

# 1

## The Best Beloved

“...yea, he is altogether lovely.”  
Song of Solomon 5:16

No words can ever express the gratitude we owe to Him who loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sins! The love of Jesus is unutterably precious and worthy of daily praise. No songs can ever fitly celebrate the triumphs of that salvation that He worked single-handedly on our behalf—the work of Jesus is glorious beyond comparison and all the harps of angels fall short of its worthy honor. Yet I believe, and my heart prompts me to say so, that the highest praise of every ransomed soul and of the entire Christian Church should be offered to the blessed *Person* of Jesus Christ, our adorable Lord. The love of His heart is excelled by the heart that gave forth that love; and the wonders of His hands are outdone by the hands themselves that worked those Divine miracles of grace.

We ought to bless Him for what He has done for us as Mediator in the place of humble service under the Law, and for what He suffered for us as Substitute on the altar of sacrifice from before the foundation of the world—and for what He is doing for us as Advocate in the place of highest honor at the right hand of the Majesty on high! But still, the best thing about Christ is Christ Himself! We prize Him, but we worship Him! His gifts are valued, but He, Himself, is adored! While we contemplate with mingled feelings of awe, admiration, and thankfulness, His atonement, His resurrection, His glory in

Heaven, and His Second Coming, still it is Christ Himself, stupendous in His dignity as the Son of God and superbly beautiful as the Son of Man, who sheds an incomparable charm on all those wonderful achievements wherein His might and His merit, His goodness and His grace appear so conspicuous!

For Him let our choicest spices be reserved, and to Him let our sweetest anthems be raised. Our choicest ointment must be poured upon His head, and for Him alone our most costly alabaster boxes must be broken. "He is altogether lovely." Not only is His teaching attractive, His doctrine persuasive, His life irreproachable, His Character enchanting, and His work a self-denying labor for the common good of all His people, but He Himself is altogether lovely! I suppose at first we shall always begin to love Him because He first loved us, and even to the last His love toward us will always be the strongest motive of our affection towards Him. But there ought to be added to this another reason less connected with *ourselves* and more entirely arising out of His own superlative excellence—we ought to love Him because He is lovely and deserves to be loved!

The time should come, and with some of us it *has* come, when we can heartily say, "We love Him because we cannot help it, for His all-conquering loveliness has quite ravished our hearts." Surely it is but an unripe fruit to love Him merely for the benefits that we have received at His hands. It is a fruit of grace, but it is not of the ripest flavor. There are other fruits, both new and old, that we have laid up for Thee, O our Beloved, and some of them have a daintier taste. There is a sweet and mellow fruit that can only be brought forth by the summer sun of fellowship—love because of the Redeemer's intrinsic goodness and personal sweetness. Oh, that we might love our Lord for His own sake! Love Him because He is so supremely beautiful that a glimpse of Him has won our hearts