

HIMSELF

By A. B. Simpson (Founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance)

I wish to speak to you about JESUS, and JESUS only. I often hear people say, "I wish I could get hold of divine healing but I cannot." Sometimes they say, "I have got it." If I ask them "what have you got?" the answer is sometimes "I have got the blessing"; sometimes it is "I have got the theory"; sometimes it is "I have got the healing"; sometimes "I have got the satisfaction."

I thank God we have been taught that it is not the blessing, not the healing, not the sanctification, not the thing, not the "it" that you want; it is something better. It is "THE CHRIST"; it is HIMSELF! How often that comes out in His Word-"HIMSELF took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses"; HIS OWN SELF bare our sins in His own body on the tree"! It is the PERSON of JESUS CHRIST we want! Plenty of people get the idea and do not get anything out of it. They get it into their head, it into their conscience, and it into their will; but somehow they don't get HIM into their life and spirit, because they have only that which is the outward expression and symbol of the spiritual reality. I once saw a picture of the Constitution of the United States so skillfully engraved in the copper plate that when you looked at it closely, it was nothing more than a piece of writing but when you looked at it from a distance, it was the face of George Washington. The face shone out in the shading of the letters at a little distance, and I saw the person, not the words, nor the ideas. I thought "that is the way to look at the Scriptures and understand the thoughts of God, to see in them the face of love shining through and through - not ideas nor doctrines, but JESUS HIMSELF as the Life and Source and sustaining Presence of all our life."

I prayed a long time to get sanctified, and sometimes I thought I had. On one occasion, I felt something, and I held on with a desperate grip for fear I should lose it. I kept awake the whole night fearing it would go, and of course, it went with the next sensation and the next mood. Of course I lost it because I did not hold on to HIM! I had been taking a little water from the reservoir when I might have all the time received from HIM fullness through the open channels. I went to meetings and heard people speak of joy, I even thought I had the joy, but I did not keep it, because I had not HIMSELF as my joy! At last HE said to me-oh so tenderly-"My child, just take ME, and let ME be in you the constant supply of all this MYSELF."

When I got my eyes off my sanctification and my experience of it, and just placed them on the CHRIST in me, I found instead of an experience, the CHRIST who is larger than the moment's need, the CHRIST that had all I

should ever need, who was given to me at once, and forever! And when I thus saw HIM, it was such rest; it was all right, and right forever! I had not only what I could hold that little hour, but also in HIM, all that I should need the next and the next and so on. Sometimes I get a glimpse of what it will be a million years afterwards, when we shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of (our) Father" (Matthew 13:43), and have "all the fullness of God!"

I thought healing would be an "it" too, that the Lord would take me like an old run-down clock, wind me up, and set me going like a machine. It was not thus at all. I found instead that it was HIMSELF coming in and giving me what I needed at the moment! I wanted to have a great stock, so I could feel rich; a great store laid up for many years, so that I would not be dependent upon HIM the next day; but HE never gave me such a store. I never had more holiness or healing at one time than I needed for that hour. HE said "My child, you must come to ME for the next breath, because I love you so dearly I want you to come all the time. If I gave you a great supply, you would do without ME and would not come to ME so often. Now you have to come to ME every second, and lie on my breast every moment." HE gave me a great fortune, placed thousands and millions at credit, but HE gave me a checkbook with this one condition: "You can never draw more than you need at the time." Every time a check was wanted, however, there was the name of JESUS upon it; and so it brought more glory to HIM, kept HIS name before the heavenly world, and God was glorified in HIS SON!

I had to learn to take from HIM my spiritual life every second, to breathe HIMSELF in as I breathed, and breathe myself out. So, moment-by-moment, for the spirit, and moment-by-moment for the body, we must receive. You say "Is not that a terrible bondage, to be always on the strain?" What? On the strain with the ONE you love, your dearest FRIEND? Oh, no! It comes so naturally, so spontaneously, so like a fountain, without consciousness, without effort; for life is always easy and overflowing!

Now, thank God I have HIM; not only what I have room for, but that which I have not room for, but for which I shall have room, moment by moment, as I go into eternity before me. I am like the little bottle in the sea, which is as full as it can get. The bottle is in the sea, and the sea is in the bottle. So I am IN CHRIST and CHRIST IS IN ME! Besides that bottleful in the sea, there is a whole ocean beyond. The difference is that the bottle has to be filled over again-every day, evermore.

Now the question for each of us is not "what think you of Bethshan, and what think you of divine healing?" but "What think you of CHRIST?" There

came a time when there was a little thing between me and CHRIST. I express it by a little conversation I had with a friend, who said, "You were healed by faith." " Oh no" I said. "I was healed by CHRIST." What is the difference? There is a great difference! There came a time when even faith seemed to come between me and JESUS. I thought I should have to work up the faith, so I labored to get the faith. At last I thought that I had it, that if I put my whole weight upon it, it would hold. I said, when I thought I had gotten the faith, "heal me." I was trusting in myself, in my own heart, in my own faith! I was asking the LORD to do something for me because of something in me, not because of something in HIM! So the LORD allowed the devil to try my faith and the devil devoured it like a roaring lion. I found myself so broken down that I did not think I had any faith. God allowed it to be taken away until I felt I had none. Then God seemed to speak to me so sweetly, saying "Never mind my child, you have nothing but I AM perfect Power. I AM perfect Love. I AM Faith. I AM your Life! I AM the preparation for the blessing, and then, I AM the Blessing too! I AM all within and all without, and all forever." It is just having the "faith of God" (Mark 11:22 , marginal note, Scofield). " And the life I now live in the flesh I live " , not by faith on the SON of God, but "by the faith of the SON of God" (Gal 2:20). That is it! It is not your faith. You have no faith in you any more than you have life or anything else in you! You have nothing but emptiness and vacuity, and you must be open and ready to take HIM to do all! You have to take HIS faith as well as HIS life and healing, and have simply to say "I live by the faith of the SON of God." My faith is not worth anything. If I had to pray for anyone, I would not depend upon my faith at all. I would say "Here LORD am I. If you want me to be a channel of blessing to this one, just breathe into me all that I need." It is simply CHRIST -- CHRIST ALONE!

Is your body yielded to CHRIST for HIM thus to dwell and work in you? JESUS is the one MAN that contains in HIMSELF all that man ought to be, all that man needs to have. All the fullness of the GODHEAD and the fullness of a perfect manhood have been embodied IN CHRIST, and HE stands now as the summing-up of all that man needs. HIS SPIRIT is all that your spirit needs, and HE just gives us HIMSELF. HIS BODY possesses all that your body needs . HE does not need strength for HIMSELF. The energy, which enabled HIM to rise and ascend from the tomb above all the forces of nature, was not for HIMSELF. That marvelous body belongs to your body. You are a member of HIS BODY! Your heart has a right to draw from HIS HEART all that it needs. Your physical life has a right to draw from HIS PHYSICAL LIFE its support and strength; and so it is not you, but it is the precious life of the SON of GOD! Will you take HIM thus today? Then you will not be merely healed, but you will sweep disease away, and then remain a fountain of life for your future need. Oh, take HIM in HIS fullness!

The Apostle Paul tells us that there is a secret, a great secret, which was hidden from ages and from generations (Col . 1:26), which the world was seeking in vain, which wise men from the East hoped they might find, and God says it "now is made manifest to HIS saints." Paul went through the world just to tell it to those who were able to receive it; and that simple secret is just this " CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory!"

I had always worked hard, and from the age of fourteen, I studied, labored, and spared no strength. I took charge of a large congregation at the age of twenty-one. I broke down utterly half a dozen times, and at last my constitution was worn out. Many times I feared I should drop dead in my pulpit. I could not ascend any height without a sense of suffocation, because of a broken- down heart and an exhausted nervous system. I heard of the LORD'S healing, but I struggled against it. I was afraid of it. I had been taught in theological seminaries that the age of the supernatural was past, and I could not go back on my early training. My head was in my way. At last, when I was brought to attend "the funeral of my dogmatics," the LORD whispered to me the little secret "CHRIST IN YOU!" From that hour I received HIM for my body as I had done for my soul. I was made so strong and well that work has been a perfect delight. For years I have spent my summer holiday in the hot city of New York, preaching and working among the masses as I never did before , besides doing the work of our Home and College, an immense mass of library work, and much besides. The LORD did not merely remove my sufferings; it was more than simple healing. HE so gave me HIMSELF that I lost the painful consciousness of physical organs. That is the best of the health that HE gives. I thank the LORD that HE keeps me from all morbid physical consciousness and from having a body that is the object of anxious care. HE gives a simple life that is a delight and a service for the MASTER and that is a rest and joy!

Then again, I had a poor sort of mind, heavy and cumbrous, that did not think or work quickly. I wanted to write and speak for CHRIST and to have a ready memory, so as to have the little knowledge I had gained always under command. I went to CHRIST about it, and asked if HE had anything for me in this way, HE replied "Yes my child, I AM unto you wisdom." I was always making mistakes which I regretted, and which I then thought I would not make again. When HE said HE would be my wisdom, that I might have the mind of CHRIST, that HE would cast down imaginations, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of CHRIST, that HE could make the brain and the head right, then I took Him for all that. Since then I have been kept free from this mental disability, and work has been rest! I used to write two sermons a week, and it took me three days

to complete one. Now, in connection with my literary work, I have numberless pages of matter to write constantly, besides the conducting of many meetings a week, and all is delightfully easy for me. The LORD has helped me mentally, and I know HE is the SAVIOR of our mind as well as our spirit.

I had an irresolute will. I asked "Cannot YOU be a will to me?" HE said "Yes, my child, it is God who worketh in you to will and do." HE made me to learn how and when to be firm, and how and when to yield. Many people have a decided will, but they do not know how to hold on just at the proper moment. I came to HIM for power for HIS work and all the resources for HIS service, and HE has not failed me!

"Behold, I AM the LORD, the GOD of all flesh,; is there any thing too hard for ME?" (Jer. 32:27)

HIMSELF *By A.B. Simpson*

Once it was the blessing; now it is the Lord.
Once it was the feeling; now it is His Word.
Once His gifts I wanted; now the Giver own.
Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone.
Once 'twas painful trying; now 'tis perfect trust.
Once a half salvation; now the uttermost.
Once 'twas ceaseless holding; now He holds me fast.
Once 'twas constant drifting; now my anchor's cast.
Once 'twas busy planning; now 'tis trustful prayer.
Once 'twas anxious caring; now He has the care.
Once 'twas what I wanted, now what Jesus says.
Once 'twas constant asking; now 'tis ceaseless praise.
Once I tried to use Him; now He uses me.
Once it was my working; His it hence shall be.
Once the power I wanted, now the Mighty One.
Once for self I labored, now for Him alone.
Once I hoped in Jesus; now I know He's mine.
Once my lamps were dying; now they brightly shine.
Once for death I waited; now His coming hail.
And my hopes are anchored safe within the veil.