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# **The Words of Jesus**

John R. (John Ross) Macduff

# Imprint

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THE  
WORDS OF JESUS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"THE MORNING AND NIGHT WATCHES,"  
"THE FAITHFUL PROMISER," ETC.

Taken from the last London Edition.

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1858.

[Pg 3]

*The Words of Jesus.*

“A word spoken in season,” says the wise man, “how good it is!” If this be true regarding the utterances of uninspired lips, with what devout and paramount interest must we invest the sayings of Incarnate Truth — “the WORDS OF JESUS!”

We have, in the motto-verses which head the succeeding pages a few comforting responses from the Oracle of heavenly Wisdom — a few grapes plucked from the true Vine — living streams welling fresh from the Living Fountain. Every portion of Scripture is designed for nutriment to the soul — “the bread of life;” but surely we may well regard the recorded “*Words of Jesus*” as “the finest of the wheat.” These are the “Honey” out of the true “Rock,” with which He will “satisfy” us. “The WORDS that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.”

The following are selected more especially as “*Words for the Weary*” — healing leaves for the wounded spirit falling from the Tree of Life. Jesus was divinely qualified for this special office of speaking “many and *comfortable* words.” “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I might know how to speak a *Word in Season* to him that is *weary*.”

Let us, like the disciple of Patmos, turn to hear the voice that speaks to us, saying, “I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in *His Word* do I hope.” Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since these “words” were uttered. With tones of unaltered and unchanged affection, they are still echoed from the inner sanctuary — they come this day fresh as they were spoken, from the lips of Him whose memorial to all time is this: “*that same Jesus*.”

Reader, seek to realise, in meditating on them, the simple but solemn truth — “*Christ speaks to me!*” Surely nothing can be more soothing with which to close your eyes on your nightly pillow, or to carry with you in the morning out to the duties (or, it may be, the trials and sorrows) of the day, than — “A WORD OF JESUS.”

[Pg 4]

## 1st Day of Month.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –

“Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” – Matt. xi. 28.

### The Gracious Invitation.

## The Gracious Invitation.

Gracious “word” of a gracious Saviour, on which the soul may confidently repose, and be at peace for ever? It is a *present* rest—the rest of *grace* as well as the rest of *glory*. Not only are there signals of peace hung out from the walls of heaven—the lights of Home glimmering in the distance to cheer our footsteps; but we have the “shadow” of this “great Rock” in a *present* “weary land.” Before the Throne alone is there “the sea of glass,” without one rippling wave; but there is a haven even on earth for the tempest-tossed—“We which have believed DO enter into rest.”

Reader, hast thou found this blessed [Pg 5] repose in the blood and work of Immanuel? Long going about “seeking rest and finding none,” does this “word” sound like music in thine ears—“*Come unto Me?*” All other peace is counterfeit, shadowy, unreal. The eagle spurns the gilded cage as a poor equivalent for his free-born soarings. The soul’s immortal aspirations can be satisfied with nothing short of the possession of God’s favour and love in Jesus.

How unqualified is the invitation! If there had been one condition in entering this covenant Ark, we must have been through eternity at the mercy of the storm. But all are alike warranted and welcome, and none *more* warranted than welcome. For the weak, the weary, the sin-burdened and sorrow-burdened, there is an open door of grace.

Return, then unto thy rest, O my soul! Let the sweet cadence of this “word of Jesus” steal on thee amid [Pg 6] the disquietudes of earth. Sheltered in Him, thou art safe for time, safe for eternity!

There may be, and *will* be, temporary tossings, fears, and misgivings,—manifestations of inward corruption; but these will only be like the surface-heavings of the ocean, while underneath there is a deep settled calm. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace” (*lit.* peace, peace) “whose mind is stayed on Thee.” In the world it is care on care, trouble on trouble, sin on sin; but every wave that breaks on the believer’s soul seems sweetly to murmur, “Peace, peace!”

And if the foretaste of this rest be precious, what must be the glorious consummation? Awaking in the morning of immortality, with the unquiet dream of earth over—faith lost in sight, and hope in fruition;—no more any bias to sin—no more latent principles of evil—nothing to disturb the spirit’s deep, everlasting tranquillity—the trembling [Pg 7] magnet of the heart reposing, where alone it can confidingly and permanently rest, in the enjoyment of the Infinite God.

“THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT IN ME YE MIGHT HAVE PEACE.”

[Pg 8]

## 2d Day.

**“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –**

“Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” –Matt. vi. 22.

### The Comforting Assurance.

## The Comforting Assurance.

Though spoken originally by Jesus regarding temporal things, this may be taken as a motto for the child of God amid all the changing vicissitudes of his changing history. How it should lull all misgivings; silence all murmurings; lead to lowly, unquestioning submissiveness—“My Heavenly Father knoweth that I have need of all these things.”

Where can a child be safer or better than in a father’s hand? Where can the believer be better than in the hands of his God? We are poor judges of what is best. We are under safe guidance with infallible wisdom. If we are tempted in a moment of rash presumption to say, “All these things are [Pg 9] against me,” let this “word” rebuke the hasty and unworthy surmise. Unerring wisdom and Fatherly love have pronounced *all* to be “needful.”

My soul, is there aught that is disturbing thy peace? Are providences dark, or crosses heavy? Are spiritual props removed, creature comforts curtailed, gourds smitten and withered like grass?—write on each, “*Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*” It was He who increased thy burden. Why? “*It was needed.*” It was He who smote down thy clay idol. Why? “*It was needed.*” It was supplanting Himself: He had to remove it! It was He who crossed thy worldly schemes, marred thy cherished hopes. Why? “*It was needed.*” There was a lurking thorn in the coveted path. There was some higher spiritual blessing in reversion. “He *‘prevented’* thee with the blessings of His goodness.” [Pg 10]

Seek to cherish a spirit of more childlike confidence in thy Heavenly Father's will. Thou art not left unbefriended and alone to buffet the storms of the wilderness. Thy Marahs as well as thy Elims are appointed by Him. A gracious pillar-cloud is before thee. Follow it through sunshine and storm. He may "lead thee about," but He will not lead thee wrong. Unutterable tenderness is the characteristic of all His dealings. "Blessed be His name," says a tried believer, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet" (*literally*, "equateth" them), "he *equateth* them for every precipice, every ascent, every leap."

And who is it that speaks this quieting word? It is He who Himself felt the preciousness of the assurance during His own awful sufferings, that all were *needed*, and all *appointed*; that from Bethlehem's cradle to Calvary's Cross there was not the redundant thorn in the chaplet of sorrow which [Pg 11] He, the Man of Sorrows, bore. Every drop in His bitter cup was mingled by His Father: "This cup which *Thou* givest me to drink, shall I not drink it!" Oh, if He could extract comfort in this hour of inconceivable agony, in the thought that a Father's hand lighted the fearful furnace-fires, what strong consolation is there in the same truth to all His suffering people!

What! one superfluous drop! one redundant pang! one unneeded cross! Hush the secret atheism! He gave His Son for thee! He calls Himself "thy Father!" Whatever be the trial under which thou art now smarting, let the word of a gracious Saviour be "like oil thrown on the fretful sea;" let it dry every rebellious tear-drop. "He, thine unerring Parent, knoweth that thou hast need of *this* as well as *all* these things."

"THY WORD IS VERY SURE, THEREFORE THY SERVANT LOVETH IT."

[Pg 12]

### 3d Day.

**“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –**

“Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” – John xiv. 13.

#### The Power of Prayer.

## The Power of Prayer.

Blessed Jesus! it is Thou who hast unlocked to Thy people the gates of prayer. Without Thee they must have been shut forever. It was Thy atoning merit on earth that first opened them; it is Thy intercessory work in heaven that keeps them open still.

How unlimited the promise – “*Whatsoever ye shall ask!*” It is the pledge of all that the needy sinner requires – all that an Omnipotent Saviour can bestow! As the great Steward of the mysteries of grace, He seems to say to His faithful servants, “Take thy bill, and under this, my superscription, write what you please.” And then, when the blank is filled up, he further endorses [Pg 13] each petition with the words, “*I WILL do it!*”

He farther encourages us to ask “*in His name.*” In the case of an earthly petitioner there are some pleas more influential in obtaining a boon than others. Jesus speaks of *this* as forming the key to the heart of God. As David loved the helpless cripple of Saul’s house “*for Jonathan’s sake,*” so will the Father, by virtue of our covenant relationship to the true Jonathan (*lit.*, “the gift of God”), delight in giving us even “exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.”

Reader, do you know the blessedness of confiding your every want and every care – your every sorrow and every cross – into the ear of the Saviour? He is the “Wonderful Counsellor.” With an exquisitely tender sympathy He can enter into the innermost depths of your need. That need may be great, but the everlasting arms are underneath it [Pg 14] all. Think of Him now, at this moment – the

great Angel of the Covenant, with the censer full of much incense, in which are placed your feeblest aspirations, your most burdened sighs—the odour-breathing cloud ascending with acceptance before the Father’s throne. The answer may tarry;—these your supplications may seem to be kept long on the wing, hovering around the mercy-seat. A gracious God sometimes sees it meet thus to test the faith and patience of His people. He delights to hear the music of their importunate pleadings—to see them undeterred by difficulties—unrepelled by apparent forgetfulness and neglect. But He *will* come at last; the pent-up fountain of love and mercy will at length burst out;—the soothing accents will in His own good time be heard, “Be it unto thee according to thy word!”

Soldier of Christ! with all thine other panoply, forget not the “*All-prayer.*” [Pg 15] It is that which keeps bright and shining “the whole armour of God.” While yet out in the night of a dark world—whilst still bivouacking in an enemy’s country—kindle thy watch-fires at the altar of incense. Thou must be Moses, pleading on the Mount, if thou wouldst be Joshua, victorious in the world’s daily battle. Confide thy cause to this waiting Redeemer. Thou canst not weary Him with thine importunity. He delights in hearing. His Father is glorified in giving. The memorable Bethany-utterance remains unaltered and unrepealed—“I knew that Thou hearest me always.” He is still the “Prince that has power with God and prevails”—still He promises and pleads—still He lives and loves!

“I WAIT FOR THE LORD, MY SOUL DOTH WAIT; AND IN HIS WORD DO I HOPE.”

[Pg 16]

## 4th Day.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” —

“What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.” — John xiii. 7.

### The Unveiled Dealings.

## The Unveiled Dealings.

O blessed day, when the long sealed book of mystery shall be unfolded, when the “fountains of the great deep shall be broken up,” “the channels of the waters seen,” and *all* discovered to be one vast revelation of unerring wisdom and ineffable love! Here we are often baffled at the Lord’s dispensations; we cannot fathom His ways: — like the well of Sychar, they are deep, and we have nothing to draw with. But soon the “mystery of God will be finished;” the enigmatical “seals,” with all their inner meanings, opened. When that “morning without clouds” shall break, each soul will be like the angel standing in the sun — there will be no shadow; all will be perfect day! [Pg 17]

Believer, be still! The dealings of thy Heavenly Father may seem dark to thee; there may seem now to be no golden fringe, no “bright light in the clouds;” but a day of disclosures is at hand. “Take it on trust a little while.” An earthly child takes *on trust* what his father tells him: when he reaches maturity, much that was baffling to his infant comprehension is explained. Thou art in this world in the nonage of thy being — Eternity is the soul’s immortal manhood. *There*, every dealing will be vindicated. It will lose all its “darkness” when bathed in the floods “of the excellent glory!”

Ah! instead of thus being as weaned children, how apt are we to exercise ourselves in matters too high for us? not content with knowing that our Father *wills* it, but presumptuously seeking to know *how* it is, and *why* it is. If it be unfair to pronounce on the unfinished [Pg 18] and incompleted works of man; if the painter, or sculptor, or artificer, would shrink from having his labours judged

of when in a rough, unpolished, immatured state; how much more so with the works of God? How we should honour Him by a simple, confiding, unreserved submission to His will,—contented patiently to wait the fulfilment of this “*hereafter*” promise, when all the lights and shadows in the now half-finished picture will be blended and melted into one harmonious whole,—when all the now disjointed stones in the temple will be seen to fit into their appointed place, giving unity, and compactness, and symmetry, to all the building.

And who is it that speaks these living “words,” “What I do?” It is He who died for us? who now lives for us! Blessed Jesus! Thou mayest *do* much that our blind hearts would like *undone*,—“terrible things in righteousness [Pg 19] which we looked not for.” The heaviest (what we may be tempted to call the severest) cross Thou canst lay upon us we shall regard as only the *apparent* severity of unutterable and unalterable love. Eternity will unfold how *all, all* was needed; that nothing else, nothing less, could have done! If not now, at least then, the deliberate verdict on a calm retrospect of life will be this,—

“THE WORD OF THE LORD IS RIGHT, AND ALL HIS WORKS ARE DONE IN TRUTH.”

[Pg 20]

## 5th Day.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –

“Herein is my Father glorified, that *ye bear much fruit.*” – John xv. 8.

### The Father Glorified.

## The Father Glorified.

When surveying the boundless ocean of covenant mercy – every wave chiming, “God is Love!” – does the thought ever present itself, “What can I do for this great Being who hath done so much for me?” Recompence I cannot! No more can my purest services add one iota to His underived glory, than the tiny taper can add to the blaze of the sun at noonday, or a drop of water to the boundless ocean. Yet, wondrous thought! from this worthless soul of mine there may roll in a revenue of glory which He who loves the broken and contrite spirit will “not despise.” “*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.*” [Pg 21]

Reader! are you a fruit-bearer in your Lord’s vineyard? Are you seeking to make life one grand act of consecration to His glory – one thank-offering for His unmerited love. You may be unable to exhibit much fruit in the eye of the world. Your circumstances and position in life may forbid you to point to any splendid services, or laborious and imposing efforts in the cause of God. It matters not. It is often those fruits that are unseen and unknown to man, ripening in seclusion, that He values most; – the quiet, lowly walk – patience and submission – gentleness and humility – putting yourself unreservedly in His hands – willing to be led by Him even in darkness – saying, Not *my* will, but *Thy* will: – the unselfish spirit, the meek bearing of an injury, the unostentatious kindness, – these are some of the “fruits” which your Heavenly Father loves, and by which He is glorified. [Pg 22]

Perchance it may be with you the season of trial, the chamber of protracted sickness, the time of desolating bereavement, some fur-

nace seven times heated. Herein, too, you may sweetly glorify your God. Never is your Heavenly Father *more* glorified by His children on earth, than when, in the midst of these furnace-fires, He listens to nothing but the gentle breathings of confiding faith and love,—“Let Him do what seemeth good unto Him.” Yes, you can there glorify Him in a way which angels cannot do in a world where no trial is. They can glorify God only with the *crown*; you can glorify Him with the *cross* and the prospect of the *crown* together! Ah, if He be dealing severely with you—if He, as the great Husbandman, be pruning His vines, lopping their boughs, stripping off their luxuriant branches and “beautiful rods!” remember the end!—“He purgeth it, that it may bring [Pg 23] forth *more* fruit,” and “*Herein* is my Father glorified!”

Be it yours to lie passive in His hands, saying in un murmuring resignation, Father, glorify Thy name! Glorify Thyself, whether by giving or taking, filling my cup or “emptying me from vessel to vessel!” Let me know no will but Thine. Angels possess no higher honour and privilege than glorifying the God before whom they cast their crowns. How blessed to be able thus to claim brotherhood with the spirits in the upper sanctuary! nay, more, to be associated with the Saviour Himself in the theme of His own exalted joy, when he said, “*I have glorified* Thee on earth!”

“THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT MY JOY MIGHT REMAIN IN YOU, AND THAT YOUR JOY MIGHT BE FULL.”

[Pg 24]

## 6th Day.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –

“The very hairs of your head are all numbered.” – Matt. x. 30.

### The Tender Solitude.

## The Tender Solitude.

What a “word” is this! All that befalls you, to the very numbering of your hairs, is known to God! Nothing can happen by accident or chance. Nothing can elude His inspection. The fall of the forest leaf – the fluttering of the insect – the waving of the angel’s wing – the annihilation of a world, – all are equally noted by Him. Man speaks of great things and small things – God knows no such distinction.

How especially comforting to think of this tender solicitude with reference to his own covenant people – that He metes out their joys and their sorrows! Every sweet, every bitter is ordained by Him. Even “*wearisome* nights” are “*appointed*.” Not a pang I feel, [Pg 25] not a tear I shed but is known to Him. What are called “dark dealings” are the ordinations of undeviating faithfulness. Man *may* err – his ways are often crooked; “but as for God, *His way is perfect!*” He puts my tears into His bottle. Every moment the everlasting arms are underneath and around me. He keeps me “as the apple of His eye.” He “bears” me “as a man beareth his own son!”

Do I look to the future? Is there much of uncertainty and mystery hanging over it? It may be, much premonitory of evil. Trust Him. All is marked out for me. Dangers will be averted; bewildering mazes will show themselves to be interlaced and interweaved with mercy. “He keepeth the feet of His saints.” A hair of their head will not be touched. He leads sometimes darkly, sometimes sorrowfully; most frequently by cross and circuitous ways we ourselves would not [Pg 26] have chosen; but *always* wisely, *always* tenderly. With all its mazy windings and turnings, its roughness and ruggedness, the believer’s is not only *a* right way, but THE right way – the best

which covenant love and wisdom could select. "Nothing," says Jeremy Taylor, "does so establish the mind amidst the rollings and turbulence of present things, as both a look above them and a look beyond them; above them, to the steady and good hand by which they are ruled; and beyond them, to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that hand, they will be brought." "The Great Counsellor," says Thomas Brooks, "puts clouds and darkness round about Him, bidding us follow at His beck through the cloud, promising an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side." On that "other side" we shall see how every apparent rough blast has been hastening our barks nearer the desired haven. [Pg 27]

Well may I commit the keeping of my soul to Jesus in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. He gave *Himself* for me. This transcendent pledge of love is the guarantee for the bestowment of every other needed blessing. Oh, blessed thought! my sorrows numbered by the Man of Sorrows; my tears counted by Him who shed first His tears and then His blood for *me*. He will impose no needless burden, and exact no unnecessary sacrifice. There was no redundant drop in the cup of His own sufferings; neither will there be in that of His people. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

"WHEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS."

[Pg 28]

## 7th Day.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said” –

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” – John x. 14.

### The Good Shepherd.

## The Good Shepherd.

“The Good Shepherd” – well can the sheep who know His voice attest the truthfulness and faithfulness of this endearing name and word. Where would they have been through eternity, had He not left His throne of light and glory, travelling down to this dark valley of the curse, and giving His life a ransom for many? Think of His love to each separate member of the flock – wandering over pathless wilds with unwearied patience and unquenchable ardour, ceasing not the pursuit *until* He finds it. Think of His love *now* – “I AM the Good Shepherd.” Still that tender eye of watchfulness following the guilty wanderers – the glories of heaven [Pg 29] and the songs of angels unable to dim or alter His affection; – the music of the words, at this moment coming as sweetly from His lips as when first He uttered them – “I know my sheep.” Every individual believer – the weakest, the weariest, the faintest – claims His attention. His loving eye follows me day by day out to the wilderness – marks out my pasture, studies my wants, and trials, and sorrows, and perplexities – every steep ascent, every brook, every winding path, every thorny thicket. “He goeth before them.” It is not rough driving, but gentle guiding. He does not take them over an unknown road; He himself has trodden it before. He hath drunk of every “brook by the way;” He himself hath “suffered being tempted;” He is “able to succour them that are tempted.” He seems to say, “Fear not; I cannot lead you wrong; follow me in the bleak waste, the blackened wilderness, as well [Pg 30] as by the green pastures and the still waters. Do you ask why I have left the sunny side of the valley – carpeted with flowers, and bathed in sunshine – leading you to

some high mountain apart, some cheerless spot of sorrow? Trust me, I will lead you by paths you have not known, but they are all known *to me*, and selected *by me*—‘Follow thou me.’”

“And am known of mine!” Reader! canst thou subscribe to these closing words of this gracious utterance? Dost thou “know” *Him* in all the glories of His person, in all the completeness of His finished work, in all the tenderness and unutterable love of His every dealing towards thee?

It has been remarked by Palestine travellers, that not only do the sheep there follow the guiding shepherd, but even while cropping the herbage as they go along, they look wistfully up to see that they are near him. Is this [Pg 31] thine attitude—“*looking unto Jesus?*” “In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct thy paths.” Leave the future to His providing. “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” *I shall not want!*—it has been beautifully called “the bleating of Messiah’s sheep.” Take it as thy watchword during thy wilderness wanderings, till grace be perfected in glory. Let this be the record of thy simple faith and unwavering trust, “These are they who *follow*, whithersoever He sees meet to guide them.”

“THE SHEEP FOLLOW HIM, FOR THEY KNOW HIS VOICE.”

[Pg 32]