

# Christ Wholly to Be Loved

by Samuel Rutherford

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*Samuel Rutherford's sermon calls believers to wholly love Christ above all earthly desires and warns against the dangers of a superficial faith.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 73:25, Matthew 6:24, John 14:15, Philippians 3:8, Colossians 3:2, 1 John 2:15

**Topics:** "Personal Sanctification", "Christian Devotion"

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## Description

Samuel Rutherford emphasizes the danger of formal religion and the importance of wholeheartedly loving Christ above all else. He warns against being deceived by a mere profession of faith and urges believers to seek a genuine, enduring relationship with Christ that can withstand trials and storms. Rutherford paints a vivid picture of the joy and fulfillment found in being deeply in love with Christ, contrasting it with the fleeting pleasures of the world. He encourages believers to fix their thoughts and hearts on Christ's love, mercy, and grace, which surpass all earthly treasures and desires.

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## Transcript

Danger of Formality--Christ Wholly to be Loved--Other Objects of Love

Mistress,--

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.--I have meant to write to you for a long time, but I have been hindered. I heartily desire that you would think about your country\*\*, and consider to what quarter your soul sets its face; for not all come home at night who suppose that they have set their face heavenward. It is a woeful thing to die and miss heaven, and to give up lodging with Christ at night: it is an miserable journey where travellers are forced to sleep in the fields. I persuade myself that thousands will be deceived and ashamed of their hope. Because they cast their anchor in sinking sands, they must lose it. Till now I knew not the pain, labour, nor difficulty that there is to win at home: nor did I understand so well, before this, what this means, "The righteous shall scarcely be saved."\*\* Oh, how many a poor professor's\*\* candle is blown out, and never lighted again! I see that a mere profession, and to be ranked amongst the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought good enough to carry professors to heaven. But certainly a name is nothing but a name, and will never last through a blast of God's storm. I counsel you not to give your soul or Christ rest, nor your eyes sleep, till you have gotten something that will endure the fire, and stand the storm. I am sure, that if I had one foot were in heaven, and then He should say, "Take care of yourself, I will keep my grip on you no longer," I would go no farther, but presently fall down in broken pieces of dead nature.

They are happy forevermore who are over head and ears in the love of Christ, and know no sickness but love-sickness for Christ, and feel no pain but the pain of an absent and hidden Well-beloved.\*\* We run our souls out of breath and tire them, in chasing and galloping after our night-dreams (such are the roving of our miscarrying hearts), to get some created good thing in this life, and on this side of death. We would rather stay and spin out a heaven to ourselves, on this side of the water\*\*; but sorrow, poverty, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill-spun web. Oh, how sweet and dear are those thoughts that are still upon the things which are above! And how happy are they who are longing to have little sand in their hour-glass, and to have time's thread cut, and can cry to Christ, "Lord Jesus, have over; come and fetch the sorrowful passenger!" I wish that our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. Oh, but heaven gives a sweet smell afar off to those who have spiritual smelling! God has made many fair flowers; but the fairest of them all is heaven, and the Flower of all flowers is Christ. Oh! why do we not fly up to that lovely One? Alas that there is such a scarcity of love, and of lovers, to Christ amongst us all! Fie, fie, upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houses, fair lands, fair pleasures, fair honours, and fair persons, and do not pine and melt away with love to Christ! Oh! would to God I had more love for His sake! O for as much as would lie betwixt me and heaven, for His sake! O for as much as would go round about the earth, and over the heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, and ten thousand worlds, that I might let all out upon fair, fair, only fair Christ! But, alas! I have nothing for Him, yet He has much for me. It is no gain to Christ that He gets my little, inconstant span-length and hand-breadth of love.

If men would have something to do with their hearts and their thoughts, that are always rolling up and down (like men with oars in a boat), after sinful vanities, they might find great and sweet employment to their thoughts upon Christ. If those frothy, fluctuating, and restless hearts of ours would come all about Christ, and look into His love, to bottomless love, to the depth of mercy, to the unsearchable riches of His grace\*\*, to inquire after and search into the beauty of God in Christ, they would be swallowed up in the depth and height, length and breadth \*\* of His goodness. Oh, if men would draw back the curtains, and look into the inner side of the ark, and behold how the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily!\*\* Oh! who would not say, "Let me die, let me die ten times, to see a sight of Him?" Ten thousand deaths were no great price to give for Him. I am sure that sick, fainting love would heighten the market, and raise the price to the double for Him. But, alas! if men and angels were auctioned off, and sold at the dearest price, they would not all buy a night's love, or a four-and-twenty-hours' sight of Christ! Oh, how happy are they who get Christ for nothing!\*\* God send me no more for my part of paradise, but Christ: and surely I will be rich enough, and have as much heaven as the best of them, if Christ will be my heaven.

I can write no better thing to you than to desire you, if ever you need to count up the worth of Christ\*\*, than to take Him up and count over again: and weigh Him again and again: and after this have no other to court your love, and to woo your soul's delight, but Christ. He will be found worthy of all your love, howbeit it should swell upon you from the earth to the uppermost circle of the heaven of heavens. To our Lord Jesus and His love I commend you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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