

All Loves Excelling - Sketches of Grace

Program Note:

My faith has changed me. The confrontation I had with Jesus Christ nearly 6 years ago has turned my life around. My attitudes have changed so much and yet I wonder at saintliness and graciousness because they are qualities I have never owned and ones which I see as almost impossible for me to attain.

Yet I see saintliness and grace in the work of Christian Blind Mission International. I see the blind see and the lame walk! Jonathan Krause wrote a book about the work of that mission and from its pages I hear the voices of those healed and I share the vision of hope with those who are testament to grace in action. One of my faith's contemporary saints spoke to me from the pages of Jonathan's book - Mother Teresa said to me:

Do not think that love, to be genuine, has to be extraordinary. What we need is to love without getting tired.

I look at those who work in such a calling and I wonder at my complaining and my annoyance and my comfort and I am chastened. I look at the love of Christ and I hide my eyes in shame.

Charles Wesley calls to me across the centuries and tells me of a "Love Divine, all loves excelling" and I am awe struck. He tells me of Jesus who is "all compassion" and "pure, unbounded love". Then he reminds me that the new creation that is my life in the Christian faith has to be finished and he alerts me to the fact that grace will come in that finishing. He says I will be "Lost in wonder, love and grace".

There is still a long journey for me to travel and there are still so many who need the love and grace that Jonathan Krause tells the story of in his book, *miracles of Life!* I am pleased that my family and I are on that journey and that we hold the hands of those who need support through the strong hands of Christian Blind Mission International.

As this work comes to its conclusion you might like to think of their work, and others like them, and you might reflect on Wesley's words from the last verse of the hymn I referred to above.

*Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love and grace.*

God bless you

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To the Glory of God