

THE JOYFUL LETTER — PHILIPPIANS

(Br. Kenneth Rawson, discourse Jersey City Convention 1971)

The Joyful Letter is Paul's letter to the Philippians. Remember Paul's first trip to Philippi. He went by the river where "prayer was wont to be made" and witnessed to the women gathered there. As a result he brought Lydia and her household into the Truth. Then for days he was plagued by a damsel possessed by an evil spirit. He cast out the spirit from her and we have reason to believe she came into the Truth. Then persecution arose and Paul and Silas were cast into the prison. In stocks they sang hymns at night. There was a mighty earthquake. The jailer feared that the cell doors being opened, all the prisoners would escape. He prepared to take his life. But Paul intervened, witnessed to him, and the jailor and his whole house were baptized. This formed the nucleus of the Church at Philippi—a Church that Paul grew to love dearly, perhaps more than any other church. He visited it on four occasions and now from a prison cell, he writes what Br. Russell calls "Paul's Love Letter to the Philippians."

Most Bible Students agree that Philippians was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. A detail that I wish to stress is that it was written after the favorable first part of that imprisonment. In Acts 28 Paul is in an hired house for two years. Large groupings of people could come and go and he witnessed to them. But at the time of the writing of the letter to the Philippians the favorable part of his first imprisonment had ended.

We feel this for a number of reasons, but we will just cite two. One, from Phil. 2:23 we find that Paul was expecting an immediate decision in his case. The long waiting period for his trial was over. Also, the letter to the Philippians was written some time after three other letters written during his first imprisonment—the letter to the Ephesians, to the Colossians and Philemon.

In Eph. 6:19-20 Paul reveals he is still in his hired house condition because he is able to preach and to witness the Truth. But now when he writes the Philippians he is not able to preach. But the Brethren are witnessing more because of his bonds. We could go into a number of other reasons, but for these reasons we feel it is logical to conclude that Paul had moved from his hired house condition and is now in chains in the Praetorium mentioned in Phil. 1:13. The word "palace" in the King James actually means a building adjacent to the palace that housed the Praetorian guard.

The Joyful Letter. All the way through this letter Paul speaks of Joy and Rejoicing—16 times in four brief chapters. Students of Philippians within and outside of the Bible Student movement agree that Joy is the theme of this book. What is not generally recognized is another theme that numerically far exceeds the theme of joy in its repeated occurrences. And it is the theme of Christ. The name of Christ occurs 17 times in the first chapter alone. This is an average of one time for every two verses. Paul longed to

know Christ. And he longed to be known of Christ. This theme of Christ and knowing Christ overflows throughout the letter. Thus we read, “For me to live is Christ.” Again, “That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.” Again, “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.” And again, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ.”

My basic premise is that Paul’s letter to the Philippians shows the close relationship between knowing Christ existentially and experiencing joy. I have to define my term. When I say existentially, I’m not referring to existential philosophy that none of us can agree with. It is completely subjective and has no absolute standards. But divorced from its philosophical meaning, the word existential is beautiful. It literally means that the only Truth worthwhile is that Truth which we personally experience. And Paul in Philippians shows the full relationship between knowing Christ existentially and possessing joy. You cannot have the true Christian joy unless you daily experience Christ in your life. You might have happiness. You might have joy. But it is not the joy that Paul is speaking of, unless you are daily, personally experiencing Christ.

Christian Joy Vs. Happiness

Let us consider the difference between Christian joy and happiness. What is Christian joy? It is a delight in the Lord and in the Lord’s goodness. An inner satisfaction of the presence and blessings of God regardless of outward circumstances and situations. Joy is very different than happiness. The world seeks happiness. The Christian’s counterpart is joy. Happiness is the English translation of the Latin word “*fortuna*.” It is closely related with the thought of chance. Thus, as things happen to work out the way we want them, we are happy. If they do not work out the way we want them, we are unhappy. Happiness is circumstantial—based on external things. But joy is an inner quality of delight in God, or gladness, and it is meant to spring up within the Christian in a way totally unrelated to the adversities and circumstantial episodes and blessings of life.

I’m sure that many of us have seen the Charlie Brown cartoon that defines happiness as a warm puppy. But suppose there is no puppy. Well, then there is no happiness. Happiness depends on the things we have or can acquire. Speaking from a worldly-wise standpoint, for some it is money, fame, power, or even good looks, that bring happiness. But these are all externals. And there are many noble externals that bring happiness—a husband, a wife, children, a home, friends, a good job. But when these externals go, happiness goes with them. It is not that way with joy. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. It is intended to well up within those who are filled with the Holy Spirit. It is not external, it is internal. And it does not hinge upon chance. Things can happen to a child of God that no one, including that child of God, would ever want to happen to them—that they would not be happy about—but there can still be joy.

The child of God can still be abounding in joy in the midst of sorrow. And this is precisely Paul's situation in prison, in chains, when he writes the Philippians. The dynamo that walked up and down the Roman Empire, back and forth preaching the Gospel, establishing ecclesias, maintaining contact and nurturing them—our dynamic brother is now in a prison cell, in chains. Someone might think, "Oh, that's nothing for Paul." But in Phil. 1:29 and 30 Paul speaks of suffering, and being in conflict. In Phil. 2:27, he speaks of being in sorrow. Yet, in prison, in chains, in suffering, in conflict, in sorrow, he writes a letter that is bursting with joy and rejoicing.

Internals of Joy

I'm going to say something that I'm sure will shock many of you. The consecrated life can seem as dreary and pointless as a prison cell. I say it can. Because of consecration ideals we can place ourselves in a self-imposed prison. How is this? Because of consecration ideals, some of us never went on to college. And this placed restrictions in many areas for the rest of one's life. Because of consecration ideals, some are living in a city or a state that they would not personally prefer. But for the sake of the Truth and the Brethren they are there. Because of consecration ideals, some are limited in the jobs which they can accept and limited how they can seek promotion. Some even despise their work. Because of consecration ideals some never marry. And some who marry never have children. Because of consecration ideals, some live in a cold water flat.

When we first sacrificed these things there was a thrill, a challenge, a sense of consecration fulfillment. That was long past. Now we are in the day-in, day-out routine of our consecrated life. And as we have denied ourselves the externals of happiness, life in this consecrated vacuum CAN be dreary, a prison in which we are in chains. Unless, unless we have the internals of joy that Paul possessed. The Christian life requires sacrificing many externals that bring degrees of happiness. And the consecrated life can be dreary unless these externals of happiness are replaced with the far surpassing internals and externals of joy.

I will now raise a disconcerting point. Disconcerting to myself as well as others. We can mistake the externals of happiness for Christian joys. Marriage, a home, a good job, are externals that can bring much happiness. They may or may not be God's will for us. We probably do view them as blessings from the Lord. This might or might not be true. But even if they are blessings in the Lord's providence, they are externals of happiness that should not be mistaken for the joys of the Lord.

Thus we find there are two kinds of Christians who lack spiritual joy. One, those who have sacrificed many externals of happiness, or the Lord in His providence has taken from them these externals of happiness, and they have failed to replace these externals with the internals of joy. The second class of Christians lacking the internals of joy are

those who are so enraptured with the externals of happiness that they mistake them for spiritual joy.

Chapter One

Now we will turn to the contents of the letter of Philippians and consider several points in chapters one and two. Then we will proceed on to chapter three where Paul reaches his climax in his theme, the co-relationship between experience knowledge and joy.

As we read through the book of Philippians, two things immediately strike us in this letter. One, the extreme warmth and mutual love between Paul and the Philippians. We have an example of this in Phil. 4:1 where we read, “Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.” Seemingly Paul can’t find enough superlatives to describe his affection for the Philippians. And the second point that immediately strikes us in Philippians is the reason Paul could have this warm love and mutual affection and fellowship with them. It was the result of complete harmony of doctrine, of character or devotion, and of service.

Phil. 1:3-5, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for YOU ALL making request with joy.” Notice this phrase—“you all.” Paul uses it four times between verses three and eight. Never in his other letters to the other churches does he speak as if he is including every individual in the church. In all of Paul’s other letters to the churches he has commendations, yes. But these commendations are only for some in the church who are faithful to the Lord and Truth and Brethren. Then he has reprimands for those in the church who are not faithful. But seemingly every single member in the church of Philippi was in complete unison with Paul. So he emphasizes “you all” as he proceeds in these verses. This is a phenomenal thing. In our day, what ecclesia can we point to and say that there is complete unity in doctrine, in character, in devotion, in service. I can’t think of any. No wonder Paul so loved this church.

Now verses 6-8. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you in all the affections of Jesus Christ.”

Paul felt grace, favor, in being in bonds for Christ. Also he felt it was a favor to defend the Gospel of Truth. Now, because the Philippian brethren were in unity with Paul there was a mutual sharing. They shared in his bonds. But he in turn shared in their defense and their confirming of the Truth because he now was not able to be out in the field preaching the Truth. This is why he had joy in prison—the joy which he speaks of in

verse four—in praying for them. All his Christian life joy came from experiencing Christ in these two areas of defending and confirming the truth. Now that Paul was in prison, he still was experiencing Christ in these two areas by sharing in fellowship the Philippians’ defense and confirmation of the truth. So there was this mutual fellowship they shared in his bonds, and he had oneness with them and joy in the Lord because they were defending and confirming the truth.

Now we will consider verses 9-11. We often hear it said that Paul doesn’t get involved in doctrine in the book of Philippians. But we have here the most profound statement on doctrine in the Scriptures. And it is all the more meaningful because it is Paul’s prayer for the Philippians. We read, “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more” Period? End of paragraph, Paul? Oh no. Love alone is not enough. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.” And the word judgment here means discernment. Why? “That ye may approve things that are excellent.” And a better translation is: “that ye may test things that differ.” The word approve is a translation of a Greek word that literally means “testing” and in Paul’s day, it was often used in connection with testing money to see whether or not it was counterfeit. And why were they to test things that differ? “That ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ.” Now Paul was concerned that the Philippians’ love should not be blind or misguided enthusiasm. It needed to be directed with knowledge and discernment. Why? That they might test differences among the brethren. Oh, we worry about differences among the brethren, don’t we? But these differences are necessary, and the Philippians’ ability to test these differences, and their actions and reactions to the brethren in these differences, provided the training ground for verse 11—whereby they were “filled with the fruits of righteousness.”

Thus we see that love, not according to knowledge, is not sufficient to fill us with the fruits of righteousness. But on the other hand, in 1 Cor. 13:2, we know that if we understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and have not love, WE ARE NOTHING. It is only love-knowledge, existential knowledge, experience knowledge, that will enable us to test differences among the brethren, and be rightly exercised thereby.

Verses 14-18: “And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”

Paul had received a divine commission at the beginning of his Christian walk—to preach

the Gospel. And it was one of his main works. He suffered much adversity in fulfilling this commission, but these were cherished experiences, because the Lord who sent him on this mission was with him. And experiencing the Lord's presence with him in these adversities became Paul's joy in adversity. Now Paul was in prison, unable to preach. He had walked with the Lord many years, preaching the Gospel, and he knew that his Lord still wanted the Gospel preached. But he could not do it. Therefore, Paul could rejoice in the Gospel being preached—even by brethren who were doing it in order to spite Paul. This is how much the proclamation of the truth meant to Paul. Can we rejoice that the truth is being preached by others, or are we blind and bound by prejudices or a petty party spirit? Do we discredit the preaching of this group, or that movement of brethren, because we feel they have lost the spirit, or differ on some doctrine? I am not saying that we can condone support, or associate with error, or that we can condone a wrong spirit, but what I am saying, and what Paul said, is: when truth is being preached we should rejoice no matter who is preaching it.

Now there are many wonderful lessons in the rest of chapter 1 and chapter 2, but we won't take the time to go into them. We'll just deal with one more, and that's in Phil. 1:21. Remember, in this context, Paul is between two straits: whether he should die and wait for the Lord's return, or whether he should live for the sake of the brethren. He said he had a third choice, which was far greater, but which was impossible. That was to die and be with the Lord immediately, but he couldn't be with the Lord until the Lord returned. So in this connection of whether he should live to help the brethren, he says, "For me to live is Christ." This is the most existential expression of knowing Christ found in the Bible. There is no theoretic knowledge here. For one to make this statement one has to have experienced Christ continually and to have become so in love, so enthralled with Christ, that one wants to just imitate everything about him. So thorough is this love, this admiration, this imitation, that Paul tried to do everything, to think, to speak, to act, the way Christ would. And thus Paul could say: "For me to live is Christ."

Chapter Three

Now we turn over to chapter 3, and we come to the climax of Paul's letter, the full relationship between existentially knowing Christ and possessing joy.

In verse one, Paul says: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous." And then in verses 2-7 (we won't take time to read them) we know that there must be a co-relationship between knowledge and joy, between doctrine and joy, because here Paul warns the Philippian Brethren against false doctrine.

Then we come down to verse eight. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for [for what?] the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have

suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” Here Paul is telling us all else is worthless by comparison with the excellency, the supremeness, of the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Verses 9-11 make it clear that this is not an intellectual knowledge that Paul is speaking of. It is personally experiencing Christ. We read, “And be found in him, [1] not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: [2] That I may KNOW HIM and the power of his resurrection and [3] the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Paul is speaking here of personally experiencing Christ in every phase of the Christian life. He categorizes three phases here: justification, character development (experiencing the power of his resurrection), and third, suffering and sacrificing in the Lord’s service and on the Lord’s behalf. Just about every office or function Christ fulfills in our lives or shares with us falls within these three categories.

Secret of Joy

Now why did Paul have joy in prison? What was Paul’s secret? The secret is actually a simple one. It is based upon this simple fact: our minds cannot be preoccupied with two things at the same time. You cannot be thinking of the pain in your back if you are thinking about a T-bone steak. Similarly, you cannot be thinking about your problems in the same moment you are thinking about and experiencing Christ in your life. Paul knew this. Consequently, he filled his mind with Christ, and he looked for and found Christ in every phase of his Christian life. This was the secret of Paul’s joy.

We will suggest four steps in experiencing Christ in our lives that our joy may be full.

Our first step in experiencing Christ is to become thoroughly acquainted with his personality and his characteristics. Walk up and down Galilee and throughout Judea with him. Stand next to him as he was with the multitudes and he looked upon them and it says “he was moved with compassion, and he healed them.” Join him as he supped with the sinners and the publicans and endured the scorn of the Pharisees because of it. Stand next to him as he proclaimed the Lord’s judgments upon the Scribes and the Pharisees. Go with him to the hill overlooking Jerusalem, when, with the tears running down his face, he said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Watch with him, kneel with him in Gethsemane. Be with him during the torturous hours of his trial when he was spat upon, mocked, scourged, and they yelled, “Crucify him! Crucify Him!” Stand at the foot of the cross, where he was forsaken by all—even by his God.

The second step in experiencing Christ is to perform in your daily life the things that Jesus did.

The third step in experiencing Christ: Have faith that the risen Christ is with you and will give you the strength to perform his will.

And our fourth step is: Talk to the risen Christ, just as you talk to the heavenly Father. Express your confidence that he will understand and help you in this experience that you are going through, because he was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin.

If you follow these steps, you will be assured that Christ is daily walking with you. You will be able to say: “I know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

Now for the balance of our period, we want to consider various offices that Jesus, the risen Christ, fulfills on our behalf, and also consider how we might experience, have this existential relationship, with him that our joy may be full.

Christ Our High Priest

The first office that we will consider is Christ, our High Priest. In Heb. 4:15 and 16 (you all know the scripture), “For we have not an high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect was tempted as we, yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence, draw near to the throne of grace that we might receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” What happens when you and I sympathize with someone in distress? We react as if that grief or pain were taking place inside us. And that is precisely what happens to Christ our High Priest. He has sympathy, compassion. When I suffer, Christ suffers. When you grieve, Christ is grieved. When we shiver in anxiety, Christ can share our anxiety.

The scripture says “in all points he was tempted like as we, yet without sin.” I personally believe that Jesus was tempted in all areas: before his consecration—in areas that included sinful things, but he did not succumb to sin (Reprint page 3715, col. 1, bottom par.). After his consecration he was tempted as a new creature. He knows what it is to be tempted; therefore, he can sympathize with us. If we respond to the invitation of this text, with faith in our High Priest, our High Priest will come into our lives. We will find love, compassion, tenderness, understanding. Also we will find strength and power to help keep us—not from falling—but to help keep us from completely failing, because by his grace we will get up again.

If we have walked through the Gospels with Jesus, we know that he has the love and sympathy to enter into our temptations. If the risen Christ suffers when we suffer, is

anxious with us, grieves for us in our weaknesses, if he moves into our lives on these occasions with strength and sympathy, is this not personally experiencing our Lord Jesus as our High Priest? And we can rejoice.

Christ Our Advocate

Now we'll consider Jesus in our lives as our advocate. Anyone who has been with Christ at Calvary, who has stood at the foot of the cross for those six agonizing hours; anyone who knows how much it cost Jesus to make us whole; anyone who has lived with Jesus on that occasion, endured the scorn of the people, the ridicule of the leaders, the violence of the elements, and witnessed the literal heartbreak caused by the turning away of the face of the Father—if we have been with Jesus at Calvary, how can we help but commune with him, our Advocate, every time we sin—which is daily. He has promised to stand behind us and make up for every fleshly imperfection. At times we take our sins so lightly. Yet they cost him so dearly. If we live with Jesus at Calvary, we will daily thank him for his cleansing blood, apologize for failing him time and time again, and tell him how much we love him. We will know that he knows us and we know him, and thus experiencing Christ, we will have the assurance of forgiveness, because he is standing behind us, and we will rejoice in him.

Chief Reaper

Another office that Jesus fulfills on our behalf is that of Chief Reaper in the harvest of the Gospel Age. We won't take time to read the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matt. 13, you are all acquainted with it. The Son of Man, our returned Lord, sends his church, his angels, the reapers, into the wheatfield to gather the wheat into the barn, and bind the tares into bundles and cast them into the fire. Remember the same reapers preach a message that has a twofold effect. One, that of gathering the wheat, and two, that of binding the tares.

Christ is present as chief reaper. And all the feet members of the church are to be fellow-reapers. Christ as chief reaper will speak to you and to me as to the part of the harvest work in which we should be sharing. Now, how does our chief reaper speak to us? As we study the scriptures pertaining to the doctrine of the presence and the harvest, and as we sincerely pray, "Lord, send more reapers into the vineyard!" the thought will come into our mind as to how we personally can become more involved in the harvest work.

Now I do not pretend that I, or any of the brethren engaged in the harvest work always hear the voice of our chief reaper correctly as far as details or methodology are concerned. I am sure that my own prejudice at times distorts my understanding of the Lord's voice pertaining to methodology. But of this I am certain: If the Lord is present, and if the door to the high calling has not closed, then we are still in the harvest, and our

present Lord as chief reaper will speak personally to every spirit-begotten child of God, inviting them into the vineyard. Whether or not we agree on details of methodology matters little. What we will agree on is that we should proclaim this message in some way or other. And that it will have the twofold effect of gathering the wheat and binding the tares. As I said, the chief reaper is speaking to all of us personally. Whether we hear him or not, depends on us. Whether we, as with a radio, turn off the switch on someone who is talking, depends on us, but the chief reaper is talking to us.

Have you re-lived with Jesus the harvest of the Jewish age? Were you with Jesus in the countryside, where it is recorded that “when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep without a shepherd.” And on this occasion he said, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few, Pray that the Lord might send more reapers into the vineyard.” If we were with Jesus then, how can we now help but let his love inspire us to earnestly seek the few remaining grains of wheat, scattered abroad, fainting, as sheep having no shepherd. If we re-live the harvest of the Jewish age with Jesus, we will follow his bidding as chief reaper now. And in so doing, we will find him walking with us. We will find him personally giving us strength lest we become weary in well doing. And as the chief reaper, directing our work, we will have that sense of joy and of fellowship, that we are a part of the great reaper class that is carrying on to a grand conclusion, the harvest work. And we will rejoice.

Reigning King

The last office which I have time to speak about is Jesus’ office as reigning King. I just want to briefly explain what it means to me to personally experience Christ reigning. This is a thrilling concept for me. I could begin to best express it with the words of Bro. Russell on page 301 of Volume III under the heading, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him” and ends up with they proclaim the message “Thy God reigneth.” The Pastor says among other things, “And the ‘feet’ members of the body of Christ who still tarry in the flesh catching the inspiration of the glorified throng who have already ascended into the mount (kingdom) of God, reflect a measure of that transcendent glory, as did Moses when he came down from Mt. Sinai. The faces of these messengers shine with heavenly joy, which fills their hearts and overflows their lips as they commune together and with the Lord, and go heralding to every nation (mountain) the good tidings of Immanuel’s reign begun.”

Our conquering King has invaded this present evil world; momentous events are taking place as a result of this invasion. The Lord’s judgments are upon the earth. A time of trouble has begun and is continuing on. You and I have the honor and the privilege of telling the world what is going on. We are instructed to inform them. We are living in dynamic times, momentous times. Our King is marching on! And we have the privilege of marching with him. We have the privilege of proclaiming to the world what He is

doing beyond the veil.

Vol. III, page 303: “While the glorified members of the Kingdom beyond the veil are doing a work in shaping the current of present events and preparing for the glorious reign, those on this side the veil have also an important work. It is their mission to gather together the elect and to seal them in the forehead (intellectually) with the knowledge of the truth (Rev. 7:3); to separate the wheat from the tares with the sickle of present truth; and to proclaim unto Zion this important message—‘Thy God reigneth!’” And as Bro. Russell says, if we are marching with our King, we are communing with him and sharing with him in these most momentous events in history.

And in closing, as I look out upon this audience of brethren that gather at Jersey City every year, I see many faces that I have learned to love and cherish over the years. Many of us have worked together in the Lord’s vineyard for many years. We have studied together, we have argued together, we have shared much together. And because of this, in closing, in the words of Paul I would like to say: “My beloved brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.” “I pray that you might know him, and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death.” And indeed, if you know this, you will “rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice!” Amen.

(Selected—Reprint page 81)

A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

A little talk with Jesus,—
How it smoothes the rugged road!
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And my eyes with tears are dim,
There is naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with him.

I tell him I am weary,
And I fain would be at rest;
But I still will wait his bidding,
For his way is always best.
Then his promise ever cheers me
'Mid all the cares of life:—
“I am coming soon in glory

To end thy toil and strife.”

Ah, that is what I am wanting,
His lovely face to see—
And, I’m not afraid to say it,
I know he’s wanting me.
He gave his life a ransom
To make me all his own;
And he’ll ne’er forget his promise
To me, his purchased one.

The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Has helped me many a time.
The more I come to know him,
And all his grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know him more and more.