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"Believest Thou This?"

John xi, 26.

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BY C. C.
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THE Lord Jesus Christ, in the three short years of His ministry on earth, covered every experience of every child of humanity. He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin; and therefore He is able to fully sympathize with us, and to enter fully into every phase of our daily lives. I love to think of this, and to know that the Lord takes

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knowledge of the most minute matters. He saw and knew of the man carrying a pitcher of water; He told the disciples even where a colt was tied; He gave directions how to find Simon, the tanner, in the street called Straight; He saw Nathaniel under the fig-tree; He told of the fish in whose mouth lay the piece of money, and He it is who counts every hair in our heads, and without whose care not even a sparrow falls to the ground.

Believest thou this? Why, if we should take out all the promises of God and bind them together, they would make a large book of themselves; and they are all for us, every one of them, if we can only believe

them. A great many people have a general belief in the doctrines of their church. I once asked a man, "Do you love Jesus?" and he replied promptly, "O, yes; I'm a Baptist." His belief probably partook of the nature of Martha's, in the context. It is especially worthy of remark that, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He deliberately waited where He was for two days; and this was done solely that greater glory to God might result. (He was obliged to convey Himself away or to remain absent from certain localities more than once, to prevent his enemies from precipitating the great tragedy for which he came; and so it almost seems that He

sometimes remains away from those who love Him, lest he should be obliged to yield to their prayers, too soon for the highest glory of God.) You often ask of God certain petitions, perhaps twenty times, and He hears you every time; but he abides still in that place, because He sees that by so doing your highest good and God's honor will be most completely served. "Blessed is he that waiteth." Often in the work when necessity presses sorely upon me, and I have n't a cent to meet the most immediate wants of the many departments of labor for the Master, I wait on the Lord. Not worry, but wait; and He has never failed me yet. Live or die, His words are

true, and I will wait on Him, even if everything goes to pieces about me. Many Christians wait in the wrong way; they do not do anything for the Lord, either by deed or word of mouth. I remember a physician who lived for fifteen years next door to a church, and yet at the expiration of all that time, I was the very first who ever asked him if he loved Jesus.

Jesus waited two days, and then He said, "Lazarus is dead, let us go." (Isn't there a striking significance here? The old man must die and be buried in the tomb before the Master can come, and by His word bring forth the new man into the life of sanctification, free from

sin, crucified with Christ, nevertheless living by the faith of the Son of God.) Now Martha had the common faith of the church; and like many dear, good souls in the church, she "took it out," so to speak, in much serving; which is only another expression for dead works and formal legalism. She believed that God was able to do anything in general, just as men and women to-day are ready enough to admit the theoretical possibility of God's performing some of the stronger promises in His Word. Ah! the question is not, What is He able to do? He is able to upset the world; but, What *will* He do? Believest thou that what He hath promised, He *will* also per-

form? He was actually and visibly present in the very house with Martha, but what kind of faith did that inspire in her? Merely the head belief that He had power, and that even then, if He would ask God, God would give Him whatever *He* requested. A great many say to me, "Doctor Cullis, if you ask God for something, I know you will get it, but there's no use in my asking." What is the trouble? They are not in that harmony with God where alone true faith can exist. Self has not been surrendered, and God's will is not the item of supreme desire in the heart. People make a great mistake about God's will; they look at the petition, "Thy will be done,"

and shake the head sorrowfully; feeling sure that saying this necessarily involves great and unending tribulations and afflictions. If my boy comes to me and says, "Papa, I'll do just what you want me to do," will I immediately take him by the collar and shake him all to pieces? You ought to be, and you can be, sanctified wholly. Believest thou this? Oh! how I wish we could all be little children, to take every promise and put our feet down hard upon it and go fearlessly forward, trusting in our Father's word.

Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." O, yes, she knew that, but it would be in the

last day. (How many Marthas are about us to-day! Jesus *can* save from sin, He *can* purify the heart, He *can* take out the root of sin and make us pure, but it will be only completed at the last day of life.) Christ replied, "I am the resurrection and the life; *he that believeth in Me*, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Believest thou this?" She rather dodged the question, it was too direct and searching, so she endeavored to make it appear as a figure of speech, and put it off into the next world. How many make death the sanctifier, instead of the Holy Ghost indwelling in the soul!

Hope and faith are two very different things. Martha had a hope;

she would probably have sympathized with the Christian of to-day who says, "I hope I am saved." God deliver us if we are not a little farther along than that! Let us take our proper place, confess our own ignorance, go through the tunnel trusting God, and see where we will come out afterward "I am the resurrection and the life," Christ said. I call the resurrection-life the life this side of the grave of Jesus; and you can be on this side if you will. Believest thou this? I have died unto sin; been buried there with Christ, and have come up into the glorious life of the children of God. There is no danger in trusting God; He cannot fail; He is everywhere.

I remember, when crossing the Atlantic and a storm came down upon us, some natural fears arose; but then I thought, Why should I fear, if the ship did sink beneath my feet? I should only go down into the hollow of God's hand, for in that He holds the seas. Martha hesitated to believe to the very last. She said, "Lord, he has been dead four days already." Ah! she could not take away the stone from the door of her heart. The great trouble with you, perhaps, is that you have not taken away the stone from the door of your heart. (Christ could have rolled it away Himself by a word, but the command was given to test even the weak faith of those

about Him). We must yield perfect obedience. Abraham, when told to go out, did not question, but started on the journey, leaving future care and direction with God. I once asked a poor consumptive, "Do you love Jesus?" "No." "Well, Jesus loves you." Three or four days after, he called me and said, "O, I'm so happy in Jesus"; and about three weeks after, when near his death, he said, "When I am conscious, I am thinking about Jesus; and when I am unconscious, Jesus is thinking about me." Does your heart long for such an experience? It can be yours to-day; take God at His word, believe Him, and accept Him in His own way.