

## A LESSON FOR THE DAY (OR YEAR)

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### ***"Learn of me" (Matthew 11:29)***

THE Lord Jesus, having all things delivered unto him of his Father, lovingly invites poor, labouring, weary, and burdened sinners to him, and promises them rest and repose. The very thing we want, Jesus has; and what Jesus has that suits us, He wishes to bestow upon us. Therefore He calls us to him, and bids us ask of him. A sinner may have anything from Jesus that suits his case, if he is prepared to receive it as a gift from free and sovereign grace. "If we ask anything according to his will he heareth us," and "this is His will, even our sanctification." Jesus desires our happiness, but only through the means of our holiness. On this His heart is set. To effect this all his dealings are directed. To this end the whole of His word points. If we come for rest, he says, "Take my yoke, learn of me. Be my servant, my imitator. Make me your lesson." Beloved, we must learn of Jesus, if we would walk peaceably with God - if we would pass safely through the world - if we would fearlessly meet death. Be this, then, our daily lesson, and let us, day by day, hear Jesus say to us, "learn of me."

We must learn *to be of his temper*. He was meek and lowly of heart. He meekly bowed to His Father's will - took a servant's place, suffered the sinner's doom, - and in all things sought to honour His God. His will was subordinated to his Father's will. Self in Him was never allowed to bear sway. "I seek not mine own glory," was His daily rule. "He was reviled, but he reviled not again." He was persecuted, but he suffered it. He always appears the lamb and not the lion. He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. When there was everything to irritate, provoke and stir up passion, He was calm, patient, and subdued. In the most trying scenes His conduct said, "I am meek." Let our hearts, then, be set on this, to be of the same temper as Jesus was. Let carnal men talk of their honour, self-respect, and rights - be it ours to be as much like Jesus as possible, seeing He has left us an example that we should walk in His steps.

We must learn *to copy his example*. "He was holy, humble, undefiled, and separate from sinners." The law of God was in His heart, and ruled every action of his life. His thoughts were holy thoughts. His words were holy words. His actions were holy actions. His thoughts, words, and actions were all ruled by love. There was no bitterness, or envy, or malice, or evil-speaking, ever seen in Him. All was love. And to this we should aspire. Over the opposite of this we should mourn and weep. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Such is God's command; a command which must commend itself to our judgments, and ought to sink into our hearts. Let us therefore strive against vain thoughts, unprofitable conversation, and unlovely actions, and seek to be like Jesus. Grace from Jesus will render us like Jesus; and if we are fully set upon learning of Him, we shall come often and boldly to his throne, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need.

We must learn *to walk by his rule*, which was love - love to God, and love to man. Love to God, so that he preferred His will, invariably obeyed His commands, and aimed at His glory. Love to man, so that he pitied his weakness, pardoned his

faults, and sought always to do him good. He became servant of all. He appeared to be at everyone's bidding. He would go miles to heal a servant. He stopped in His journey to listen to a blind beggar. He took the little children of strangers into His arms and blessed them. He gave food to the hungry, health to the sick, and life to the dead. He was the poor man's friend, while He was at everyone's call. Love should influence our hearts, baptise our words, and rule our conduct. Jesus, the loving One, says, "Learn of me." Let us then put on charity, that all may see it. Love is religion, and religion among men is love carried out into every part of one's conduct and conversation.

We must learn *to work in His spirit*, which was a spirit of self-denial. Jesus never appeared to study Himself for one moment. He wrought, He suffered, He died - but all for others. He lost sight of Himself. His was a life of self-sacrifice, the finest exhibition of self-annihilation ever seen. We, alas! too often think of ourselves first, and others next, and our God last of all. This order should be reversed. Our first aim should be God's glory; next to that the good of our fellow-men; then we need think little of ourselves, for our holiness and happiness are secured. Self must be denied in its demand; it must be mortified in its efforts; it must be crucified, or put to death, or we shall never be like Jesus. The self-denying One says to us, "Learn of me." Let us therefore seek grace that we may lose sight of self, and whatsoever we do, do it for the sake of Jesus; in whatsoever we do, aim at the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-men.

We must learn to worship as He worshipped. He was the model worshipper. He worshipped the Father in spirit and in truth. In worship he was devout, spiritual, and earnest. He realised the presence of his Father. He pleaded the promises of his Father. He bowed to the will of His Father. Even when he "offered up strong crying with tears unto him that was able to save him from death," He closed by saying, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." Beloved, let us learn of Jesus to worship. He never neglected it, for if He had not time by day, he continued the whole night in prayer to God. If He had no closet, He sought the sequestered walk or the mountain top. With the eloquence of the God-man, with the simplicity of the child, and with the earnestness of one whose whole heart was set upon obtaining the blessing, He prayed. O to pray as Jesus prayed! O to praise as Jesus praised! O to worship as Jesus worshipped!

We must learn *to suffer as he suffered*. In Him patience had its perfect work. He suffered from man, from Satan, and from God. He was the man of sorrows. He suffered for us in the flesh. It was common to him to sigh, to groan, to weep. But He never repined, never complained, but at the very worst said, "The cup that my heavenly Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" We shall be called to suffer. It may be personally, in body, in mind, or in property. It may be relatively, - in beloved relatives or friends. We must drink of His cup. But shall we drink of it in His spirit? Will there be that clear, quiet, unresisting submission to the will of God? There should be. "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also both suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Let us realise our interest in Jesus, our union to Jesus, and remember that if we suffer for him, with him, like him, we shall also reign with him. O to suffer like Jesus, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not His mouth!

Brethren, shall we take this for our lesson this day? For this year? It may be the last day of life to some of us. If it should not, can we do better than set our whole hearts and souls upon this one point, to learn of Jesus? Are we not predestined to be conformed to His image? Is it not testified that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His? Can we be like Christ, if we do not make conformity to him our object and our aim? Is it not a cause for lamentation, that we have hitherto been so unlike our Saviour? Does it not sometimes generate a doubt of our adoption, because we so little resemble the only begotten Son of God? Can we satisfy our consciences, when we come to close self-examination, that we have made it so little of our study to be like Jesus? Alas, alas! if we had believed for this, if we had aimed at this, should we not have been much more like Jesus than we are? And what are the things of time, the pleasures of sense, the gratifications of the intellect, compared to this? Surely, Surely, as redeemed by His blood, as called by his grace, as hoping to dwell with Him in heaven for ever, we ought to seek to resemble him on earth! Can We expect to receive from Him, if we do not obey Him And can we be said to obey Him, if we do not learn of Him?

Brethren, let us then set our hearts and souls upon learning of Jesus, and, in order to this, let us read His word carefully, meditate on it seriously, compare ourselves with it daily, and aim to copy its precepts in our life hourly. There is grace in Jesus that will enable us; let us seek it; and day by day, as we discover our defects, mourn over our want of conformity to our Redeemer, and confess it as our sin. The eyes of the world are upon us, and they too often judge religion by us, and pronounce a false verdict. Satan will try by all means to divert our attention from this object, or discourage us by suggesting that we can never attain it. But in spite of Satan, notwithstanding failures, in the strength of God promised in His word, let us determine to learn of Jesus. Spirit of the living God! produce in us the meek and gentle temper of Jesus, enable us to copy His holy example, - to walk by His lovely rule, - to work for God in his humble, self-denying spirit -to suffer as he suffered - to worship as he worshipped - and, like Him in all things, to aim at his Father's glory.

Sinner, unless you are like Jesus, you can never live with Jesus in heaven; and unless you come to Jesus for life and salvation, you can never be like Him. Come then to Jesus. Let it be the first purpose of your heart, the solemn determination of your soul, to come to Jesus and seek salvation at His hands. Many have lost their last opportunity, and are now in hell, where they rue their folly, and suffer the just desert of their sins; if you neglect the salvation of your soul now, perhaps before another day you may be in hell too, exclaiming, in bitter agony, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." O, delay not! Listen no longer to the enemy of your soul; but this day, this hour, this moment, - seek, and seek until you find, the salvation of your never-dying soul.