

COME INTO THE SUNLIGHT.

"He that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." – John 8:12.

My friend had some plants which had been all winter in a south window, where they had the sun. They looked bright and flourishing, and already blooming in the early spring. It was cheering to see the rich verdure and luxuriant bloom, and in my warm admiration I exclaimed, "How lovely! how charming!"

But there was one which was unlike the others. It was withered and leafless. I remarked, "That one appears to be dead." She replied, "No, it is not dead. I have just brought it up out of the cellar. It was there all winter, shut out from the sun and air. Plants may live a long time in the dark and in an ungenial atmosphere, though they lose their foliage and their beauty; but it is wonderful how soon the sun will revive them and restore their verdure."

Just so, I said, it is in regard to Christians. If deprived of the light of his face who is called the Sun of Righteousness – the joy of earth and heaven – how sad and forlorn they appear, no indications of spiritual life, no flowers of Christian experience, no fruits of grace, no beauty, no attraction. The secret is, they have been living down in the cellar, away from the bright sun, and in an unhealthy atmosphere.

Poor, drooping soul, hast thou been down in that gloomy place, and has thy spiritual vigor died out? Now, stripped of thy sweet comforts, art thou despondently saying, "There is no hope for me"? Be not discouraged. Come right up in the sunlight, and the pure air of love, where Jesus lives, and where he wants us all to live.

"Rise, he calleth thee!" This is the spring time. He would array thee in thy vernal robes, and deck thee with glory and beauty. Dost

thou seem dead? no vitality left? Be not dismayed, for Jesus says, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." His life-giving beams can vivify thy soul much more speedily than the natural sun can revive withered plants.

'Tis only to place thy poor, drooping heart beneath his blessed rays, and soon thou wilt feel new life and fresh vigor start through thy whole being, and thus in the garden of the Lord, thou wilt become a tree of righteousness whose lovely bloom and rich fruits will abound to the glory and praise of God. Come! Oh, come quickly into the sunlight!

– *M. D. James.*

