

*“Meditation is  
letting God speak  
to us till our heart  
is throbbing.”*

“NOW IS OUR SALVATION  
NEARER THAN WHEN WE  
FIRST BELIEVED.”  
ROM. 13:11



Be still.

# The Secret of the Lord

from HEART TALKS by B. Carradine

**F**or fourteen years of my Christian life I failed to see what was in the Bible expression, “The secret of the Lord.” That there was a secret the Scripture taught plainly and repeatedly. The veil in the Tabernacle and Temple, as it hid a certain part of the sanctuary from all eyes but one, and that person a type of Christ, confirmed the fact. Even in the Holy of Holies the two angels bent over the ark as if in investigation and profound study, and so kept prominent the same truth. Later still, Paul speaks of “the mystery of the Gospel hid for ages, but revealed in the last days to the saints.” And still later, John writes about a white stone given to the Overcomer in the Church, and in it a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. For quite a while we supposed this mystery and secret was God’s unseen, unrecognised presence in the world. After that we thought it meant Christ’s incarnation.

We were driven from these and a number of other false conclusions by the explicit statement of God’s Word, which at first we did not notice, that the white stone was given not to a repenting sinner, but to an overcomer in the Church. Still farther, that the mystery of the Gospel, hid for ages, was revealed in the last days to the saints. If it had been pardon spoken of, and the saving knowledge of God, it would have been a revelation to sinners, and not saints. Then we remembered that pardon had been known from the days of righteous Abel to the present hour; but this peculiar revelation of grace made to saints was given in the “last days.”

After this we noticed that Paul declared plainly what the mystery or secret was: “Christ formed within us the hope of glory.” Not Christ for us, or with us, but in us. Christ not appearing to a sinner; but Christ entering and dwelling in the Christian. The Divine Visitor transformed into a **perpetual abider**.

The Saviour alluding to it said to his disciples that on the condition of their keeping his commandments He would come into them and take up His abode with them.

The experience unquestionably came to Paul, who says that it pleased God after He had called him by His grace to “reveal his Son in me.” We all know that the occurrence near Damascus was not an inward, but an outward, revelation of Christ. The reference is evidently to something which transpired at a later period. The blessed secret is that there is a precious, beautiful experience for the child of God. It is for them that fear him. Sinners do not fear God. The Bible says so. There is, then, a holy secret to be imparted to the Christian if he is willing to accept.

There are several facts about the matter which impress the writer. One is, that it is the secret of the Lord. This explains why we cannot make it clear to those who have it not. If a certain man has a secret, no one else but himself can tell it. People may guess what it is, but cannot know assuredly until he is pleased to declare it.

This simple fact applied to the spiritual life will at once explain what has often puzzled the sanctified man. Filled with the blessing,

yet he is unable of, and by himself, to make the experience clear to one who has it not. Letters are written, sermons preached, books loaned, and conversations are held in vain. The face fails to light up with appreciation, and the mind to grasp the meaning of what has been said. The sanctified man thought that all he had to do was to run home and tell his family, rush around to his church and pastor and proclaim it, and all would immediately see, agree, be glad, and seek and find. To his amazement the countenances of his hearers remained heavy and cloudy, while some were grieved, and still others displeased. He told them carefully how he had obtained the blessing, and thought they would follow him; explained what it did for the soul, and supposed they would understand. To his surprise and sorrow they did neither one nor the other, and he was left to marvel.

If he had remembered the Scripture he would not have been astonished at the result. God had prepared him for the disappointment in the words, “I will give him a white stone, and in the white stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” And still again in the words, “The secret of the Lord.” It is the Lord’s hidden truth, and it takes him to reveal it.

A second fact is, that there is a certain attitude or position needful to secure a secret. When one concludes to repose a confidence in another, he draws the proposed confidant aside and whispers, while the one thus trusted bends the head and gives undivided attention to the

utterance which a little distance makes inaudible.

So in securing this secret from the Lord, **it is not to be obtained in a careless way.** There is the drawing aside from the crowd, and an attitude of the soul which corresponds to what is seen when we behold the bent head, rapt face, and fixed attention of the hearer to all that is being said.

Here again we see the failure of many Christians in the obtainment of the blessed experience. They do not observe the conditions which are inexorably demanded of those who would enter within the veil. It is not truer than if a man fails to draw near and listen intently to what is whispered to him in a noisy street, he fails to get the intended information; than, **if a person neglects to wait in a certain manner upon God, he will never know the secret of the Lord,** will never be wiser concerning the work of grace in the soul. There are just as fixed laws in the spiritual as in the natural world. Happy is the man who obeys them. As a farmer does not and cannot make a good crop by laziness or an accident, so men do not rise and shine in the character world, are not caught up into great heights of the love and knowledge of God, by a stumbling chance or by waiting with listless eyes and idle hands for something to happen.

**If the soul would see deep into the mysteries of heaven and grace, the vision will not come in a haphazard way.** The wonderful experience of Daniel cost him weeks of lonely prayer and fasting on the banks of the river Hiddekel. It took all that was meant in the words "exiled to Patmos" to open the heavens to John. The baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire came at the end of ten days of ardent prayer and patient, faithful waiting on God in an upper room, away from the busy streets and talking circles of Jerusalem.

A man who prays three or four hours daily, is felt by others to be ahead in some important particulars. The preacher who has been on his knees an hour in humble, tearful waiting on God, begins in his sermon, not with his audience, but beyond and above them in tenderness of heart, clearness of spiritual vision, and conscious strength of soul; moreover, the audience feels it.

Look where we will, the faithful working of this spiritual law is beheld. He who turns aside sees the flaming bush, and talks with God. He who waits on the Lord renews his strength, and mounts up on eagle's wings. He who wraps the mantle about his head at the entering in of the cave and listens, will hear the still, small voice. And he who will lay all on the altar, and patiently, believingly, and prayerfully look upward, will be rewarded by the descending fire of the Holy Ghost, and the blessed secret of the Lord.

It is simply absurd for a man to say there is no such secret, when he refuses to comply with the conditions of obtaining the revelation,

and it is lost time on our part to listen to their ridicule, arguments, doubts, and denials.

A third fact connected with the secret of the Lord is the remarkable effect it has upon the person who has been put in its possession and enjoyment.

The writer has seen an individual tell another a secret, and instantly saw the face light up, a pleased look or smile overspread the countenance, and an almost indescribable expression spring in the eye, that came from the consciousness of a new and valued possession.

So we have been impressed with the people of God who obtained this secret. It was their smiling looks, shining faces, and speaking eyes that first deeply impressed us with the distinctiveness and superiority of the gift of grace they were enjoying.

The hard lines of the face had been changed into curves of pleasing repose; the lips, even when not speaking, seemed to declare inward rest; the eyes had a quiet, sunny look, like unto deep, clear springs; and the voice possessed a note of gladness, and at times an exultant ring, which impressed the dullest spiritual hearer.

It was the beaming light and joy of this secret which made the Irish gaze fascinated on Fletcher's face, when they did not understand a word that he uttered. They said there was heaven in the man's countenance.

Such a beautiful look the writer, when a young preacher, saw on the face of a lady who had been an invalid seventeen years. For all that weary time she had sat in a large chair, and crippled and stiffened with rheumatism, unable to do anything to help herself or others, quietly waited for death to relieve her from her acute sufferings. Six years were added to the seventeen, and still, with a patient smile on her lips, and that holy restful light in her face, she waited for God to say it was enough and call her home. Of the hundreds who visited her, all marked the pure, unearthly joy which filled her, and that was not only seen in the eye, and heard in the voice, but felt in her presence. The secret of the Lord kept her not only uncomplaining, but joyful through a quarter of a century of suffering.

She finally died, and they buried her, sitting in her invalid chair, which she had transformed into a throne, and in which she had ruled over many hearts as a crowned queen among the daughters of God. She died with the sweet, old-time smile on her lips, and was buried with it still resting on her face. There she is under the ground today, sitting in her throne-chair, and waiting for the coming of her Lord, whose voice will make her spring from the dust to meet him in the air, and whose blessed secret kept her strong, patient, and victorious through many years of as great pain and sore trouble as almost ever fell to the lot of any of God's children. \*



## Bring Every Thought Captive

Most of the struggles that we face in life are inner ones. The outward battles are normally a result of deep inner conflicts that have been built over a lifetime. If we are to truly experience victory over bad habits and wrong patterns of actions, then we must learn to undergo a transformation of our inner thoughts and feelings. The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth saying, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2Cor. 10:5 NIV).

Paul was speaking of the spiritual battle that every Christian faces. He understood that the greatest conflicts of life are spiritual ones, and that the battleground is often the mind of the believer. Before a person comes to know Christ in a deeply personal way, the Bible says that he is a captive or slave to sin. In other words, our entire outlook and view of life is built upon attitudes and thought patterns that are contrary to God's plan for us. We build those patterns of thoughts over months and even years. When we come to know Christ, that doesn't mean that we no longer have to deal with wrong thought patterns. It simply means that we are no longer slaves to those patterns.

But we must learn to "take every thought to make it obedient to Christ." Let me explain. I grew up in a home where I experienced a lot of negativism. My mother was very critical. There's a fine line of difference between a critical spirit and an analytical spirit. A critical spirit analyses each situation and condemns. But an analytical spirit is able to discern right from

wrong and find an appropriate means of action to do the right thing. Over many years, I turned a God given analytical spirit into a self-centred critical spirit. My first line of thought about anyone or any type of action was always a negative, critical one.

When Christ came into my life, He set me free from such a critical spirit. I was no longer a captive to such thinking, no longer a slave. However, I had not built a negative spirit within my heart in one moment. I had built such a pattern of thinking over a lifetime. Therefore, I needed to learn to tear down that stronghold in my life brick by brick. That simply meant that every day I needed to take every negative thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

When I awaken every morning, my “natural” way of thinking is a negative one. I, therefore, take time alone with God to ask Him to capture every thought of mine. Through prayer, I bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. I ask God to fill me with those thoughts that are pleasing to Him. The more regularly that I bring my thought patterns under Christ’s rule, the quicker that stronghold is torn down in my life.

Once that stronghold is torn down, it doesn’t mean that I am no longer tempted in that area. It simply means that Satan no longer has a foothold in that area of my life. I don’t have to be a “naturally negative” person. I can be a supernaturally positive person. No matter what comes my way, I have been given everything I need to overwhelmingly conquer those patterns of thought that are so contrary to the character and ways of God. Each of us can experience victory over wrong thought patterns. God has given you weapons of spiritual warfare to overcome Satan’s stronghold on your life. Begin today to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

—SAMMY TIPPIT

“Let them pretend what they please, the true reason why any despise the new birth is because they hate a new life.

He that cannot endure to live to God will as little endure to hear of being born of God.”

—JOHN OWEN



“When sin is your burden, Christ will be your delight.”

—THOMAS WATSON

# THE FORGOTTEN INGREDIENT IN CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Article by Brian K. Giselbach

One of the things that ought to concern every Christian is his own individual growth. Spiritual growth is one of the greatest obligations we have as Christians. Peter exhorted us to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). The reason why growth is so important is explained by Peter in the preceding verse: “Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” In the context, Peter was telling us how possible it was for us to be deceived by false teachers who “wrest” the Scriptures “unto their own destruction,” and no less, to the destruction

must a person be a Christian before he is expected to live a life of purity? Don’t take me wrong, it is obvious that individual growth takes time. But how long must the mission of the church go unfulfilled before “John” grows up in the faith and begins making his own contribution? If “John” has been a Christian for fifteen years and is still not attending services like he should, can we honestly believe that he is growing as a Christian?

Apparently when we talk about Christian growth, we’re leaving something out. We have forgotten perhaps the single most important ingredient: DESIRE! Every person who puts on Christ in baptism will

**Every person who puts on Christ in baptism will eventually fall from his own steadfastness without a personal desire for spiritual growth.**

of others. Therefore, growth is an important concern to every serious minded Christian. Growth in Christ is a safeguard and deterrent against those who would lead us away from the faith.

But there are other ways by which we can fall from our own steadfastness. We can fall away through the indifference and concern we may have regarding the needs of the church, the needs of others, and the needs of our own lives. Many people have very little contact with false teachers. Yet they have fallen away because of their own personal lack of interest in the things which lead to life eternal. Recently, I heard an individual say about another person: “John (not his real name) doesn’t come to church like he ought to, but I wish he would. I’ve seen a lot of changes in his life since he became a Christian fifteen years ago. He is really growing as a Christian, but you must remember, growth takes time.” I couldn’t help but wonder; how much time does it take for a person to grow to the point that he begins to fulfill his Christian obligations? How long must a person be a Christian before he is expected to attend services like he should? How long must a person be a Christian before he is expected to make an effort to win someone to Christ? How long

eventually fall from his own steadfastness without a personal desire for spiritual growth. This “I want to grow” attitude is crucial! This is why Peter commanded Christians to “desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Pet. 2:2, 3). The Lord has been so gracious in saving us from our sins! **Now that we have tasted of that grace, let us grow in grace.** In order to grow, we must desire that which produces and enhances growth, God’s Word. Do you have this essential ingredient in your life? The author of the first Psalm expressed the correct attitude, when he said: “But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Ps. 1:2, 3). What a beautiful picture of growth; a tree that is alive, growing, and bringing forth fruit. Why? Because of a desire for growth that expresses itself through a delight in and meditation upon God’s Word.

**DESIRE is the forgotten ingredient in Christian growth!** ❖

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# THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

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by George Ridout

*"The beauties of the earth and sky may change, the highest, sweetest forms of beauty in the human face divine, may turn to the dust and ashes of the sepulchre; but Holiness abides forever. No fires can burn it, no floods can overwhelm it, no age bring wrinkles on its brow or carve deep lines into its face."*

It has been well said that Holiness resembles the light of the sun at noonday with its brightness, beauty, illumination and warmth. Holiness should bring sunshine, not gloom; happiness, not heaviness; gladness, not depression. The Beauty of Holiness adorns the soul with certain qualities which bring praise and glory to the God of all grace (Ephesians 1:6).

Sanctified grace is that grace by which the soul comes into possession of faith like Abraham, patience like Job, hope like Moses, perseverance like Noah, meekness like David, temperance like Daniel, prayerfulness like Elijah, unworldliness like James, holiness like Peter, love like John, guilelessness like Nathanael, devotion to God and to Jesus like Paul. It is that grace which will let you sing in prison like Peter, keep you in the hottest fire of affliction like the three Hebrew children. Sanctification is supernatural grace because it takes supernatural power to arrest, to control, to destroy.

Sanctification is an habitual grace. Holiness becomes a habit on earth; here the saints do on earth as they do in Heaven. Holiness imparts sovereign and moral beauty to the soul so that according to Thomas Aquinas, that which is in God substantially by His essence is accidentally in the soul by divine participation. It is such beauty God Himself is captivated with it. "Thou art all beautiful; there is no spot in thee." It reflects the beauty of the face of God. Oh, the face of God! Did you ever see a soul lit up by divine glory? That is but the reflection of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Holiness is a participation of the divine nature, a seed of divinity. "His seed remaineth in him." It partakes of the divine nature in the sense the iron partakes of the fire; the rough, rude iron put into the fire becomes radiant, brilliant and the fire may say to it: "I have imparted that to thee." So God may say to the soul, "I impart to thee the glow and beauty and heat of my nature"—the soul is bathed in God.

Holiness is susceptible of constant increase, and

like other riches can be added onto. This is increased by divine bestowments, also by fuller acquirements by exercise and practice. God delights in His saints and takes pleasure in them. Sanctifying grace is that by which the soul enjoys God, abounds in His love and becomes more and more like Him — like Him in love, in humility, in sinlessness, in purity, in holiness — "We shall be like Him."

As pure Light is composed of seven colours, so the holiness of the perfect Christian character is composed of a number of distinct and beautiful virtues and purity is not the least among them.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart."*

*"I wait till he shall touch me clean,  
Shall life and power impart,  
Give me the faith that casts out sin  
And purifies the heart."*

The purification of the soul from sin's defilement is an act of God's grace wrought for the believer. Peter, in Acts 15:9, describing the outflowing of the Spirit in the house of Cornelius, said, "And God which knoweth the hearts bare them witness giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

Writers on the deeper life in God trace the stages whereby the chosen soul is gradually invaded and absorbed by God thus: First, the long climb of cleansing when the first renunciation is effected; secondly, the hilltop of supernatural illumination; thirdly, the vale of purging drought when all spiritual life seems withdrawn, and the world loses all of its attachments and all spell of its allurements is broken and no taste for worldly things remains.

**Pureness of soul is solely a matter of God's grace through the precious blood.**

From the Reflections of Albin Peyron...

"I besought Him for this blessing as I prayed long for the grace of forgiveness. He freed me from evil. He made me literally free. That was nine years ago and I can say here to the glory of God that the sin which He took out of my heart has never returned. I do not mean to say that since that time I have never been tempted; on the contrary, I have been the mark of the adversary and attacked far more than before, and at times these attacks have been terrible. But if Satan has come—and he has—he has had nothing in me. The Saviour has removed that inner correspondence with him which formerly existed, that traitor hidden within who opened the gate to the enemy. Satan still prowls around. I must watch. But thanks to God, he prowls around and not within. Jesus guards the gates."

It will be noticed in Paul's writings that he uses some special phrases in setting forth the state of soul purity. He uses negatives namely, "without offense," Acts 24:16; "Without rebuke,"

Philippians 2:15; "Without blame," Ephesians 1:4; "Free from sin," Romans 6:22.

Let it be remembered sin is cleansed, not outgrown. The remains of depravity must be removed from the soul by faith in the atonement and not supplanted by a new nature. In fact, the weeds will choke the growth of the wheat. The remains of the carnal mind will hinder the development of the spiritual nature.

**The energies which should be spent in working for Christ are used in watching, and chaining, and keeping the old self subdued and in prison, when he ought to be slain and buried,** and then these guards could do active duty for God and humanity. The soul is exhausted in this dreadful struggle with self. The inner poverty and emptiness have no overflowing streams for the thirsty souls of others. Self-environed and self-absorbed, they do not move as a living force, an inspiration and courage to their fellow men. They need the cleansing of the blood of Christ, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost which always follows, and then they will grow. Having the hindrances removed, and the vital force of the spiritual organism increased by this Holy Ghost power, they will grow naturally and symmetrically from within and not from accretion without. A few Greek soldiers, concealed within the prodigious Trojan horse, opened the gates of Troy to the Greek army, and Troy fell. Traitors within the heart are more to be feared than the foes without.

Martin Luther has said: "The Holiness of common Christianity is this: that the Holy Spirit gives the people faith in Christ and sanctifies them thereby; that is, makes a new heart, soul, body, work, and being and writes the law of God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly hearts. He sanctifies them, not only by the forgiveness of sin, but also by the laying aside, expelling and destroying of sin."

It has been indiscreetly said, "We are to believe the work is done, and it will be done." Let it be remembered that this exercise of faith is not a mere intellectual calculation; it occurs when the soul is travailing for sanctifying power, groaning for deliverance from distressing sinfulness, giving up all to Christ; when it is feeling that "it is worse than death its God to love, and not its God alone;" when it is purposing to claim and obtain holiness at all hazards. It is now agonising at God's altar, looking at the promises; the Holy Spirit is helping, imparting, illuminating, and strengthening the faltering faith. The refining fire touches it, "as the coal Isaiah's lips;" it yields, it trusts—the work is done; and now the soul, sanctified, believes it is done, and rejoices in the rest of faith. The belief that it will be done, that it is being done, is the trust which brings the blessing; the belief that it is done follows after.

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**"HOLINESS IS POWER. IT UTILISES ABILITY, FERTILISES THE SOUL AND ENERGISES THE WHOLE MAN.  
HOLINESS IS GOD'S POWER WITH MAN AND MAN'S POWER WITH GOD." — CECIL**

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