

# Christ's Ways Misunderstood

by Samuel Rutherford

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*The speaker shares their journey to understanding Christ's ways and the dangers of pride and self-will, offering advice on how to live a humble and surrendered life.*

**Scripture:** James 4:7

**Topics:** "Suffering And Joy", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Samuel Rutherford shares his spiritual journey of encountering Christ in a deeper way, realizing the sweetness and joy of communion with the Lord despite facing trials and suffering. He expresses a desire to fully surrender to Christ, welcoming crosses and challenges as opportunities to draw closer to Jesus. Rutherford encourages the recipient to grow rapidly in their faith, emphasizing the importance of mortifying lusts and worldly desires, and preparing for the inevitable decline of youth by seeking grace and heavenly treasures.

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## Transcript

Honoured and Dear Brother,--

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter, which refreshed my soul.

I thank God that the court is closed \*\*; I think shame of my part of it. I pass now from my unjust summons of unkindness libelled against Christ my Lord.\*\* He is not such a Lord and Master as I took Him to be; verily He is God, and I am dust and ashes. I took Christ's obscurity to be as good as Scripture speaking wrath; but I have seen the other side of Christ, and the white side of His cross now. It was necessary to come to Aberdeen to learn a new mystery in Christ, that His promise is better to be believed than His looks \*\*, and that the devil can cause Christ's obscurity to speak a lie to a weak man.

Nay, verily, I was a child before; all that happened before was but child's play. I would that I could begin to be a Christian in sad earnest\*\*. I need not blame Christ if I be not one, for He has showed me heaven and hell in Aberdeen. But the truth is, for all my sorrow, Christ is nothing in my debt, for comforts have refreshed my soul. I have heard and seen Him in His sweetness, so as I am almost saying, it is not He that I was wont to meet with. He smiles more cheerfully, His kisses are more sweet and soul-refreshing than the kisses of the Christ I saw before were, though He be the same. Or rather, the King has led me up to a measure of joy and communion with my Bridegroom that I never attained to before, so that often I think that I will neither borrow nor lend with this world.\*\* I will not strike sail to crosses, nor flatter them to be quit

of them, as I have done. Come all crosses, welcome, welcome! so that I may get my heart full of my Lord Jesus. I have been so near Him, that I have said, "I truly know that this is the Lord. Leave a token behind, that I may never forget this." Now, what can Christ do more to caress one of His poor prisoners?

Therefore, Sir, I charge you in the name of my Lord Jesus, praise with me, and show to others what He has done in my soul. This is the fruit of my sufferings, that I desire Christ's name may be spread abroad in this kingdom, in my behalf. I hope in God not to slander Him again. Yet in this, I get not my feasts without some mixture of gall; neither am I free of old jealousies, for He has removed my lovers and friends far from me; He has made my congregation desolate, and taken away my crown. And my dumb Sabbaths \*\* are like a stone tied to a bird's foot, that lacks not wings,--they seem to hinder me to fly, were it not that I dare not say one word, but, "Well done, Lord Jesus."

We can, in our prosperity, joke with ourselves, and be too disrespectful with Christ; yea, be that insolent, as to chide with Him; but under the water we dare not speak. I wonder now of my sometime boldness, to chide and quarrel with Christ, to nickname providence when it stroked me against the hair; for now, swimming in the waters, I think my will is fallen to the bottom of the pool: I have lost it. I think that I would prefer to let Christ alone, and give Him leave to do with me what He pleases, if He would smile upon me. Verily, we know not what an evil it is to run and indulge ourselves, and to make an idol of our will. Once that I would not eat except I had my dainty delicacies; now I dare not complain of the crumbs and parings under His table. I was once that I would stir up the entire house, if I saw not the world carved and set in order to my liking; now I am silent when I see God has set servants on horseback, and is fattening and feeding the children of perdition.\*\* I pray God, that I may never find my will again. Oh, if Christ would subject my will to His, and trample it under His feet, and liberate me from that lawless lord!\*\*

Now, Sir, in your youth you must grow rapidly; your sun will mount to the meridian quickly, and thereafter decline. Be greedy of grace. Study above anything, my dear brother, to mortify your lusts. Oh, but pride of youth, vanity, lusts, idolizing of the world, and charming pleasures, it takes a long time to root them out! As far as you are advanced in the way to heaven, as near as you are to Christ, as much progress as you have made in the way of mortification, you will find that you are far behind, and have most of your work before you.\*\* I never took it to be so hard to be dead to my lusts and to this world. When the day of visitation comes, and your old idols come weeping about you, you will have much ado not to break your heart. It is best to give them up early, so that you could in an instant leave your part of this world for a drink of water, or a thing of nothing. Verily I have seen the best of this world, a moth-eaten, threadbare coat: I purpose to lay it aside, being now old and full of holes. O for my house above, not made with hands!\*\*

Pray for Christ's prisoner; and write to me. Remember my love to your mother. Desire her, from me, to make ready for removing\*\*; the Lord's tide will not bide her; and to seek an heavenly mind, that her heart may be often there. Grace be with you.

Yours, and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 20, 1637.

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