

# A Typical Case

by F.J. Huegel

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of identifying with Christ in death and resurrection, and how this principle can revolutionize our lives and bring us victory over sin, rest, and peace.*

**Scripture:** Romans 7:24

**Topics:** "Identification with Christ", "Victory in Christian Life"

---

## Description

F.J. Huegel emphasizes the transformative power of participating in Christ rather than merely imitating Him, using Hudson Taylor's life as a case study. Despite his significant achievements as a missionary, Taylor struggled with spiritual poverty until he experienced a profound change in 1869, realizing his oneness with Christ. This revelation led to a joyous and victorious Christian life, where he no longer strove in his own strength but rested in the sufficiency of Christ. Huegel argues that this principle of identification with Christ can revolutionize the lives of all believers, leading to victory over sin and a deeper spiritual fulfillment. The sermon highlights that true happiness and effectiveness in the Christian life come from this divine participation.

---

## Transcript

The value of any principle in the realm of religion and j ethics can only be determined by its bearing upon life. I-human happiness must be the standard of measurement. Is there real dynamic in it for the ennoblement of life, and for the fulfillment of man's deepest spiritual aspirations?

When we apply this standard to the principle of participation as over against imitation in our relation to Christ, our contention that the Christian life should be lived on the basis of the former, receives an overwhelming confirmation.

In my biographical studies-I have for many years been a lover of biography-I recently came upon what I shall call a typical case, in the experience of the founder of the China Inland Mission. Whether v=e agree, or not, with the missionary principles laid down by Hudson Taylor, an unbiased study of his life and work will not fail to bring us to the conclusion that he was one of the great missionary peers of history. His achievements were colossal. At a time when the interior of China was closed to foreigners, and when ignorance, fanaticism, and race prejudice made it exceedingly hazardous to venture into the interior of China, Dr. Taylor established a chain of Missions in almost all the great provinces of the interior. The Church records no more amazing story of sacrifice and of achievement than that of the humble doctor who laid the foundations of the kingdom of God in the interior of China.

But Hudson Taylor was not always victorious, not always that joyous expounder of the faith, which in the later period of his life all who came to know him, found him to be. The fact of the matter is that even though he had already achieved great things as a missionary, and had mightily influenced the Church in the homeland, though he was highly esteemed as a man of God and held in reverence by Christian leaders of many lands, yet, in his letters to loved ones he pours out the grief of his heart, the pain of his secret soul, over the fact of his spiritual poverty. There is a hidden plague in his heart. He is consumed by secret longings. Like Paul, he cries out: "Oh! wretched man that I am! who will deliver me from the body of this death?" He longs to be victorious over sin. He struggles, he agonizes. In spite of all his efforts, sin as a principle continues to master him; the Saviour is no more real to him than before; he cannot, in the true sense, overcome. If ever a man strove to imitate the Master, he was that man. But all to no avail.

In 1869, a great change took place. It was so radical, so complete, so overwhelming, that all Mr. Taylor's fellowworkers were soon cognizant to the fact. A tide of Divine life swept through the Mission. A change so great had been wrought, that in all the doctor's attitudes-his correspondence, his sermons, his prayer life, his very purposes -a new light shone forth.

I quote from a letter by Mr. Judd: "He was a joyous man now, a bright, happy Christian. He had been a toiling, burdened one before, with latterly not much rest of soul. It was resting now in Jesus, and letting Him do the work -which makes all the difference. Whenever he spoke in meetings after that a new power seemed to flow from him, and in the practical things of life, a new peace possessed him. Troubles did not worry him as before. He cast everything on God in a new way and gave more time to prayer . . . from him flowed the living water to others."

"When I went to welcome him," wrote Mr. Judd, "he was so full of joy that he scarcely knew how to speak to me. He did not even say 'how do you do?' but walking up and down the room with his hands behind him, exclaimed: 'Oh! Mr. Judd, God has made me a new man! God has made me a new man.'"

To his sister he wrote: "I feel as though the first glimmer of the dawn of a glorious day had arisen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust."

But just how was this great change effected? I draw somewhat at length from a letter written to his sister, October 17, 1869: ". . . as to work, mine was never so plentiful, so responsible, or so difficult; but the weight and strain are all gone. The last month has been perhaps the happiest of my life; and I long to tell you a little of what the Lord has done for my soul . . . Perhaps I shall make myself more clear if I go back a little . . . My mind has been greatly exercised for six or eight months past, feeling the need, personally, and for the Mission, of more holiness, life, power, in our souls. But personal need stood first and was the greatest. I felt the ingratitude, the danger, the sin of not living near to God. I prayed, agonized, strove, fasted, made resolutions, read the Word of God more diligently, sought more time for meditation and prayer-but all was without effect. Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of sin oppressed me . . . each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power . . . Then came the question-Is there no rescue? Must it be thus to the end-constant conflict and instead of victory too often defeat? How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive Jesus, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God (i.e. God-like) when it was not so in my own experience? . . . I hated myself. I hated my sin; and yet, I gained no strength against it. I felt I was a child of God: His Spirit in my heart would cry: 'Abba Father'; but to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless.

"All the time I felt assured there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how was I to get it out? . . . I knew full well that there was in the Root abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As the light gradually dawned on me, I saw that faith was the only pre-requisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fullness and make it my own. But I had not this faith! I strove for it but it would not come; tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply laid up in Jesus, the fullness of our precious Saviour-my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. Sins committed seemed but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause, which could not, or would not, take God at His word, but rather made Him a liar. Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world-yet, I indulged in it . . .

"When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes, and the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never known it before. McCarthy, who had been exercised by the same sense of failure, but saw the light before I did, wrote: 'But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One.' As I read I saw it all, 'If we believe not, He abideth faithful.' I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh! how joy flowed) that He had said: 'I will never leave you.' Ah! there is rest I thought. I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me?

"But this was not all He showed me, nor one-half. As I thought of the Vine and the Branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured direct into my soul . . . I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. The Vine, now I see, is not the root merely, but all-root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit; and Jesus is not only that: He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh! the joy of seeing this truth. I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in -Christ."

And now comes the part bearing yet more directly upon the subject in hand:

"Oh! my dear Sister, it is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Saviour; to be a member of Christ. Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? Or your head be well-fed while your body starves? Again, think of its bearing on prayer. Could a bank clerk say to a customer: 'It was only your hand wrote that check, not you,' or, 'I cannot pay this sum to your hand, but only to yourself'? No more can your prayers or mine be discredited if offered in the Name of Jesus (i.e. not in your own name, or for the sake of Jesus merely, but on the ground that we are His members) so long as we keep within the extent of Christ's credit-a tolerably wide limit.

"The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything . . . for He, I know, is able to carry out His will and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for the easiest positions He must give me grace, and in the most difficult, His grace is sufficient. It makes little difference to my servant whether I send him to buy a few cents worth of things, or the most expensive articles. In either case he looks to me for the money and brings me the purchases. So, if God place me in great perplexity, must He not give me much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trial, much strength? His resources are mine, for He is mine . . . all this springs from the believer's oneness with Christ.

"I am no better than before (may I not say, in a sense, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be) ; but I am dead and buried with Christ-aye .and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, `and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' I now believe I any dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best, all my past experience may have shown that it was not so; but I dare say it is not now, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away. I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realized as present as never before. He cannot sin and He can keep me from sinning. I cannot say (I am sorry to have to confess it) that since I have seen this light, I have not sinned; but I do feel that there was no need to have done so. And further-walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly confessed, and pardoned; and peace and joy (with humility) instantly restored . . ."

I have quoted at considerable length from the Doctor's correspondence, because his experience illustrates so strikingly the incalculable difference which this principle of identification makes. The Doctor had been a burdened Christian-he becomes a joyous, triumphant one. He had been a Christian who strove and agonized in the energy of the "old life" to be Christ-like, only to be brought at last to utter self-despair. He realizes, at last, his position of identification with Christ in death and resurrection, and there emerges a new man, who is swept forward by the tide of a Divine life, and who no longer serves mechanically, from a mere sense of duty, but spontaneously from the inner surgings of a, Heavenly life.

This is a typical case. Had Mr. Taylor written for the very purpose of giving us something that would illustrate in perfect detail the force of the principle which throughout these chapters we have attempted to set forth, he could not have offered us anything more to the point.

The apprehension of this principle (i.e. identification with Christ in death and resurrection) revolutionized the life and work of a great pioneer in modern missions. And, wherever it is apprehended and faithfully acted upon, wherever this oneness with the Saviour is realized in actual experience, whether it be by the humblest believer or the greatest Christian leader, the same glorious results must follow. Defeat must give place to victory; spiritual poverty and decrepitude to riches of grace and fullness of life; weakness must give place to power; a mechanical striving to imitate Christ, to a delightful spontaneity in the participation of His Divine Life; a gnawing sense of insufficiency for Christian life and service, to a glorious all-sufficiency in a deep union with the all-sufficient Christ. There will be a happy fulfilment of the promise, staggering in its amplitude, found in the ninth chapter of 2 Corinthians "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/fj-huegel/a-typical-case/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**