John - Commentaries by James George Deck

Hymns and Sacred Poems, Abide in Me: John 15:4 (15:4)

CHRISTIAN, wouldst thou fruitful be?

Jesus says, "Abide in Me;”

From Him all thy fruit is found,-

May it to God's praise abound.

Christian, wouldst thou happy be?

Jesus says, "Abide in Me;" He is thine exceeding joy,

Bliss divine without alloy.

Christian, wouldst thou holy be?

Jesus says, "Abide in Me;”

Sanctified in Him thou art,-

Sanctify Him in thy heart.

Christian, this thy motto be,

Jesus says, "Abide in Me;”

Grace and strength from Him receive,

As a branch in Jesus live.

Soon shalt thou thy Master see,

Hear Him say, " Abide with Me,

In My Father's house above,

In the bosom of His love.”

Hymns and Sacred Poems, Jesus at the Grave of Lazarus (11:35)

“Jesus wept."-JOHN 11: 35.

IT was not to her brother's new-made grave,

That Mary, from her chamber, went to weep,

But to her Lord, so full of power to save,

Who passed Himself through death's dark, swelling wave,

To turn death's terrors into peaceful sleep.

She knew His love. She sat in happier hours

A soul-rapt listener at His holy feet;

Drank in His living words like April showers,

Like dew distilled upon the opening flowers,

As heavenly music to her spirit sweet.

How changed the scene was now! Her happy home,

Where Jesus ever was a welcome guest,

Sickness had entered, death's dark shadows come;

Lazarus was now an inmate of the tomb:

Distracting thoughts and anguish filled her breast.

Had they not sent to tell Him of their pain?

“He whom Thou lov'st is sick," their strong appeal:

They looked, but still they looked, and looked in vain;

At such an hour, what could His feet detain?

Did not His heart for their affliction feel?

“Oh that He 'd come! or, even speak the word!”

A hundred times her burthened spirit sighed;

The thought, "I am forgotten by the Lord,”

With wound more piercing than a two-edged sword,

Mary, may-be, thy tempted bosom tried!

Now all is o'er-gone is that brother dear;

Jesus nor came, nor spake the sought-for aid;

Four days have passed since death reigned master here,

And they had weeping followed slow his bier,

And in the silent tomb his body laid.

Many have gathered to that house of woe;

Well it was known to be the loved retreat,

Where, after toil and conflict with the foe,

From strife and tumult, Jesus used to go,

And with these friends enjoy communion sweet.

But all in vain they seek her heart to cheer,

In vain their tears of sympathy may flow;

Can they restore to her that brother dear?

But Martha comes-she whispers to her ear,

“The Master calls thee; to His presence go.”

Oh, gleam of sunshine in the darkest sky!

“Jesus is here, He calls me!" From her seat

She rises quickly. Whither should we fly,

But to Thy bosom, when the waves are high?

Weeping she falls, and worships at His feet.

“Lord, if Thou hadst been here, he had not died,"-

'T is all her lips can utter. Lord, how true!

Death to assault Thine own in vain had tried,

If Thou wert here, and we but near Thy side;

Thy absence is death's time, and Satan's too.

His answer was not words, but groans and tears;

Oh, tears and groans of sympathy divine!

How fraught with glory, "JESUS WEPT," appears!

What stores of comfort through all coming years!

The woe, that wrings my spirit, touches Thine;

It almost makes the darkness turn to light,

Sorrow to joy, when thus Thy grace we know:

On blackest clouds the rainbow shines most bright,

The stars most brilliant in the darkest night;

So shines Thy love in deepest shades of woe.

Thou hast, O Lord, a bottle for our tears!

Thine in our inmost hearts deep-treasured lie,

Our richest cordial in all griefs and fears;

More precious than the costliest gem, appears

Each drop of Thy most tender sympathy.

Men learned Thy love, when they beheld Thy woe:

“See how He loved Him," they admiring cried.

Oh, priceless tears, and groans! and yet we know

E'en more Thy heart's deep fountains, since did flow

The streams of blood and water from Thy side.

Oh, blessed Jesus, all we want we find,

The more we know our wants all hid in Thee;

A friend than brother far more true and kind;

Balm for the bleeding heart, and tortured mind,

Full of divine and human sympathy.

And more than friend Thou art: for when we lay

In our own blood polluted, lost, and dead,

And Justice drew its fiery sword to slay,

And hell exulting waited for its prey,-

Thou gavest up Thy life, and diedst instead.

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