

## **REST – IN GRACE SUFFICIENT.**

The benediction of undisturbed rest is a blessing sought and eulogized wherever man is known, but experienced by a surprisingly small fraction of the race. Everyone craves rest. Careworn souls, turning away from the vision of weary years of trial and bereavement to friends upon whom sorrows press but lightly, wonder at the beauties life seems to hold for them, and ask the secret of their peacefulness, enquiring where this rest is to be found. Disappointed hearts, turning from the futile chase for joys which kept so near, but just beyond their reach, tantalizing, beguiling, inviting, yet receding faster than the swiftest feet could follow, come, breathless and panting, ready at last to relinquish the long-continued pursuit, and, dropping with weariness, imploringly ask for rest. Beautiful home-circles, long unbroken by the ravages of the destroyer, and all the more perfect by the firmness of affection's cords, grown to be so mature, must be broken now. The cords must be parted, and all the attendant pain endured. Hearts must bleed, tears must flow. And now the bereaved, sighing for an hour of forgetfulness, in which they may recruit their vigor, looking away from this, the keenest sorrow they have known, with swollen eyes and with sobs that melt the sternest heart, appeal to our sympathies and ask, "Can you not tell us where we may find rest?"

All classes are in search of rest. The cry for it reverberates upon a thousand hill-tops, and echoes along the fertile valleys of the earth. It comes to us from the north; the south also is calling for rest. They seek it in the east, nor is the west satisfied without it. Millionaires have everything beside it; the penniless desire it above the bread they crave. Health cannot satisfy without it; with it, sickness is powerless to disturb. Ease becomes wearisome if rest of soul be absent; its presence makes the heaviest burdens light. Without it, we sigh; but this soul-rest turns our sighing into singing. Bitter tears flow where it does not abide; but with rest, tears lose their bitterness. What price is too dear to pay

for rest of soul? Cheerfully will they endure hardness for a season, if but the assurance of its coming attend the labor of its famished seekers. They will work till hands are brown and callous from their toil; till brains are weary, eyes are dim, and limbs grow feeble. They will deny themselves the comfort of the present, modify arrangements for the future, to prepare for its enjoyment, and engage every power, to the end that this priceless boon be made their own.

Yet while it stands knocking at their very doors, they will not take it! While it sits awaiting entertainment, they turn away as if it were an intruder upon their time! While it offers itself, saying, "I will confer enduring comfort," they refuse, as if because so readily obtained it could not be worth the taking. They would work for it, yet seem unwilling to accept it as a gift. But oh, wearied, one, have you not labored long enough to no account? Have you not yet borne enough? Have you not suffered enough, sighed, wept, sought, agonized and called? Have you not already spent too much time and means without avail, conscious, after all this anxiety, of the same hungering, thirsting, aching heart? Have you not experimented until convinced that such is not the means by which the pearl may be discovered? Have you not tried all that reason bids you venture? Alas, 'tis true! but your soul is burdened still. Now cease your random search, and embrace the blessing just outside your heart. Rest is there! Rest for you. Rest now. Rest forever. The grace of God includes it, and comes to you laden with its sweetness. Walk with God, and it shall be yours this day and evermore! "Come unto me," said Christ, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I *will give you rest.*" That means *you* if you are burdened. Surely you do not doubt it! You would not say that because your burdens are peculiar, and unaccountably afflicting, that therefore Christ is unable to fulfill his word? Then he *must* mean you just as you are; and the heavier the burden the greater is your need of relief. It signifies nothing whether the burden be great or small. He can bear it in either case. Therefore, bring it to him, and having done so, *leave* it with him. You must do it; the privilege is too great to be neglected. Christ loves you and would not see you burdened thus. He commands you to do it,

and if you love him you will obey. Having "come" to Christ, having "taken" his "yoke," and "learned" of him, the unqualified promise is, "you *shall* find rest." Now, if you do not find rest it will be because of some reserve; for the promise stands unchanged. Rest is always given when the conditions are fully met. Then plead no excuse; your case is not an exceptional one. You shall have rest if you will accept it. Then *do* so and "go in peace."

The cause of unrest among believers is not the excessive weight of burdens, not the severity of trial, for often the fully consecrated, who enjoy the sweetest rest, are they whose material surroundings are of the most distressing character, subjecting them to sorrows calculated to harrow beyond expression; yet they ride on victoriously, while others with far less reason for complaint are disturbed much of the time. The cause lies within themselves; and consists in a partial reception, only, of the grace which would drive forever from their lives such inconsistencies as are often deplored in penitence and sorrow. Neither victory nor rest shall ever gladden our hearts by the simple absence of the ills of life, but rather through divine strength being brought to our assistance. And this can only be done by the concurrence of our wills; including, and indeed, necessitating an unreserved surrender to God. Oh, if this work be accomplished what mighty results will follow! It will be as natural for us to rest in God as it is for us to breathe. Soul-rest will be ours continually, and effective labor for God the outward expression. As the child, timid, fearful, unwilling to venture, when alone, becomes wonderfully brave when conscious of his father's presence, so we, though formerly helpless, will, by the abiding presence of our God, venture anything, everything so long as it be IN THE DEFENSE OF TRUTH and in obedience to the Father, who has promised to protect us.

And what shall be able to disturb us while God's strength is still our own? Shall it be the remembrance of weary years of trouble? Shall it be a death-bed scene? Shall it be painful memories of loved ones who have failed, and thus mortified or grieved us? I tell you it will not be

found in these things to molest the repose abiding in our hearts. While the surface may sometimes show agitation, the peaceful currents of the soul will move on toward the boundless ocean – God himself, whence came this wondrous grace; then the tide of his love will come, overwhelming the little disappointments of an hour, drowning our sorrows, washing away the stains our tears had left, and thrilling with a heavenly joy our souls, as, standing in bewilderment, we demand, with the astonished Paul, whose words were unequal to his rapture, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

– *H. Roissy.*

