

Christ in You: The Apostle's Secret

by A. B. Simpson

Ancient mythology recognized some union of God with man, but it was a union which only degraded the gods and did not lift mankind. It still left a great gulf between the earthly and the heavenly.

It is this Paul refers to when he exclaims: "*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him*" (1 Cor. 2:9).

The apostle's secret of "*Christ in you, the hope of glory*" (Col. 1:27) is one which the world cannot grasp. Think of it and try to realize it. God is not only a God who mercifully pardons our guilt and saves us from its consequences, not only a God who gives to us a new nature that loves to do the right which once we hated, not only a God who comes to our aid in temptation and trial and interposes His strength and His providence for our deliverance, but above all this He is a God who comes Himself to live His own life in us.

He takes us into the divine family, makes us partakers of the divine nature, undertakes our life for us, becomes the Author and Finisher of our faith, and works in us "*to will and to do of His good pleasure*" (Phil. 2:13). This is incomprehensible to our finite minds.

What does human poetry, human philosophy, the purest form of human religion know of anything like this? No wonder Paul was aflame with the enthusiasm of his glorious discovery and longed to sweep like an angel flying in the midst of heaven to tell our helpless race the mighty secret — the secret that God not only had come down to visit men with a message of mercy, but had come to stay and live within them with "*the power of an endless life*" (Heb. 7:16).

It is still a secret, except to the initiated. Not only did it need a divine revelation to make it known to the world, it still needs a divine revelation to make it personally known and experientially real to the individual heart.

This is what the apostle means in 1 Corinthians 2, where with great clarity and force he argues that the mere human intellect cannot comprehend the things of God, but that we need a divine mind to be added to our human understanding before we can enter into the realm of spiritual truth.

It takes the mind of a man, Paul says, to understand the things of a man; and it takes the mind of God in us to understand the things of God. So he adds, "*We have received ... the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*" (1 Cor. 2:12). Later he states the profound and extraordinary fact, "*We have the mind of Christ*" (verse 16), meaning that God gives to us a supernatural revelation of Himself and a supernatural capacity to understand that revelation.

Therefore the moment that this great mystery becomes an experience in the life of a soul is a transcendent moment. It is one of the mountaintops of life. It is the crisis of existence. It is the Peniel where God declares, "*Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel*" (Gen. 32:28) and where transformed Jacob can say, "*I have seen God face to face*" (verse 30).

Have you entered into that sublime, supreme mystery? Have you passed through the veil into the Holy of Holies, so that you can say triumphantly:

*I have passed through the veil to the
Sacred Abode
Where His glory the Savior reveals to His own:
And now, in the innermost presence
of God,
I am dwelling forever with Jesus
alone.*

It is always a mystery, because even to the initiated there are still depths and heights of yet undiscovered glory and blessing. The apostle himself declares, "*The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God*" (1 Cor. 2:10).

Further, he prays that believers may fully know the riches of the glory of this mystery. He declares, "*The love of Christ ... passes knowledge*" (Eph. 3:19).

This glorious secret will unfold in ever-richer, fuller splendors till the end of time and through the never-ending ages of eternity. All that we know of it already is like the pebbles that a child has gathered on the shore while the depths of the boundless ocean stretch out unexplored beyond.

Artists tell us that the secret of genius in any great work of art lies in the depth of the painting. Some pictures seem all upon the surface; others open to the observing eye infinite depths of suggestion and imagination.

But the mystery of Jesus surpasses all human thoughts, visions or imaginations. Every day unfolds some new charm. Every experience presents in it some new and living glory.

Like Aaron's rod, it is ever budding, blossoming and bearing new fruit. It never will cease to be as fresh as in the hour its glory first burst upon our transported view. And on and on through the cycles of eternity we shall still sing with wonder and adoration:

*His love what mortal thought can reach,
What mortal tongue display?
Imagination's utmost stretch
In wonder dies away.*