

no active mission

"sit ye here while I go and pray yonder." matt 26:36

it is a hard thing to be kept in the background at a time of crisis. in the garden of gethsemane eight of the eleven disciples were left to do nothing. Jesus went to the front to pray; peter, james and john went to the middle to watch; the rest sat down in the rear to wait. methinks that party in the rear must have murmured. they were in the garden, but that was all; they had no share in the cultivation of its flowers. it was a time of crisis, a time of storm and stress; and yet they were not assigned a duty.

you and i have often felt that experience, that disappointment. there has arisen, perhaps a great opportunity for christian service. some are sent to the front; some are sent to the middle. but we are made to lie down in the rear. perhaps sickness has come; perhaps poverty has come; perhaps ignominy has come; in any case we are hindered and we feel left out. we do not see why we should be excluded from a part in the christian life. it seems like an unjust thing that, seeing we have been allowed to enter the garden, no path should be assigned to us there.

be still, my soul, it is not as though we are set aside! we are not excluded from a part of the christian life. do you think that the garden of the Lord has only a place for those who walk and for those who stand! no, there is a spot consecrated to those who are compelled to sit. there are three voices in a verb - active, passive and neuter. so, too, there are

three voices in Christ's verb "to live." there are the active, watching souls, who go to the front, and struggle till the breaking of the day. there are the passive, watching souls, who stand in the middle, and report to others the progress of the fight. but there are also the neuter souls - those who can neither fight, nor be spectators of the fight, but have simply to be there for the Lord and observe His working.

when that experience comes to us, remember, we are not shunted. remember it is Christ that says, "sit ye here." your spot in the garden has also been consecrated. it has a special name. it is not "the place of wrestling," nor "the place of watching," but "the place of waiting."

there are lives that come into this world neither to do great work nor to bear great burdens, but simply to be; they are the neutered ones - ones set to watch and worship. they are the flowers of the garden which have had no active mission. they have adorned no hall with ornaments; they have graced no table; they have escaped the eye of peter and james and john. but they have gladdened the sight of Jesus. by their mere perfume, by their mere beauty, they have brought Him joy; by the very preservation of their loveliness in the valley they have lifted the Master's heart. we must not murmur should we be one of these flowers!

be docile to thy unseen guide,
love Him as He loves thee;
time and obedience are enough,
and thou a saint shall be.

obedience is a sacrifice. often the the greatest
sacrifice of all; often the hardest.