

A NEW YOUAR'S GIFT FOR BABES IN GRACE¹:

Mr. John Corbitt on the Lords Supper

I WRITE unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you. Little children, it is the last time; and as you have heard that Antichrist shall come-even now there are many Antichrists. I have therefore written unto you, not because you know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. And who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? These things I have written unto you concerning them that seduce you. And now, little children, abide in Him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming; for whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father, but he that acknowledges the Son, has the Father also. 1 John 2.

Examine, therefore, yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not that Christ Jesus is in you, except you be reprobates? My little children, for whom I travail in birth again until Christ he formed in you, know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? And if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit; and let us not be desirous of vain glory, but slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

My little children, in passing along the ordained road of tribulation through this sinful and dying world, you will meet with many things that will deter, and if possible, hinder your course, and prevent your intercourse with God; and you will find none of them more powerful, plausible, and deceitful than Satan working on the carnal fleshly feelings of your own heart, which you will find needful to resist steadfastly and faithfully, according to the commandment of the Lord, without consulting either your good or bad feelings. On this point allow me to drop a few hints to those who allow their feelings to be the standard of their actions, and this especially in their attendance at the Lord's table.

I am well aware of the contradictory feelings that sometimes occupy the breast of the weak child of God in coming to the Lord's table. Sometimes it is with a melting heart, weeping eye, and humble spirit, admiring the lovingkindness, condescension and great goodness of a covenant God in a covenant Christ. Sometimes it is with a heart, as hard as a stone full of blind unbelief and carnal reasoning, and by Satan tempted to think you are going to eat and drink damnation to your own soul. Hence arises a hard struggle between the flesh and the spirit. Flesh says, "Keep away;" the spirit says, "Go;" until the poor weak believer is something like a weak person, for whom two strong ones are striving; one in one way, and one another, until the little stripling is almost pulled in pieces. This is the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit striving against the flesh, until you are brought into such distress that you know not what to do. For the encouragement of such little children, allow me to say that this is a true family feature, and is represented by the struggling's of Esau and Jacob before they were born; as is shown by the company of two armies in the Shulamite, and is never felt or known in the heart of a proud presumptuous hypocrite.

Dear children, however numerous these feelings may be, they may be summed up under two heads, namely, *satisfaction* and *dissatisfaction*; and these two principles will be at work in you, all your

¹ This was taken from the 1852 volume 8 edition of the Earthen Vessel: and Christian Record. January issue, pages 13 and 14 Richard C. Schadle

journey through. One is derived from what we are in our first head, Adam; the other from what we are in Christ; one is to be cherished, the other to be denied. And amidst all this, little children, it is your happiness that you are not your own, for you are bought with a price;" therefore your good feelings do not justify you in the sight of God, or give you a right to his ordinances, neither do your bad feelings condemn you in the sight of God or deny you the right to them. Your salvation is for yourselves, but not of yourselves; your salvation originated in the love of God, and it will never never depart from him; for though God, by his grace has put his love in your hearts, as his chosen, and thereby distinguished you from the rest of mankind, who live and die in enmity against God; yet your salvation and eternal safety are not in your own hands, but in Christ, "in whom all the fulness of Godhead dwelleth bodily;" and the grace that God has given you, is the earnest that you shall be kept, by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed; for as there was no reason but in God himself, why he should fix. his love upon you from before the foundation of the world, and so continue to love you, even while dead in sin, and then send. his Spirit to "quicken you together with Christ, that you might receive the adoption of sons," so he will never suffer anything to transpire that shall break this union or dissolve this relationship. Therefore, my little children, fear not; for "He that has begun a good work in you, will carry it on and perfect it in the day of salvation."

Now let me show you who are the children of God, by the family likeness; and if you may not have faith enough to say "I know that I am a child of God;" perhaps you will be able to say, "Well, I do love the things of God, and am satisfied with what God is satisfied with, and dissatisfied with what he is dissatisfied with."

First, are you dissatisfied with your *darkness, sinfulness, and unbelief*? If so, you are dissatisfied with that which God was never pleased with. So, you see you are of one mind with God here. Again, are you dissatisfied with your little *wisdom, obedience, and retention*? If so, you are dissatisfied with what God never put any dependence in; and thus, you and your heavenly Father are agreed. Again, are you dissatisfied with your little *faith, hope, and love*? If so, you are dissatisfied with that over which you have no supreme control; for these are all the gifts and graces of God, both as to quantity and quality; for He who gave them has declared that they shall be sufficient for you; for "as your day, so shall your strength be." Therefore, none of the things that vex you ought to move you, as God did not say, that your feelings of these things, but his grace-should be sufficient for you.

Now, let us see if there is any satisfaction in you that is God-like and acceptable to him.

First, are you satisfied with his *covenant engagements with Christ for his church*? "O yes," say you, "I am perfectly satisfied, and rejoice in the truth of it." Well, then, here you and your God are one again; for he will be satisfied with nothing less. Again, are you satisfied with the way, work, and manner of salvation, as carried out and made known by the Holy Ghost in regeneration? "O yes;" say you, "we are perfectly satisfied with this, and bless the Lord for such a divine and holy distinction." Well, then, you are one with God here. Again, are you satisfied with the security and insurance of the church's safe keeping in our Savior's hand, and entrance into glory by and with Him" "O yes; this is just what suits and satisfies me when all other hopes fail." Well, then, you are here just like your heavenly Father, who first trusted in Christ his glory and his grace.

But if there should be any children that are not thus satisfied, arise and let us hear your amendment; and if you have no amendment to make, then, as good children, sit down at his feet, and say, "He has done all things well." But though there may be none to make an amendment., yet I anticipate an objection in that old hackneyed phrase of the devil, "I am not worthy." Remember, my dear children, that no personal beauty or worthiness will make you a son or a daughter of another person. And in this matter, let it never be forgotten, that a feeling sense of not worthy, not able, not good enough, are the very best qualifications to come to the Lord's table with; for none can come aright, but such as come in self-renunciation; for no one can at the same time see and be pleased with his own goodness and rightly discern the Lord's body. And remember, my children, that there is no limitation or qualification to those who come to Christ, but such as is evidenced by their own needs, which is the fruit of the Spirit. Those who come full are sent empty away; those who come empty are filled with good things.

Consult, therefore, neither your good feelings or bad ones; take up, your cross and follow him, through evil and good report. If you love him, be careful to keep his commandments, in season and out of season, remembering that he is always the same. If, by faith, you can discern the Lord, in his body, as having fulfilled the law, satisfying justice, enduring the cross, despising the shame, destroying death, and him that has the power of death, which is the devil, then, in dependence on him, come, "eat and drink in remembrance of him;" and remember that "you are Christ's, and Christ is God's, therefore glorify him in your soul and body which are his." Lift up your heads, you children of God, for "your redemption draws nigh."

Yours in eternal love, John Corbitt

[Our brother Corbitt has here hit upon a very Important subject. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance for such poor sinners as, having believed in the name of Jesus, daily feel, more or less, their need of His life-supporting power, and conscience-cleansing blood. Looking to, and leaning on him alone, let them, by faith draw near, whatever be the fit or frame of their minds." Ed.]