



Sweet Path



THIS IS THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY;

IT IS THE BREATH OF A NEW NATURE;

IT IS THE TRANSLATION OF THE SOUL INTO

A HIGHER UNIVERSE AND

A LOFTIER SCALE OF BEING.

Albert Benjamin Simpson



I Am Crucified with Christ

ALBERT BENJAMIN SIMPSON
1843-1919



A SWEET PATH TO GLORY

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live,
but Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20a)*

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17a)

All believers in Christ have been bought with the precious Redeemer's blood and were transferred into the realm of light and life in God's dear Son. Christ Jesus carried with Him every member of the corrupted race to the cross and terminated each of them there. What relief from bondage Albert Benjamin Simpson saw in a cross that annihilated every resultant problem from Adam's fall; he saw no dread in this kind of death, declaring, "Oh! It is so sweet to die with Christ." It is *only* at this pleasant place—the cross—that the believer can be rid of the "world, and self, and sin."

The cross is "our path to glory," opening to us the "mystery hid from ancient ages." Simpson discovered "the secret of the holy" is "not our holiness, but Him." The secret of living the Christian life is to *not* live it. Our dying to self allows the only One Who ever could live the Christian life to live it within us, for "He lives and reigns within"! "The cross hath set me free," and now "it is so sweet to live with Christ."

Living in the new creation is infinitely better than merely existing in the old. It is a good thing to be crucified with Christ, for only dead men are free from the old life of self and sin, and only those in His resurrection life are truly alive to God. When the accomplished fact of self's death becomes our reality, the heavenly doors to a new life in Christ fly open. When self goes out, Christ comes in, and how sweet is this path to life and glory!

I Am Crucified with Christ

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Verse One

I am crucified with Christ,
And the cross hath set me free;
I have ris'n again with Christ,
And He lives and reigns in me.

Chorus:

Oh! it is so sweet to die with Christ,
To the world, and self, and sin;
Oh! it is so sweet to live with Christ,
As He lives and reigns within.

Verse Two

Mystery hid from ancient ages!
But at length to faith made plain:
Christ in me the Hope of Glory,
Tell it o'er and o'er again.

Verse Three

This the secret nature hideth,
Harvest grows from buried grain;
A poor tree with better grafted,
Richer, sweeter life doth gain.

Verse Four

This the secret of the holy,
Not our holiness, but Him;
O Lord! empty us and fill us,
With Thy fulness to the brim.

Verse Five

This the balm for pain and sickness,
Just to all our strength to die,
And to find His life and fulness,
All our being's need supply.

Verse Six

This the story of the Master,
Thru the Cross, He reached the Throne,
And like Him our path to glory,
Ever leads through death alone.

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I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST



A Sweet Path to Glory

A CRY IN THE WILDERNESS

During the second half of the nineteenth century, North America was the battleground of differing "gospels" among the professing community. Within a number of denominations, the practice of the Christian faith was becoming institutionalized, its purity diluted with modernism. Many clergymen, seminary theologians, and authors seemed eager even to capitulate on the Bible's authority and accuracy. In part, this compromise was due to the struggle to accommodate both Darwinism and the rise of science as a Western religion.

To fill a void they had helped to make, these leaders encouraged their followers to find purpose in the social gospel of behavioral modification and humanitarian

works. All of these factors reduced the emphasis on Christ's redemption by grace, thus diminishing basic orthodoxy. Reaction to this spiritual decline was seen in a powerful burst of gospel activity by many nonsectarian evangelists, including D. L. Moody and R. A. Torrey.

A. B. Simpson also spent his lifetime in fervent gospel preaching and in seeking to unite denominations for worldwide evangelization while learning to depend on the Lord for everything.

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Late at night during a fierce storm, a prominent gentleman heard a knock at his door. He invited the unanticipated visitor, Albert Benjamin Simpson, within to dry off by the fire in the study. Simpson spoke from an open heart to express his great concern for his host's eternal destiny—a topic to which the host had given little prior consideration. Deeply touched by Simpson's loving concern to seek him amid the raging tempest and now convicted of his heart's condition, the host turned to the Lord.




IF THE LORD SO WILLS

It was on the fifteenth of December, a cold winter day in 1843 on Prince Edward Island, that Albert was born, the fourth of nine children, to James and Jane Simpson. Albert's mother requested of the Lord "that the boy might be a minister or missionary," cautiously adding, "If the Lord so wills, and he lives to grow up and is so inclined." She immersed young Albert in the noblest literature and poetry; her "aspirations,



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her soaring imagination” became his as well. His father was a “Presbyterian elder of the old school.” He believed in all the “principles of a well-ordered Puritan household” and “the efficacy of the rod.”

Of his early influences, Simpson wrote, “I cannot say I wholly regret the somewhat stern mould in which my early life was shaped,” for it “threw over my youthful spirit a natural horror of evil things which often safeguarded me afterwards when thrown as a young man amid the temptations of the world.” In fact, young Albert wanted to become a minister of the gospel. However, funds were limited, so his father quietly informed Albert that it would be his duty to stay at home on the farm while his elder brother went to college to enter the ministry. At the tender age of nearly fourteen, he stated,


I can still feel the lump that rose in my throat as I stammered out my acquiescence. Then I ventured with broken words and stammering tongue to plead that they would consent to my getting an education if I could work it out without asking anything from them but their approval and blessing... I remember the quiet trembling tones with which my father received

my request and said, “God bless you, my boy.”

So the struggle began, and I shall never cease to thank God that it was a hard one.

To enter the ministry, Simpson had to become a candidate for examination by the presbytery, so he was tutored in Greek, Latin, and advanced mathematics. Later, he traveled to study at Chatham High School, nine miles from his home on foot or horseback. Since he was of a weakened constitution, the strain caused him to become a “physical wreck.” Simpson’s physical distress “predisposed him toward despair,” worsened because he was not regenerated! He explained, “I had no personal hope in Christ. My whole religious training had left me without any conception of the sweet and simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. The God I knew was a being of great severity.” This narrow and extreme view

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of an austere God caused “the accumulated terrors of a multitude of books and sermons on total depravity and the damnation of the non-elect [to] roar out upon him like a lion from the thicket and throw him into mortal panic for his dying soul,” stirring him to seek salvation with all his heart.

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DARE TO BELIEVE

While glancing through the library of his former minister and tutor, Simpson came across “an old musty volume called *Marshall’s Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*.” As he scanned its pages, a sentence, “which opened ... the gates of life eternal,” caught his eye:

The first good work you will ever perform is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Until you do this, all your works, prayers, tears, and good resolutions are vain. To believe on the Lord Jesus is just to believe that He saves you according to His Word, that He receives and saves you here and now, for He has said—“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

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He fell to his knees and cried out to the Lord Jesus to save him:

*I come the best I can, and I dare to believe that
Thou dost receive me and save me, and that I
am now Thy child, forgiven and saved simply
because I have taken Thee at Thy word.*

Afterward, Simpson felt he had the “supreme joy of a soul in its earliest love.” In response to this joy, he wrote and formally sealed his “Solemn Covenant” with the Lord—one he would keep with him and renew at pivotal times in his life—which included this telling line:

*I yield myself unto Thee as one alive from the
dead, for time and eternity. Take me and use
me entirely for Thy glory.*

At age seventeen, Simpson earned a teacher’s certificate and taught in county schools until he entered Knox College in Toronto. True to his plan to “work out” his education, he put himself through college by tutoring, preaching, and winning scholarships. Although unquestionably redeemed through

faith in Christ, he said, “My religious life was chiefly that of duty, with little joy or fellowship... I had not yet learned the secret of the indwelling Christ.” After graduating in 1865, Simpson began to serve as a pastor in Hamilton, Ontario. That same year, he married Margaret Henry, who had “all the quiet dignity and resourcefulness” to support Dr. Simpson throughout a long and eventful life.

A few years into their marriage, Albert and Margaret suffered the great loss of their little toddler Melville. His last poignant words in the arms of his father were, “Take me to Mamma.” Once in her arms, the little one quoted the Scriptures, “Abide in Me and I in you,” as his mother had taught him, and then he died. Mrs. Simpson said later that



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“this was the first message that ever sank deeply into her heart” and that the words of her dying child prepared her for an ever-deepening experience of abiding in Christ.



THE BENDED KNEE PREVAILS

In January 1874, Simpson’s second chapter of ministry began in Louisville, Kentucky, and he gave his pledge to the congregation to preach “Jesus only.” Even though it was ten

years after the Civil War ended, Louisville’s churches were still beset with smoldering hostility between Northern and Southern sympathizers. Seen as a neutral Canadian, Simpson invited all of Louisville’s church leaders to his home with a goal of reconciliation and revival. Knowing that the bended knee is the most prevailing denial of self, he insisted that they first engage in prayer. God softened their hearts, and as repenting commenced, a tearful reconciliation began among all but one stubborn attendant. Afterward, revival swept over Louisville, and hundreds were saved.

A specially invited speaker in the revival, Major D. W. Whittle, deeply affected Dr. Simpson through his depth of experience and joy in Christ. As Simpson listened night after night to the preaching,

a vast uneasiness came over his heart; the hyphenated self-qualities [of] self-love, self-confidence, self-seeking, all that Adam-begotten brood of illegitimate soul children which inhabited his life, began to make him sick utterly.

Driven to his room to pray, Simpson yielded himself to the Lord in utter abandonment.

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As expressed in his song “I Am Crucified with Christ,” the world and all its offerings and the self with all its private interests died to him that night. Still greatly desiring more power in his Christian service, Simpson later sought counsel from “an old, experienced friend,” who shared with him this faithful word:

All you need ... to make your life a power for God is to be annihilated.

Simpson later reflected,

The fact is the shock of that message almost annihilated me for the time, but before God's faithful discipline was through, I had learned ... that I am not sufficient to think anything of myself.

This counsel led to Simpson's life-altering realization that “dying with Christ” simply released the indwelling Christ to be his life lived out day by day!

THE LIFE OF THE VINE OVERFLOWS

Simpson clearly saw the critical distinction between the work of regeneration and the Holy Spirit's indwelling the human spirit:

“The one is like the building of the house; the other the owner moving in and making it his own personal residence.”

However, Simpson did not consider his spiritual life with Christ as the *end*, but rather as the *means* to minister Christ to individuals, cities, and ultimately to nations. In fact, “the inward pressure” to evangelize worldwide was “being born out of a heart big with love for

God and the perishing world.” In 1879, when the Thirteenth Street Church in New York City urged him to come, he felt God had given the opportunity to carry out his burden in that gateway to the world.

Simpson was greatly used in bringing the gospel to both the upscale congregation and the neglected of society. After more than a

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hundred poor Italian immigrants were won to Christ through his preaching on the streets, the church leaders pointed out that the new converts were not “social equals” and might feel more “at home” among their “own kind.”

Although Simpson had served for two happy years “with this noble people,” he realized that “it would be difficult for them to adjust themselves to the radical and aggressive measures to which God was leading” him. After a week of fervent prayer, he asked to be released “for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the masses.” Resigning meant giving up a comfortable salary with which to support his family of six children, a decision that astonished the church

leaders. Visiting the parsonage the next day, they “offered their condolences” to his wife, saying they felt they “had come to his funeral.” Nevertheless, Simpson obeyed the Lord.

Simpson immediately started evangelical meetings, the first attended by only seven.

They opened their Bibles to “who hath despised the day of small things?” Then, knowing their need of the Holy Spirit for the work, they knelt and thanked God that they were few, poor, and weak. Within eight years, a six-story building was built, which included a bookstore, a missionary training center, and a large


meeting hall to evangelize the masses. Consequently, hundreds of kindred missionaries of the gospel were raised up through his labors, and vast multitudes came to Christ.

Following the apostle Paul’s pattern, Simpson was obedient to his commission to

A. B. Simpson’s motto:
*“Take the whole Bible to
the whole world.”*

In 1882, Simpson started Nyack Missionary College in New York City, with the goal of training missionaries. Simpson was also engaged in inspiring all Christians to evangelize, and he felt a vehicle was needed to coordinate their finances, prayers, and gospel efforts for missions. Thus, the Christian and Missionary Alliance was founded.

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carry the gospel to the multitudes, and he did so with relentless labor. He was careful to not err as some, who do nothing “because God will do all.” Simpson professed, “I have been permitted by God to work—I say this to His honor.” However, his work *for* Christ was accomplished by his communion *with* Christ:

I used to be very fond of gardening. I could work in the garden and yet smell the roses... They did not hinder the work a bit. So you can

be busy all the time, and have the breath of heaven; it will not hinder you... It is something deeper than prayer—[it is] communion.

Indeed, A. B. Simpson gained the “richer, sweeter” life of Christ by being crucified with Him:

If I have ever done anyone any good, it was not I, but Christ in me.

Lord Jesus,

How real it is to me that I have been crucified with You—to the world, self, and sin. Thank You that holiness and strength do not depend on me, for You alone are holy and strong. You are my hope of glory! May Your death and resurrection become my continual reality.

Amen

I Am Crucified with Christ

Albert Benjamin Simpson

1843–1919

Albert Benjamin Simpson authored more than seventy books and many hymns and gospel songs. He founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance to send missionaries around the world. He established a publishing house, founded a college, and became a voice for Christian oneness to his generation.

December 15, 1843, on Prince Edward Island, A. B. Simpson was born to James and Jane Simpson. In 1865, he graduated from Knox College in Toronto and married Margaret Henry. They had six children. Despite the difficulties of obtaining a good education and suffering with serious health problems, Simpson became a Presbyterian minister and served congregations in Ontario, Kentucky, and New York.

But Simpson's heart of obedience to the Lord and his overwhelming burden to



preach the gospel to the masses caused him to become stifled by and dissatisfied with the coldness and divisiveness found in the culture of formal Christianity. Simpson became burdened for two main matters: the gospel outreach to the world and the inner life experiences that most Christians were missing. Simpson became a beacon of light pointing believers to Christ and Christ alone.

Simpson learned how to live by resurrection life and how to maintain a moment-by-moment contact with the Lord. His "inbreathing of the very fullness of God" became his "daily renewal of life." Indeed, after spending several hours of fervent prayer for missionaries in Jamaica and abroad, he greeted the Lord in glory the following morning, Wednesday, October 29, 1919, at the age of seventy-six, having lived twice as long as doctors predicted.

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