

sunday solace - He speaks even in His silence

"He answered her not a word." matt 15:23    "He will be silent in his love." zeph 3:17

it may be a child of God is reading these words, perhaps having bore some great crushing sorrow, some bitter disappointment, some heart-breaking blow from a totally unexpected quarter. you are longing for your Master's voice bidding you "be of good cheer," but only silence and a sense of mystery and misery meet you - "He answered her not a word."

God's tender heart must often ache listening to all the sad, complaining cries which arise from our weak, impatient hearts, because we do not see that for our own sakes He answers not at all of what seems best to our tear-blinded, short-sighted eyes. the silences of Jesus are as eloquent as His speech and may be a sign, not of His disapproval, but of His approval and of a deep purpose of blessing for you.

"why art you cast down, o my soul?" you shalt yet praise Him, yes, even for His silence. now i would like to tell you another of my little stories.

this is an old and beautiful story of how one christian dreamed that she saw three others at prayer. as they knelt, the Master drew near to them.

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as He approached the first of the three, He bent over her in tenderness and grace, with smiles full of

radiant love and spoke to her in accents of purest, sweetest music.

leaving her, He came to the next, but only placed His hand upon her bowed head, and gave her one look of loving approval.

the third woman He passed almost abruptly without stopping for a word or glance. the woman in her dream said to herself, "how greatly He must love the first one, to the second He gave His approval, but none of the special demonstrations of love He gave the first; and the third must have grieved Him deeply, for He gave her no word at all and not even a passing look.

"i wonder what she has done, and why He made so much difference between them?" as she tried to account for the action of her Lord, He Himself stood by her and said: "o woman! how wrongly have you interpreted Me. the first kneeling woman needs all the weight of My tenderness and care to keep her feet in My narrow way. she needs My love, thought and help every moment of the day. without it she would fail and fall.

the second has stronger faith and deeper love, and I can trust her to trust Me however things may go and whatever people do.

the third, whom I seemed not to notice, and even to neglect, has faith and love of the finest quality, and her I am training by quick and drastic processes for the highest and holiest service.

she knows Me so intimately, and trusts Me so utterly,

that she is independent of words or looks or any outward intimation of My approval. she is not dismayed nor discouraged by any circumstances through which I arrange that she shall pass; she trusts Me when sense and reason and every finer instinct of the natural heart would rebel; because she knows that I am working in her for eternity, and that what I do, though she knows not the explanation now, she will understand hereafter.

I am silent in My love because I love beyond the power of words to express, or of human hearts to understand, and also for your sakes that you may learn to love and trust Me in Spirit-taught, spontaneous response to My love, without the spur of anything outward to call it forth.”

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"what do you think? if a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?" matt 18:12 that's our Lord's way.

oh, to know Him so well and trust Him so much that words alone cannot even express their depth. yes, He “will do marvels” if you will learn the mystery of His silence, and praise Him. every time He withdraws His gifts is so that you may better know and love the Giver.