

The Father's House

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Published and available from:

SILVER PUBLISHING SOCIETY

2700 Stuart Avenue

Richmond, VA 23220

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The Father's House

"In my Father's House are many mansions" (John 14:2).

Our Lord gives us much beautiful teaching about the Father's House. Note His first thought here, namely that—

The Father's House is the cure for the troubled heart

"Let not your heart be troubled ... in my Father's House are many mansions." (John 14:2.)

A fierce storm was sweeping the great lakes. A steam tug towing a barge began to founder. The captain and his mates took to a small boat. All night long they tossed to and fro, every instant in jeopardy of their lives. In the morning they were rescued by a passing ship. The captain afterwards testified that all the long night as they were beaten and tossed by the tempest there was one thing which nerved their arms and kept their hearts from sinking in despair. It was this—shining through the darkness and the storm they saw the lights of home.

We are sailing on a stormy sea. Often our frail boat is tossed and beaten with the tempest. Sometimes the gales seem too fierce for us to weather, and we are sorely tempted to give way to the troubled heart that so easily besets us in such an hour. but the Captain of

our salvation knows the sore and frequent temptation to be troubled in heart. His remedy is simple. Let not your heart be troubled. Think about the Father's House! Think of its peace, its joy; its glory; its reunions and fellowship; its sureness; its eternalness; and as you think the troubled heart will vanish. You will be like the tempest-tossed sea captain. *You see the lights of home.*

The Father's House is where the Father is

"I go to my Father," (John 16:10)

A devoted missionary was called to see a dying Brahmin. He began to tell him of Jesus Christ; of the glory-land beyond; of the blessedness of those who believed in the Son of God as their Savior. Suddenly the Brahmin broke in upon him with the words—"What do you know about the future! What do you know of heaven? How do you know what is there beyond the skies? Without a word the missionary walked across the room laid his hand upon the door-knob and flung the door wide open. Into the room through the doorway leaped his dog who had been lying in the darkness outside awaiting his master. "Do you see that dog," said the missionary. "All the time I have been here he has been lying outside in the darkness and storm. He did not know what was in this room. He did not know the surroundings nor what sort of a place this was behind the door which shut him out. But one thing even his dog instinct did know. And that was that beyond that

door was the master whom he loved and that all he needed was to be inside where his master was, in the light and the warmth instead of the cold and gloom without. Just so, Brahmin, I may not know much about heaven. But one thing I do know. And that is enough for me."

Heaven is a place. The Word of God is too clear to leave any doubt as to that. Why then did Christ in answering Thomas' question as to whither He was going—suddenly change his phrasing from "The Father's House" in the second verse, to "No man cometh unto *the Father* but by Me" in the sixth? Why, when showing Thomas the way to heaven did He point him the way to *the Father*? Clearly because to our Lord Jesus the great thought of the Father's House is that it is where the Father is. Beyond our dreams are its splendor and glory, yet all of it but reflects the glory of the Father who is "all and in all."

The Father's House is the *believers* *homeland*

I had dropped in upon an old friend of my boyhood days. She was one of God's own saints. Rich in experience, she was ripe for the coming glory. She had gone so far in life's pilgrimage that her mind was slightly beclouded, and her memory affected. As I rose to go home she arose also and said, "I want to go home." "But mother," said her daughter, "you are home now." At that she looked a bit dazed. Then looking at me with a

tender smile she said with a profound touch of pathos in her voice—*"I want to go home before it gets dark."*

I opened the door and started homeward. The twilight sky was still aglow with the vanishing glory of the sunset. Beyond it lay the glory of the Father's House. My soul was tingling with the spiritual message my dear friend's words had brought me. What an unspeakable blessing for God's children to reach home before it gets dark! Before the darkness of broken body and failing health; of dimmed senses and clouded faculties; of physical suffering and infirmities; of vanished faces, voices, and fellowships—before all these come, how blessed it is to reach home before it gets dark.

Sometimes we deplore the passing of those of God's own who die young. The young girl in the bloom of her sweet maidenhood; the lad in the flush of his strong youth;—how premature it seems, and what a grievous mistake. But, is it not we who are mistaken in this? They have only reached home before it got dark. They have entered the Homeland; they have found "a place to stay;" they are forever with the Lord;" they see His face and walk in the unfailing splendor of His glory. It is only because we look through tear-blinded eyes, "see through a glass darkly," and so fail to measure eternal values as God measures them, that we ever lament as premature the passing of the young into the Homeland. The Father's House is thronged with children. And we may be sure He made no mistake in

taking them there. After all when we enter into a Homeland whose time-units are centuries and ages, instead of seconds and minutes, then the mere human distinctions of age and years shall count as nought.

The Father's House is a sure house

"If it were not so I would have told you."
(John 14:2)

These are days of doubt. Men are doubting the Godhood of our Lord; doubting His atonement; His resurrection; His glorious return; doubting hell; doubting heaven. Naturally the thought arises—Can we possibly be deceived? Is it all true? It is true that He shall change the body of our humiliation and fashion it like unto the body of His glory; that His servants shall serve Him in a service that sweeps the universe; that they shall forever live in the glory of His face to face presence; that they shall "stand in their lot" through all the ages; that they shall share His kingship and follow Him whithersoever He goeth; that their tears shall be wiped away, their sufferings forgotten, their separations ended? It is surely, unshakable, and eternally true. For He who never deceived a soul in earth or heaven; He who is "full of grace and truth;" He who is the truth Himself has said with a voice of assurance which rings out from the heart of this fourteenth of John from two thousand years ago—

"If it were not so I would have told you!"

Yea, and the Father's House is made sure to

us not only by *His word* but by *His will*.
Listen to this—

"Father, I WILL that those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am that they may behold my glory."

"All things were made by Him." He said "I will," and the planets began their stately march in measureless void; He said "I will," and the earth was hurled from His omnipotent hand like a giant projectile whizzing through space at an inconceivable speed; He said "I will" and the lofty mountains pierced the azure skies with their snow-clad summits; He said "I will" and the silvery moon began her nightly course held by the binding cords of the earth she encircles; He said "I will," and millions of blazing suns filled the uncharted eternities of space whirling in dizzy course through all the ages of their existence. But most marvelous of all for you and me, the precious gift of God to Him for all the endless ages, He said—

"Father, I WILL that those whom Thou hast given me BE WITH ME WHERE I AM that they may behold my glory!"

Child of God, for you and me the Father's House is sure by the same omnipotent will which set the universe a-going. Not because of any merit in us who believe but because of His own all-creative and irresistible will the Father's House is sure for all of us who bear His name and the seal of His own blessed Spirit.

The Father's House is a house with *only one door*

"I am the door. By Me if any man enter in He shall be saved." (John. 10:9.)

It is the door from which we hear a voice crying out "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins." It is the passover door. It is a blood-stained door. It is the door which the proud and lofty spirit of man scorns to enter, for it is a humbling door to all such. Yet it is the only door. Not the door of a beautiful personality; not the door of service or sacrifice; not the door of imitation of his walk and ways; not the door of lofty ideals. By no one of these, beautiful though they may be, can we ever enter the Father's House. His own lips have said it—"No man cometh unto the Father but *by Me.*" "Who loved us and washed us from our sins *in His own blood.*" And no other washing than the crimson one will fit us to enter into the glory where He dwells. "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:12). The blessed Book reads "No other door;" and the cleansed consciences and triumphant souls of men here on earth cry out with unspeakable joy and rapture "No other door."

A great preacher was pressing the claims of Christ upon one bright young man who was not a Christian. The boy's father, one of the most distinguished physicians of the city, was also out of Christ. The boy well-nigh worshiped his father. After they had talked for a while he turned to the minister and said, "The best man in this city is not a

Christian; why should I be?" The pastor said, "Who is that?" The young fellow answered proudly—"My father is the best man who walks the streets of this city, yet he is not a Christian. Why should I be one?" The next day was Sunday. At the earliest possible hour the faithful pastor was in the physician's office with a great burden upon his heart. "Do you know sir that you are keeping some one else out of the kingdom of God?" "What do you mean," said the doctor. "I mean that your boy told me you were the best man in this city, and that as you did not seem to need Christ in order to be saved he did not see why he should." "Did my boy say that?" said the physician earnestly. "He certain did" was the reply. "Pastor what is the first service in your church at which I could make a public confession of Christ?" was the instant question of the father. "This morning at ten thirty," said the pastor. "I have an important operation at that hour and cannot come. What is the next opportunity available?" "This evening at eight o'clock was the reply." "I will be there." At eight o'clock he was on hand. When the hour came for the decision this splendid man arose, deliberately walked down the aisle, and openly accepted Christ as his personal Savior. As he looked around there stood his boy in the midst of the congregation, with upraised hand, signifying his own decision to accept the same Christ. In a few moments he stood by his father in the same place of open confession and salvation. What a joy to that father who had been leading his own loved

boy astray through a false door now to turn him to the true and only Door by which men can enter into the Father's House!

"To miss the Father's House is the tragedy of all time But there is another appalling tragedy. It is to cause some one else to miss it by your example. Jesus Christ says plainly, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." But you, my moral friend, are claiming by implication, that there is some other one by which one may enter. Great will be your bitterness of soul if, in the years to come some dear child, wife, husband, or other loved one should fail to enter the Father's House because through love and admiration of you they have chosen the way of "salvation by character," and, though seemingly "not far from the kingdom of heaven," have yet fallen short. John Bunyan tells us in simple, solemn words that when Christian had reached his journey's end he perceived that there was a door leading to hell from the very gate of heaven. Alas, for some beloved one to be so near yet miss the Father's House because he or she chose to walk with you and, so doing, missed the blood-sprinkled door through which alone men may pass into the glory of the Father's House.

The Father's House is a house of *communion*

"They shall see His face." (Rev. 22:4.)

The face is the mirror of the soul. The face reveals the innermost soul in all its beauty.

The Father's House will be filled with myriads of faces. Baby faces that have never known the shadow of sin; radiant faces that show forth the glory of the Christ within; sorrowful faces now flooded with everlasting joy; suffering faces now filled with the rest and peace of eternity; sin-marred faces now resplendent with the glory of holiness.

But "His servants shall see HIS face!" The face artists have tried to paint; the face which God's children have seen in their mid-night dreams; the face which was torn with agony unspeakable upon Calvary's bloody hill; the face which little children and sweet women loved to look upon; the face into which as we gaze we are "changed into the same image from glory to glory." The first sight of Jesus Christ's face will flood the heart with a stream of joy unspeakable and full of glory which shall never cease its flow through all the endless ages of eternity." They shall see HIS FACE!" The greatest sight of all the Father's House will be the face of Jesus. The gates of pearl; the jasper walls; the streets of gold like crystal; the bow-encircled throne; the angels and archangels; the white-robed multitude before the throne, all these shall be the wonder of the soul. But the face of Him "who sits upon the throne" is the vision which shall feed the souls of His saints through all the ages to come.

**The Father's house is a house of
*Christlikeness***

"And His Name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. 22:4.)

This is the word said about God's children in the Revelation. And what does His Name stand for? The Name stands for the character, the nature of God. When we become new creature God gives us a new name which speaks within us. A beautiful thing is said of this name in the message to the angel of the church at Pergamos. We are told there that "no man knoweth it saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. 2:17). What a beautiful fact! No one knows, save you and God what the gift of the Indwelling Christ in your heart has meant to you. No man save you knows how Christ's power has laid hold of your weakness and made you to be an overcomer in Himself; no man but you knows how Christ's peace has swept out your care and anxiety: no man save you knows the terrific battles in your innermost soul in which Jesus Christ has brought you blessed victory; no man but you knows how the hot breath of anger, lust, and passion has been swept away by the sweet-breathings of the innermost Spirit of Jesus Christ. This wondrous inner transformation; these inner battles; these life and death struggles with the powers of darkness and hell-no man but you knows the victory which the incoming of the Son of God into your soul has meant to you. But in the day of glory in the Father's House, when all things shall be manifested then this new name is *written in your forehead* where all the assembled saints and angels of God can see it! And what does

that mean but that out of all God's saints that which shall then shine forth in unspeakable splendor and glory is the Christ-nature, the new Christ-life which came to dwell unseen in us down here when we believed on Him.

The Father's house will be a house of *kingship*

"*Hath made us kings.*" (Rev. 1:6.)

"He shall sit down with Me on my throne." "The saints shall judge the world." I saw thrones and they sat upon them." "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." Loved—washed—enthroned! That is our glorious state. The first two ours here; the third fulfilled in all its honor, splendor, and blessedness in the Father's House hereafter. And mark too this blessed fact. The scope of our kingship then is proportioned not to the *greatness* of our sphere down here, but to our *faithfulness* in it however humble it is.

I recall a message from a devoted young missionary in Central America. It came in a letter in which he gave a peep into the deeps of his own heart as well as into the trials of the work. "the work is hard," said he. "I go about on fishing boats through the day. At night I sleep on piles of hides on the decks. The people do not seem much interested in the Gospel message I bring. Sometimes the adversary tempts me to discouragement in

the face of seeming lack of success. But I take courage and press on anew as I remember that *God does not hold me responsible for success but for faithfulness.*" Like a flash came the text of which he was thinking. Not "well done good and successful servant" but "well done good and *faithful servant.* Thou has been *faithful* over a few things—I will make thee *ruler over many.*" God's rulers over many things shall spring from the obscure ranks of those who have been faithful over the few. Here indeed is it true that the last shall be first and the first shall be last. In the Father's House scrub-women may be queens; slaves prime ministers; God's hidden ones here, God's great ones there.

**The Father's House is a house of
*unspeakable glory***

"The glory of God did lighten it." (Rev. 21:23)

Who has not marked even here the glory of God as seen in a great sunset. Rivers of glory wind through meadows of gold. Lakes of glory lie embedded in the evening sky. Seas of glory lap eternal shores with their shimmering waves. Mountains of glory rear themselves to the heavens with cloud-capped summits tipped with the splendor of the dying day. Earth too is flooded with the glory. It falls in the dim aisles of great forests and illumines them with its splendor. It dances among the wind-tossed leaves. It splotches the trunks of giant trees. It bathes in

the light the upturned faces of those who watch and worship as the climaxing splendor of earth, sea, and sky turns the heart to God our Father who is Himself the glory of all creation and who designs to give us, in the lavish, golden glory of the sunset the faint forth-shadowing of the glory of the Father's House.

But if the earthly glory is such, what must be the glory of the heavenly city? It needs no sun, for the glory of God doth lighten it. The nations of the earth walk in the glory of it. Its foundations can only be likened to the glory of the diamond, the sapphire, the amethyst the topaz and like precious stones of earthly glory. Its gates are pearls—each wondrous gate a single pearl. The city and its street are gold. But it is gold which earth knows not. For it is called "gold like unto clear glass," (Rev. 21:18), and "transparent glass," (Rev. 21:21). That is—it is the glory-gold. It is gold through which the glory of God can shine forth in crystal splendor. God uses this earthly imagery as the nearest symbolism by which He can give us any glint of the glory of His House prepared for us. But when all has been said it is as nought to that glory of which He says—

"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."