed the river of death, into the land of Beulah. In that region they were "clear out of sight of Doubting Castle"; the gates of the Celestial City were full in view, so that the sun shone by night as well as by day. They continually heard the singing of birds, and in their walks they encountered several groups of the shining ones. As they walked to and fro in this goodly land they found it to be "a most pleasant, mountainous country, beautiful with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, very delectable to behold." It may seem at first sadly inconsistent with the facts to describe Christian experience on earth in such glowing colors, but there is a high and serene inheritance "common to and for all pilgrims," a promised land, towards which we are beckoned, where, as Dean Alford would say, "Materially we are yet in the body, but in the spirit we are already in heaven -- *only waiting for the redemption of the body to be entirely and literally there.*"

This experience so closely resembles heaven, that St. Paul took the term heaven and transformed it into an adjective-noun -- "the heavenlies" -- and used that term five times in the Epistle to the Ephesians to describe the region called by Bunyan the Land of Beulah. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." See also Ephesians 1:20, 2:6, 3:10, 6:12. When he uses the phrase "heavenly places," the apostle cannot be referring to heaven itself, because in Ephesians 6:12 he speaks of our wrestling with "principalities and powers" and "wicked spirits" in the heavenly places, which must mean that it is an earthly experience, because there are no wicked spirits in heaven. There can be no doubt but that St. Paul had in view a sublime dimension of Christian experience in which the heavenly state is in us and we in it, so that literally in this present life we may live in a world of the unseen.

The Hidden Place

There is a story told by naturalists of a little insect that lives beneath the slimy pools, and makes for itself a house in the dark waters. In the center of a bubble of air, which it inflates above the water and then takes down with it and moors to a little plant at the bottom of the pool, where it lives. There, in its little world of light and air, it breathes, and builds its nest, and rears its young; dwelling below, and yet

living above, and breathing the air of the upper world, while all around it are dark waters and slimy depths, and the creatures that come and go around its floating houses of air. This illustrates in some measure what we mean by living in the "heavenly places" in Christ Jesus. As we walk through this dark world of sin and sorrow we have another world about us -- a higher, sweeter, purer world; and while our feet tread the earth below, our hearts and heads are in the heavens, shut in with Christ. We are encompassed with a little world of light and glory which has descended from the skies -- a kind of heavenly cloud in which we live and work like the little insect in its ethereal sphere. Was this not what the apostle meant when he wrote, "Our conversation is in heaven"? Christians need not die to know what heaven is --

The men of grace have found
Glory begun below.

We do need to know where the "heavenly places" are. It is enough to know that they are where Jesus is. The expression refers more to the spiritual atmosphere than to locality. Heaven is a state as well as a place; and just in proportion as we abide in Christ, and live in communion with Him, do we have the earnest and first fruits of the heavenly glory. The more God enters into our life, the smaller, the less startling will be the change at death. "Weep not for me," said a dying saint to his friends who stood weeping round his bed; "I go to change my place but not my company. I have walked with God on earth, and He is calling me now to walk with Him in heaven."

Though heaven's above and earth's below,
Yet are they but one state,
And each the other with sweet skill
Doth interpenetrate.
-- Faber --

The Two Kinds of Rest

Canaan was to the Jewish people what the "heavenly places" are to us. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews warns the Jews, from the failure of their fathers, not to fail to enter the true rest, which was typified by their fathers entering Canaan. Some assume that Canaan is always a type of heaven, and that the rest spoken of eleven times in the chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to the perfect rest of the heavenly world; but the writer of the Epistle *speaks of it as a present state* -- "We which have believed do enter into rest" -- from which it is obvious that some other rest than that of the perfect rest of heaven is referred to. The Jews had supposed that Canaan was the true rest, but the writer of the Epistle shows that there was a higher rest, of which the temporal rest of Canaan was only a type. "If Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day," yet another day is spoken of. Eight hundred years after enjoying Canaan, David urged the people, "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts;" from which it is evident that entering Canaan did not exhaust the meaning of the words, "They shall enter into My rest." That land was a type, but only a type, of the rest, which God has provided for His people. Joshua gave the physical, but he could not give the spiritual rest. *Only in Jesus, the greater Joshua, can the true, real rest be found.* It is only when He Himself, who is exalted into heaven, comes by His Spirit, so fully

to possess our hearts, as that He is in us, and we in Him, that we of a truth reach the Beulah Land --

Where dwells the Lord, our Righteousness,
And keeps His own in perfect peace
And everlasting rest.

Heavenly Bliss

"The river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," is only a poetical description of the indwelling Comforter whom the Lord Jesus promised to send to His disciples, and through whom the Son of God would manifest Himself unto them, and the Father and the Son make their permanent abode with them. The bliss of heaven is of the same kind as the joy of Divine love shed abroad in the believer's heart, only there it is more abundant. The Holy Spirit brings the joy of heaven with Him, and thus the saints above and the saints below drink from the same stream.

Beulah Land is not heaven, but it has been well described as "the suburbs of heaven." Another writer speaks of it as a little heaven to go to heaven in." Mr. Wesley says, "When the Holy Spirit fills the heart of a believer, He feasts the soul with such peace and joy in God as to blot out the remembrance of everything that we called peace and joy before." This may seem strong language, but those who have felt the throb of love and gladness from the abiding fullness of the Holy Ghost can testify to its correctness. Speaking of the time when she entered this goodly land, Miss Havergal says, "My whole life was lifted into the sunshine, of which all I had previously experienced was but as pale and passing April gleams compared with the fullness of summer glory" --

"I've reached the land of corn and wine,
And all its riches freely mine;
Here shines undimmed our blissful day,
For all my night has passed away.

How meager words are to describe the glory of this inheritance. To dwell where the beloved of the Lord dwell in safety by Him; where the sun shineth night and day; where the atmosphere is too transparent for doubt to live; where duty is transformed into delight; where the mouth is filled with laughter and the tongue with praise; where the soul finds rest from unsatisfied cravings; *where triumph over temptation is complete and habitual*; where, with joy unspeakable, we see the face of God in open enraptured vision, and are made glad by the assurance, deeply buried in the soul, that we do the things that please Him. *"To portray the blessedness of those who have reached these 'heavenly places' is like representing the rainbow by a charcoal sketch."*

Oh, the sweetness of this inward spiritual kingdom! Oh, the depths of solid peace, the untroubled repose in God! What liberty is there possessed! What high, sacred, and pure enjoyment reigns! What fragrant breezes from the heavenly climes fill the air! What glorious unveilings of God to the soul! "The light of the moon has

become as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold." The intense sweetness, the superior excellence, and the Divine glory of the perfect love of Jesus can never be exaggerated, indeed this promised land testifies that even the glowing descriptions of Charles Wesley fall infinitely short of the reality --

Rivers of milk and honey rise,
And all the fruits of Paradise
In endless plenty grow.

Beulah is Near

Does the country we have been describing seem to any of our readers like some far-off "Eldorado," instead of a country nigh at hand? There is no need to regard it as a far-off land. No greater mistake could be made than to locate it as lying on the verge of the river, never to be reached until the close of our earthly career. It is nigh unto us.

The unbelieving Israelites remained forty years in the wilderness, when all the while, they might have entered their long-promised Canaan in less than a month. After they left Horeb, on the shores of the Red Sea, it took only eleven days before the vine-clad hills of Canaan were in full view, but "they could not enter in because of unbelief." "Let us also fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." We should say to those who, in God's mercy, have been led through the wilderness, and who are now on the borderland of the Canaan of God's perfect love, so that only the Jordan rolls between, "Let us go up at once and possess it." If faith is the condition, and the only condition, we may enter Beulah Land today. Hence the exhortation, "Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest." The original word for "labour" is not a word signifying long and wearying toil; it is radically the same as that found in the Septuagint version of Joshua 4:10, "and the people hastened and passed over." The same idea is expressed in the hymn --

O that I might at once go up
No more on this side Jordan stop,
But now the land possess.



Soul Rest

When all our powers are harmonized, each with each, and all with God, the soul enters upon a condition of undisturbed Rest, which is beyond the reach of doubt and fear. Among the many characteristics of this life there is none more marked than this feeling of rest, which is developed in our personal consciousness. We sing of rest beyond the river, but we must not transport to the other shore the things that God hath prepared for those who love Him on this side of the river. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." These words are often quoted as though they had reference to the heavenly world. "But," says the Apostle, "God hath

revealed them unto us by His Spirit," indicating clearly that the believer's heaven on earth is meant, not some experience beyond the grave. "We which have believed do enter into rest." This rest is described in the Epistle to the Hebrews as "God's rest" (Heb. 3:11), "My rest" (Heb. 4:1), "His rest," "Christ's rest" (Heb. 4:10), and "a Sabbath rest" (Heb. 4:4, 9). In the same Epistle we are taught that:

I. Ceasing From Our Own Works

"For he hath entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from His" (Hebrews 4:10). Cessation from our own works does not mean ceasing from all kinds of work, for that is not true of saints either on earth or in heaven. We have no reason to believe that any saint or angel, or even God Himself, is ever inactive. He who enjoys soul rest is brought so intimately into sympathy with the Saviour that he is all aflame with zeal, ever hastening with quickened footsteps towards sinners dying in their sins around him. As a widely known preacher quaintly expressed it, "I enjoy that rest of faith that keeps me in perpetual motion." We are to cease works for the purpose of saving our own souls. Just so long as that constitutes the supreme object of our works, we are doing "our own works." But when the question of our soul's salvation is thrown entirely on Christ, and our works are performed out of love to God, they are not our works, but Christ's works -- the result of His working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. In one sense they are our works, because they are done by our own voluntary agency, but Christ is the moving cause of all that we do. True faith works love, and love does all for Christ. Faith in the great Atonement is the only basis of acceptance with God, apart from anything we can do. As God did not rest until He had finished His creative works, so the Christian cannot rest until he ceases altogether from his legalistic works, and casts himself entirely upon the Saviour for salvation.

Willpower -or Trust in Him

In like manner we cease from our own efforts to live the Christian life. Many Christians live a life of resolution, instead of a life of faith in the Son of God. Those who trust to their own strength of purpose always find failure the result. The Gospel scheme is not fixing our will like flint, resolved to conquer or die. It is to commit the keeping of the soul wholly to Christ, and then to cease from our own efforts. When we understand that it is not self-control, but Christ-control, we learn the secret of victory. The attitude of the believing soul is that of Peter's when he first stepped from the ship upon the waters of the sea, "Looking unto Jesus." Philosophy says, "Keep your eye upon your enemies;" but the Gospel says, "Eye Jesus only." Weakness results from a constant survey of the difficulties and temptations, which best us. Power comes when the eye turns towards the angel Jehovah. Christ is our "I am" for every "I need" of the soul. He is the storehouse, and, as need arises, we must go to Him. He supplies for needs as they come, but not until it does come, and as we draw upon Him. "Human nature wants more -- wants to feel its wealth, to finger its coin; but is it not better to leave it in the bank, and go there for it as often, and in as large sums, as we like?" Such is the life of faith -- having all in Christ, and receiving all from Christ.

Self-endeavor is the great danger. This, rather than ambition, should be called, "the last infirmity of noble minds." First the sinner goes about to establish his own

righteousness, and even when that has proved to be a dead failure, he will be found striving to be his own sanctifier. Some write out their vows and put them into their Bible as reminders of their solemn engagements with God. Others decide that they will give more attention to secret prayer, attend all means of grace, visit the sick, and be more watchful against sin. In this way many sincere souls spend years in earnest struggle. They substitute renewed vows for faith in the all-sufficient Saviour when failure disappoints them. Christ is offered to us in the Gospel as our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; and as we try to replace Him in any of these functions, we set aside the Gospel and seek salvation by the works of the law.

We have heard a lady tell how, when she was newly married, because she had not had much domestic experience, everything in the home seemed to go wrong. She did her best, but so many problems arose that she was almost in a state of despair. One day she was so much discouraged that she sat down and wept. She was aroused by a knocking at the door, and found a telegraph boy with a telegram announcing that her mother was coming, and immediately her care was gone. "When mother arrived," she said, "I had no more anxiety, what I could not do mother could, and when she was with me I rested." What that mother was to her daughter Christ wants to be to us. If only we could learn to meet every call, difficulty, temptation and trial, not saying, as many do, "I shall never be able to go through it," but saying, "I cannot, but Christ can, and He is with me," we should be able then to sing, with ever-increasing depth of meaning:

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the joy of what Thou art.

II. Rest From Worry And Fear

Care is such a foe to happiness, that when it enters the heart happiness departs. Next to sin, it is the greatest evil that can come into a soul. It hinders prayers, prevents usefulness and defeats itself. The more the bewildered bird beats about the cage, the less chance it has of getting away. *Fear and faith cannot keep house together.* But a life free from care is not for that reason a careless life. In a certain sense we must be careful. Be careful to maintain good works is an apostolic command. The hymn contains the right sentiment, "Careful, yet without care, I am." One cannot be too careful when the care is to be right and to do right. But when the care is burdensome and distressing, we must learn to cast it on the Lord. Forethought is commanded, but foreboding is forbidden to those who are Christians. Misgivings about the providence of God lie at the root of all wearying worry. The secret tranquility is trust. "He that believeth shall not make haste." Christ has the program of our best possible future in His hands. His will is the blending of infinite love and wisdom. If He chooses for us there can be no mistake. What the hidden plan of our future may be is no concern of ours so long as it is the will of God." It is sure to be right. Our only concern moment by moment should be, "Am I in the will of God?" If I am, then all is well. "All things work together for good to them that love God," though we may not be able to understand it. With this confidence we can sing with Faber:

Ill that He blesses is my good

And unblest good is ill;
And that is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will.

God governed the world well before we came into it, and He will be at no loss so far as we are concerned. He has taken better care of our past, and secured better results for the present, than we have deserved; why should we be anxious for the future?

How can I ever careful be,
While such a God is mine?
He watches o'er me night and day,
And tells me, "Mine is thine."

He Cares

The lilies of the field He cares for, and we are of more value than they; also the birds of the air, and we are better than they. The very hairs of our heads are all numbered; which means that in all our matters, even as insignificant as the loss of a hair, God is interested; and it is in such ceaseless and perfect care -- infinite, tender, loving, and reaching to every possible necessity -- we are asked to trust. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Alford's comment on this passage is precious, because his critical scholarship brings out an idea not expressed in the English Version, "Casting (once for all, by an act which includes the life) all your anxiety, the whole of it, not every anxiety as it arises, for none will arise if this transference has been effectually made." The idea is that where there is perfect trust there is perfect contentment with our providential circumstances. We can then thank God even for disappointments, because we know they are for some wise purpose; and in this habit of reliance on God, not by spasms of faith, we find the true solvent for care. Those who have not entered into this rest not only bear the evils of today, but often import from the imaginary future all sorts of evils to increase their discomfort and distress. Can we not all say, as the aged Christian said to his family when they gathered round his deathbed, "I have had many trials and difficulties during my life-time, but half of them never happened"? This custom of crossing mountains before we reach them is most detrimental to Christian life. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Strength is never promised in advance, but given day by day as the day's needs require. We do well to follow Charles Kingsley's counsel, "Do today's duty, fight today's temptation, and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them." As grace is needed it will be given. "My God shall supply all your need." When we wonder if our need can be met, we act as absurdly as the little fish which Mr. Spurgeon imagined as swimming up the Thames, and wondering if there would be water enough for it. One day at a time, and one thing at a time, is one of the secrets of a life free from worry. If tomorrow brings some new duty, responsibility, struggle or trial, let it be sufficient that "our God will be alive tomorrow." Little faith will bring our souls to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to our souls.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread

Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

III. Rest From Internal Conflict

Rest is cessation from strife or war. The children of Israel rested when they were freed from their enemies. Those who enter the rest of faith have completely won their struggle with the flesh, or "the fallen nature", or depravity, by whatever name it may be described. All antagonisms to God are gone from the soul and Christ reigns without a rival. Christ can never exist in a state of partnership or affiliation with sin. There is no war more distressing than civil war, and when a confederacy against Christ rages in the believer's heart, there is no possibility of rest.

If the strong man is bound, but not cast out, he makes desperate efforts to burst his bonds and reassert his supremacy in the household. The "infection of nature" within responds favorably to the temptations of Satan without. When the believer would do good, evil is present with him. It is to be feared that the majority of Christians are living in the seventh chapter of Romans instead of the sixth and the eighth. The tendencies to evil are so strong within them, and the contest with the flesh so distressing that they cry continually, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the seventh chapter of Romans was never designed to be a representation of the ideal Christian life; it is rather a portrayal of the struggles of a convicted sinner seeking justification by the deeds of the law. Instead, the ideal Christian life is described in the sixth chapter, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Here we are taught that the purpose of the crucifixion of the old man is that the body, "in so far as it is a sin body" (Meyer), might be destroyed, "annihilated" (Cremer), "done away" (R.V.) "But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

The commandment is, "Crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts." "If ye do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." To crucify and to mortify mean to put to death. The fallen nature is not to be merely held down, but to be crucified until it is quite dead. Repressive power is nowhere in the New Testament ascribed to the blood of Christ, but rather purifying power. When St. Paul said that he kept his body under and brought it into subjection, he made no allusion to the flesh (the carnal mind) but to his innocent bodily appetites. God does not want to destroy our natural appetites, propensities and affections, but to take the sinwardness out of them that they may be exercised rightly and properly, and always for His glory.

When John Wesley asked the German, Arvid Gradin, for his definition of full salvation he replied as follows:

"Repose in the blood of Christ, a firm confidence toward God and persuasion of His favor, the highest tranquility, serenity and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every (inordinate) fleshly desire and a cessation of all even inward sins."

To every word of this hundreds can subscribe. It is not our mere theory, but our experience. While conscious of many errors, ignorances, infirmities and defects which every moment need the merit of Christ's death, we have obtained by faith the

rest from sin which the great poet of Methodism beautifully describes:

All the struggle now is o'er,
And wars and fightings cease,
Israel now need sin no more,
But dwell in perfect peace.

All his enemies are gone,
Sin shall have in him no part,
Israel now shall dwell alone,
With Jesus in his heart.

"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death." The natural tendency in us towards sin (the law of sin and death) is not only neutralized when Christ our life is fully apprehended (the law of the spirit of life) but under the more powerful operation of the latter law the soul now gravitates upward, every aspiration is Godward, and His service is a luxury and a delight.

Christ's Legacy to The Church

Matthew Henry says "that when Christ died He left a will, in which He bequeathed His soul to His Father, His body to Joseph of Arimathea, His clothes fell to the soldiers, His mother He gave to John, but to His disciples, who had left all for Him, He left not silver and gold, but something that was infinitely better -- His peace." "*My peace I give unto you.*" Elsewhere this peace is described as the peace of God, because He is its source and origin. It is the peace which Christ had with the Father from the beginning, the peace in the heart of the Eternal, the stillness of eternity entering the spirit, causing a waveless, breathless calm within. It lies not in the emotions, nor in the absence of the emotions. It is a peace not springing up in the course of nature, but handed down from heaven, and implanted in the believing soul.

Nothing for a moment broke the serenity of Christ's life on earth. Tempest and tumult met Him everywhere, until outwardly His life was one of the most troubled that was ever lived. *But the inner life was a sea of glass.* The highest tranquility, serenity, and peace of mind were always there. It was at the very time when the Pharisaic bloodhounds were dogging Him in the streets of Jerusalem, that He turned to His disciples and offered them, as a last legacy, "My peace." If the meagerness of human language fails to convey to a blind man the vastness of that ocean which lies in the hollow of the Creator's hand how much more is its poverty seen when it attempts to express to an inexperienced soul, all that is meant by God's perfect peace.

All Christians have peace with God, but this peace of God transcends every mind, every attempt of the strongest intellect, to realize its qualities and to describe it. Like the love of Christ, it "passeth knowledge," or, as the apostle says in writing to the Philippians, it "exceeds all understanding." Drummond describes it as "the perfect poise of the soul; the absolute adjustment of the inward man to the stress of outward things; the preparedness against every emergency; the external calm of an invulnerable faith; the repose of a heart set deep in God."

It is the deep tranquility of a soul resting wholly upon God, in contrast with the unrest and anxiety engendered by a self-centered and worldly spirit. Jesus called it "My peace," in contrast with the hollowness of what the world calls peace. The world's peace is determined by outward things, and is as changeable as external conditions. But the peace of God changes not. It is not fitful and transient, but an abiding and ever-increasing reality. Ecstatic joy fluctuates like the waves of the sea, but peace flows on without interruption, like a river ever flowing and full.

Like a river glorious
Is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious,
In its bright increase;

Perfect -- yet it floweth
Fuller every day;
Perfect -- yet it groweth
Deeper all the way.

It is easy to be tranquil when circumstances are favorable, and when we are high up above trouble, but the test is when we are in the midst of the waters, and when the waves thereof roar and are troubled. The peace that Christ promises never fails. Neither things present can disturb it, nor life nor death dispel it. It is abiding, and not intermittent; an unruffled under-current beneath the ground swell of the believer's griefs and sorrows; a peace which exists *independently of circumstances* secure and certain, which "the world can neither give nor take away."

Says John Fletcher: "I thank God I am not afraid of any evil tidings. My heart stands calm, believing in the Lord, and desiring Him to do with me whatsoever He pleases ... Thank God, I enjoy uninterrupted peace in the midst of my trials, which are sometimes not a few." Such undisturbed repose of the soul is the promised heritage of all God's people.

Bunyan's Allegory of God's Peace

It was out of a deep experience of this very peace that Bunyan in his allegory tells us that the crowning gift of Emmanuel, when He was in possession of Mansoul, was "to ordain a new officer in the town. A goodly person he was. His name was Mr. God's-peace. This man was set over all the notables of the city of Mansoul -- my Lord Will-be-well, my Lord Mayor Understanding, Mr. Recorder Conscience, the subordinate preacher Mr. Mind, and all other natives of this great and famous city." "Mr. God's-peace himself," writes Bunyan, "was not a native of the city, but came with Prince Emmanuel: he was a great acquaintance of Captain Credence and Captain Goodhope; some say they were of kin, and I am of that opinion too. This man, Mr. God's-peace, as I have said, was made governor of the town in general, especially over the castle, and Captain Credence was to help him there. And I made great observation of it that so long as all things went in Mansoul as this sweet-natured gentleman would, the town was in a most happy condition. Now were no scares, no practical jokes, no rude interruptions, no unfaithful doings in all the town of Mansoul. Every man kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in the place, observed their order; and as for the

women and children of the town, they followed their business joyfully, they would work and sing from morning until night, so that quite through the town of Mansoul now nothing was to be found but harmony, happiness, joy, and health."

Well has Bunyan pictured in these words the effect of that peace of God that "garrisons the heart and mind through Christ Jesus." God's-peace and Prince Emmanuel come and go together. When Emmanuel was grieved away from the city, Mr. God's-peace laid down his commission and departed too. This peace is only known when Jesus is in full possession of the soul. Christ brings His peace with Him. "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In Me -- not through Me, out of, or from Me, but in Me. He, Himself, is our peace. Seek not the gift, but the Giver. If you receive the Giver, you will receive all His gifts. Perfect peace will inevitably follow when Christ is welcomed to wholly reign over the soul.

Waves of Inner Turmoil

There is no surer sign that the keys of all the chambers of the heart have not been given up to Him than inward unrest, to be tossed to and fro, driven upon the waves of inward turmoil and trouble. This explains why so many Christians do not continually realize the peace and blessedness of which occasionally they have glimpses and enjoyment. Only at times does some wandering note from this diviner music stray into their spirits. The experience comes seldom and at unpredictable moments. When it comes, often it is a surprise, and when it goes it leaves no explanation. They wish for it to return and to abide, and ask eagerly how they may secure it permanently. There is but one answer: Perfect peace can only endure so long as Jesus reigns. Where Christ is enthroned there is always peace.

It is only when we are prepared to let Him take His rightful place as Master and Lord of our whole life, that we can realize the fulfillment of the prayer, "Now the God of peace Himself give you peace always by all means." At all times, everywhere, and under all circumstances, we shall be kept in perfect peace. We shall know then, by a blessed and abiding experience, what the peace of Jesus really is, and share with Him the peace that He shared with the Father from before the foundation of the world.

Christ's peace is thus a sort of installment of "heaven's perfect peace" that awaits all the children of God. Never lessening or stationary, but ever deepening and widening, it flows on year by year, and day by day, until it reaches the full blessedness of the stormless ocean of eternity."

The above passage has been adapted from: "New Testament Holiness" by Thomas Cook

