

# The Teacher's Daughter The Constraining Love of Jesus

By William Reid

Mary Ann Whyte was a teacher's daughter in Inverness-shire, who died a short time ago rejoicing in Jesus Christ, at the early age of seventeen years and six months.

One evening before she was confined to bed, she opened her mind to her father. On one occasion, she said, "I will soon and forever wear a crown of glory, and the white robe secured for me in my lovely Jesus from all eternity. Oh, how I long to be with him!" Her spiritual enjoyment in Jesus was intense. She often said, "He loved me, and gave himself for me." "O Love of heaven, who can but love thee? Art not thou altogether lovely? I love thee, sweet Jesus and I know thou lovest me 'with an everlasting love.' I long to see thee, and to enjoy thee in thy glory. Come! oh, come and take me home, for I cannot live but in thy presence."

Her grand source of help and comfort was the Bible. One evening they sang in worship part of the 45th psalm:

"They shall be brought with gladness great,  
And mirth on every side,  
Into the palace of the King,  
And there they shall abide";

and at the close, she whispered to her father; "Yon is the way I'll go home"; and when the verses were re-read to her, the effect upon her was indescribable. The narrative books even of the Old Testament also afforded her instruction and pointed her to Jesus. When her father read to her one day from Exodus, of the ark, testimony, mercy-seat, and cherubim, she abruptly and fervently exclaimed—"Oh, there he is, my sweet God!" Her father asked, "Where?" "In the ark," she replied, "with the law, perfect love to God and man in his heart, and (oh, the admiration of angels!) on the mercy-seat, where in him we can meet the Father in peace, and rejoice over judgment." And after a short pause she said with a sweet smile, "I want words to express what I see and feel." On her father asking her how it was she got an insight into the meaning of the passage, she replied, "Whosoever takes the key—Christ—can understand the Bible."

At times she would break out all at once in such expressions as—"Thy love overcomes me, my sweet Jesus! Thou hast loved me from all eternity. In time thou hast called me; and more, while I am yet young, thou takest me home from the sorrows of the wilderness to thy full enjoyment and communion—all, *all* in love—love that overcomes me."

One evening, on being asked by her father repeatedly if she were asleep, she replied in a low, sweet voice—"No, but I am afraid to speak." "Why so?" "Oh, I thought my Beloved's arms were about me taking me home, and I was so joyful, and feel still so happy, that I am afraid to speak for fear of putting him away"; and on saying this she quietly shut her eyes again.

But it appeared as if this communion was bestowed to prepare her for a sore temptation. Her father asked her in the morning as usual, "What cheer now?" "Indeed," said she, "my cheer is not so good today." "What is that owing to?" "The enemy troubles me," she said. "Does he make you doubt your interest in your Beloved?" "No," said she, with a triumphant air, "he durst not do that, for he knows I am made sure of that; but he tries to terrify me with the fear of death, telling me that it is an awful thing to die, and the agonies of dissolution are terrible; and he says to me, 'Why might not the Lord take you home as he did others, without enduring the pangs of death?' I know that this is the enemy's hour and work, and I try to resist." "By what means?" "By considering, that although some get home without tasting of death, nevertheless, the whole of them, *except two*, passed through death's gates; and besides, I cannot but reproach myself at being frightened to die, when I recollect how sweetly and happily my dear mother and sister departed. Oh, what was it but falling gently into the arms of sleep!" In a little while she added, "I know this does not affect my eternal salvation, but then, cowardly suggestions make me very uncomfortable." After prayer her father asked if the enemy told her who had the key of death? on which she joyfully exclaimed—"Oh, I see it now. My own dear Jesus has the keys of death and hell, to give me an easy passage through the one, and to lock the cowardly enemy into the other. Alas! that I should so

forget my *Key*. I now see, moreover, that he takes me home by a better way—the way he took himself—‘The King’s highway’; whereas that by which Enoch and Elias went was, in comparison, but a by-way!”

When asked if she thought it added to her happiness to have the prospect of meeting with her dear relatives in glory, she replied with deep solemnity, “Well, I have been trying to think of that, and it affords me unspeakable comfort and joy to believe that they are before me in heaven; but whatever I think of, my mind is ever on HIMSELF. Oh, who could think of, *or look* to any other? Is he not ‘altogether lovely?’ I love thee, sweet Jesus! Come! come! Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?”

When asked if she was *sure* she loved him, she replied, with much animation, “I am as sure of that, yea, he has made me sure of it, as sure as that I say it; yea, surer,” for, laying her hand on her breast, she continued, “He has written it here, and I can tell you the *time and place, when and where* he manifested his love to me and caused me to love him with an everlasting love; and that was the evening on which I heard Mr. Brownlow North in Inverness. His text was, ‘*Wilt thou go with this man?*’ I thought, when he was in the course of his sermon, opening up the character of the Man Jesus, and showing forth his matchless love to fallen sinners, that my heart was correspondingly opening; but when, in the application, he called out as with the voice of God, ‘Hear, hear! The Lord of heaven, the wonder of angels, the delight of saints, and desire of nations, is now offering himself freely to you as your all in all, for time and eternity! Oh, will you take him, *take him*, TAKE HIM! This may be the last offer you may have of him! Will you let him go? Oh, don’t!’ I thought my soul was one flame of love to him. I would not, I could not, I did not let him go. I know those who were about me were noticing my state, but I could not contain myself. I was overcome with love—love that constrained me to love him; and since then till now, and, I believe, to all eternity, I can think of none but himself. Oh, his love is written deep here (laying her hand on her heart), and, as a token of his love to me, he will soon grant me my desire, and that is, that where he is, there I may be also.”

She frequently reverted to that day of her espousals, and wondered if there could be one soul *there* that could let such a glorious offer pass. The last time she was out at church, that sermon was her theme going and returning. She cherished the most Christian affection for Mr. North, although she never saw nor heard him afterwards. Hearing, on the Lord’s day before she died, that he was in Nairn, she said, “I wonder if he can be forward soon”; but on being told that it would not be for a fortnight, she said to her father, “I will then be in glory, but never mind, I shall soon see him there; yet if you see him, tell him of my case, to encourage him to spend and to be spent in declaring to all the overcoming love of Jesus.” And on the back of it she said, “Oh, that my voice could be heard from pole to pole, that I might tell all of how ravishing his love is! and I cannot see how any could but love him.”

Being asked regarding her state previous to hearing Mr. North, she said, that for years she had been fully persuaded that salvation was attainable only by real union with Christ by faith, and that, especially since her mother’s death, which happened eleven months before her own, she had made it her earnest endeavor to lay hold of him, but could never be satisfied that she was enabled to do so until *that time*. But she added, “I know I believe now; I would as soon doubt my being.”

Her father, anxious to know how she had felt from infancy, asked her, “How early in life did you begin to entertain any serious thoughts?” “Well, I’ll tell you, though you may think it odd; when very young, I cannot say how young I might be, but I believe I was not over seven years old at the time, I had two dreams that made an indelible impression on my mind, and, I know, had a corresponding effect on my conduct through life.” The one dream detailed the terror she experienced on seeing evil spirits outside the house in the form of dogs; and the other the comfort she derived from a sight of the blood of Jesus.

Mary Ann was intensely in earnest that all might know the love of Jesus, and be saved. She frequently pleaded with the unconverted who visited her to come to God through Jesus Christ, and she could hardly part with any of them, until she got a promise that they would believe in his name. “But remember,” she would say, “it will not suffice for you to believe that you are a lost sinner, and that Christ is able to save you. You must *take* him. You must *receive* him as *your own Saviour*, or he cannot save you any more than common bread can sustain your natural life, unless you take and eat it, however much you may feel your need of it, and believe that it *can* support you.” When any indifference was manifested on their part, she was deeply moved, and would say, “Oh! how can I part with you as one without Christ, and therefore on the way to everlasting torments, and yet as one who may be saved if you but *take* him! Oh, won’t you *take him*! How can you live without him, or die without him? What

would I be today if I had him not? But *I have* him. I *have* him, and therefore, as you may see, I not only have no fear of death, but long to depart. Think! oh, think! what will be your thoughts and state when you come to die, if you have no part in Christ! Come and look at him, and I am sure you cannot but love him, for he is altogether lovely.” On one woman saying it was too late for her to come to Christ, she shed tears. To another, who took refuge in theology when pressed to come to Jesus, and who affirmed, that as faith was the gift of God, no one can believe until God works faith in his soul, she said—“Yes, I know that faith is the gift of God wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God; but, observe, he commands you to believe; now try and do so, just because he commands you, and in proportion as you try to believe, so will he enable you to believe, not because you try it, but for his great name’s sake. The Spirit, observe, works faith in the heart by assisting our endeavors to believe; so, if you don’t try to take, or in other words, to believe, you have no grounds to hope that you shall ever believe, any more than that the man could have his withered hand restored, if he had not, according to the ability given him, tried to raise it up in obedience to the divine command. Oh, then come to him, and, at his own command, ‘ask’ and cleave to him in earnest prayer with his own promise, ‘and it shall be given you,’ and you will not come to him in vain.”

She was deeply concerned for the perishing world, and would say, “Oh! I am grieved for the world. How awful to think of their perishing state, and that it is so easy to be saved,—nothing but *take and live*, and yet how few have him!”

On her beloved Jesus alone she rested all her hope of salvation. A few days before her death, being in a very elevated frame of mind, she was asked, “Would you now dare venture to depart, grounding upon that joyful frame?” “On nothing but Christ—on none but Christ,” was her prompt reply, “frames and feelings are sweet; but trusting in them, is like fixing the anchor in the ship instead of in the rock.”

Her views of herself were very lowly. When her father said, “I am afraid that in the abundance of such gracious manifestations you will forget what you are in yourself, or be exalted above measure”; she replied, “Impossible! but rather, the more I see of his love, the more am I humbled in myself; but it is hardly worth while to complain, but rather to rejoice.”

Two days before she died, when her parent asked, “What cheer?” she replied, “Good cheer, if you could tell me that my Beloved would come and take me home before night.” She often said, “Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?” She suffered greatly, and on the following morning said, as she fixed her eyes on her father, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! Don’t you think he is now at hand?” On being answered slowly in the affirmative, she added—“Yes, and the bride hath made herself ready, yea, he hath given me all readiness.” “I know that death’s pangs are on me, but I fear it not. He was three hours in death’s pangs himself, and should he leave me the same time, I’ll get home at *one* o’clock; and oh, what a joyful hour!” Observing her father in distress on account of her heavy sufferings, she said, “I am in distress. I cannot say whether my pain or my weakness is greater; and my weakness is such that I always feel as if I was coming out of a swoon; but,” she continued, laying her hand upon her breast, “He gives me such joy that I would rather be forever with him as I am, than be in health and have all the world without him.” In a little while she added, “But he will not leave me long in this state. I think I hear his voice saying unto me, ‘Come with me from Lebanon.’ Oh, how little will I think of this a million of years hence.”

She did not fear the gloomy grave; but on the contrary, she could triumph over it. “There,” she would say, “I shall rest from sin and suffering,—*there* shall my dew be as the dew of herbs,—and *there*, in union with my lovely Jesus, shall my body sweetly rest until the glorious resurrection morning, when the earth can hold me no longer, but at his command, cast me out to enjoy him, soul and body, to all eternity.”

About twelve hours before she died, she wished to speak to the little remnant of her father’s house, and they being brought to her bedside she spoke as follows: “I have called you that I might see you once more, and exhort you for the last time to make sure of your interest in Jesus. *Take* him, and you shall be happy in life and in death. I am now dying, and see how happy I am, just because I have him. Oh, take him and we shall all meet yet in happiness to part no more.” She was then laid down much exhausted, and shook hands with each of the sorrowing group, and said,—“I shall see you here no more. O Lord, bless and keep them!”

When the clock struck twelve, her father said, “There is the beginning of the sabbath.” “Yes,” she said, “and the beginning of an everlasting sabbath to me.” On receiving a teaspoonful of wine and water an hour before her death, she said, “I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” She was now very weak, and her voice almost gone; but, on listening as her lips moved, her parent heard that she was staying herself on the promise, “I will never—never—never—leave—thee—I—will never—never—never—

forsake thee." She was also heard trying with much difficulty to repeat the following: "Soon shall this earthly frame, dissolved, In death and ruins lie, etc." "Such—are—the—hopes—that—cheer—the—just." Here her voice faltered, and she could say no more. She lived and died in the happy assurance of her Saviour's love; and her remains were laid beside those of her beloved mother and two sisters, in the church-yard of Dores, to await the coming of her Lord, and the glory of the first resurrection.

**Dear reader, "I beseech you, by the mercies of God," to "*take Jesus*" for your own Saviour, as Mary Ann Whyte took him, and love him, as she loved him; and, "living or dying," you will be the Lord's.**

—William Reid