

CHILD OF THE KING OR ORPHAN

After reading through the contrast chart and definitions, you probably are saying to yourself, “Woe is me!” You may fit into only some of the categories, but most likely you will have some bleed-over between the two. Now perhaps you can see why walking in healthy relationships with God and/or others has been so difficult for you or someone you know.

An Orphan Feels Like

A

Child of the King Feels Like

THE SPIRIT OF AN ORPHAN		THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP
See God as Master	IMAGE OF GOD	See God as a loving Father
Independent / Self-reliant	DEPENDENCY	Interdependent / Acknowledges Need
Live by the Love of Law	THEOLOGY	Live by the Law of Love
Insecure / Lack peace	SECURITY	Rest and Peace
Strive for the praise, approval, and acceptance of man	NEED FOR APPROVAL	Totally accepted in God’s love and justified by grace
A need for personal achievement as you seek to impress God and others, or no motivation to serve at all	MOTIVE FOR SERVICE	Service that is motivated by a deep gratitude for being unconditionally loved and accepted by God
Duty and earning God’s favor or no motivation at all	MOTIVE BEHIND CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES	Pleasure and delight
“Must” be holy to have God’s favor, thus increasing a sense of shame and guilt	MOTIVE FOR PURITY	“Want to” be holy; do not want anything to hinder intimate relationship with God
Self-rejection from comparing yourself to others	SELF-IMAGE	Positive and affirmed because you know you have such value to God
Seek comfort in counterfeit affections: addictions, compulsions, escapism, busyness, hyper-religious	SOURCE OF COMFORT	Seek times of quietness and solitude to rest in the Father’s presence and

activity		love
Competition, rivalry, and jealousy toward others' success and position	PEER RELATIONSHIPS	Humility and unity as you value others and are able to rejoice in their blessings and success
Accusation and exposure in order to make yourself look good by making others look bad	HANDLING OTHERS' FAULTS	Love covers as you seek to restore others in a spirit of love and gentleness
See authority as a source of pain; distrustful toward them and lack a heart attitude of submission	VIEW OF AUTHORITY	Respectful, honoring; you see them as ministers of God for good in your life
Difficulty receiving admonition; you must be right so you easily get your feelings hurt and close your spirit to discipline	VIEW OF ADMONITION	See the receiving of admonition as a blessing and need in your life so that your faults and weaknesses are exposed and put to death
Guarded and conditional; based upon others' performance as you seek to get your own needs met	EXPRESSION OF LOVE	Open, patient, and affectionate as you lay your life and agendas down in order to meet the needs of others
Conditional & Distant	SENSE OF GOD'S PRESENCE	Close & Intimate
Bondage	CONDITION	Liberty
Feel like a Servant/Slave	POSITION	Feel like a Son/Daughter
Spiritual ambition; the earnest desire for some spiritual achievement and distinction and the willingness to strive for it; a desire to be seen and counted among the mature.	VISION	To daily experience the Father's unconditional love and acceptance and then be sent as a representative of His love to family and others.
Fight for what you can get!	FUTURE	Sonship releases your inheritance!

The Believer not an Orphan.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." -- John xiv. 18.

You will notice that the margin reads, "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you." In the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ, the disciples were like children deprived of their parents. During the three years in which He had been with them, He had solved all their difficulties, borne all their burdens, and supplied all their needs. Whenever a case was too hard or too heavy for them, they took it to Him. When their enemies well nigh overcame them, Jesus came to the rescue, and turned the tide of battle. They were all happy and safe enough whilst the Master was with them; He walked in their midst like a father amid a large family of children, making all the household glad. But now He was about to be taken from them by an ignominious death, and they might well feel that they would be like little children deprived of their natural and beloved protector. Our Saviour knew the fear that was in their hearts, and before they could express it, He removed it by saying, "You shall not be left alone in this wild and desert world; though I be absent in the flesh, yet I will be present with you in a more efficacious manner; I will come to you spiritually, and you shall derive from My spiritual presence even more good than you could have had from My bodily presence, had I still continued in your midst."

Observe, first, here is an evil averted: "I will not leave you orphans;" and, in the second place, here is a consolation provided: "I will come to you."

I. First, here is, an evil averted.

Without their Lord, believers would, apart from the Holy Spirit, be like other orphans, unhappy and desolate. Give them what you might, their loss could not have been recompensed. No number of lamps can make up for the sun's absence; blaze as they may, it is still night. No circle of friends can supply to a bereaved woman the loss of her husband; without him, she is still a widow. Even thus, without Jesus, it is inevitable that the saints should be as orphans; but Jesus has promised in the text that we shall not be so; the one only thing that can remove the trial He declares shall be ours, "I will come to you."

Now remember, that an orphan is one whose parent is dead. This in itself is a great sorrow, if there were no other. The dear father, so well beloved, was suddenly smitten down with sickness; they watched him with anxiety; they nursed him with sedulous care; but he expired. The loving

eye is closed in darkness for them. That active hand will no longer toil for the family. That heart and brain will no longer feel and think for them. Beneath the green grass the father sleeps, and every time the child surveys that hollowed hillock his heart swells with grief. Beloved, we are not orphans in that sense, for our Lord Jesus is not dead. It is true He died, for one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water, a sure evidence that the pericardium had been pierced, and that the fountain of life had been broken up. He died, 'tis certain, but He is not dead now. Go not to the grave to seek Him. Angel voices say, "He is not here, for He is risen." He could not be holden by the bands of death. We do not worship a dead Christ, nor do we even think of Him now as a corpse. That picture on the wall, which the Romanists paint and worship, represents Christ as dead; but oh! it is so good to think of Christ as living, remaining in an existence real and true, none the less living because He died, but all the more truly full of life because He has passed through the portals of the grave, and is now reigning for ever. See then, dear friends, the bitter root of the orphan's sorrow is gone from us, for our Jesus is not dead now. No mausoleum enshrines His ashes, no pyramid entombs His body, no monument records the place of His permanent sepulchre.

"He lives, the great Redeemer lives,
What joy the blest assurance gives!"

We are not orphans, for "the Lord is risen indeed."

The orphan has a sharp sorrow springing out of the death of his parent, namely, that he is left alone. He cannot now make appeals to the wisdom of the parent who could direct him. He cannot run, as once he did, when he was weary, to climb the paternal knee. He cannot lean his aching head upon the parental bosom. "Father," he may say, but no voice gives an answer. "Mother," he may cry, but that fond title, which would awaken the mother if she slept, cannot arouse her from the bed of death. The child is alone, alone as to those two hearts which were its best companions. The parent and lover are gone. The little ones know what it is to be deserted and forsaken. But we are not so; we are not orphans. It is true Jesus is not here in body, but His spiritual presence is quite as blessed as His bodily presence would have been. Nay, it is better, for supposing Jesus Christ to be here in person, you could not all come and touch the hem of His garment, -- not all at once, at any rate. There might be thousands waiting all the world over to speak with Him; but how could they all reach Him, if He were merely here in body? You might all be wanting to tell Him something, but in the body He could only receive some one or two of you at a time.

But in spirit there is no need for you to stir from the pew, no need to say a word; Jesus hears your thoughts talk, and attends to all your needs at the same moment. No need to press to get at Him because the throng is great, for He is as near to me as He is to you, and as near to you as to saints in America, or the islands of the Southern Sea. He is everywhere present, and all His beloved may talk with Him. You can tell Him at this moment the sorrows which you dare not open up to

anyone else. You will feel that, in declaring them to Him, you have not breathed them to the air, but that a real Person has heard you, One as real as though you could grip His hand, and could see the loving flash of His eye and mark the sympathetic change of His countenance.

Is it not so with you, ye children of a living Saviour? You know it is; you have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. You have a near and dear One, who, in the dead of the night is in the chamber, and in the heat and burden of the day is in the field of labour. You are not orphans, the "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," is with you; your Lord is here; and, as one whom his mother comforteth, so Jesus comforts you.

The orphan, too, has lost the kind hand which took care always that food and raiment should be provided, that the table should be well stored, and that the house should be kept in comfort. Poor feeble one, who will provide for his wants? His father is dead, his mother is gone: who will take care of the little wanderer now? But it is not so with us. Jesus has not left us orphans; His care for His people is no less now than it was when He sat at the table with Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, whom "Jesus loved." Instead of the provisions being less, they are even greater, for since the Holy Spirit has been given to us, we have richer fare and are more indulged with spiritual comforts than believers were before the bodily presence of the Master had departed. Do your souls hunger to-night? Jesus gives you the bread of heaven. Do you thirst to-night? The waters from the rock cease not to flow.

"Come, make your wants, your burdens known."

You have but to make known your needs to have them all supplied, Christ waits to be gracious in the midst of this assembly. He is here with His golden hand, opening that hand to supply the wants of every living soul. "Oh!" saith one, "I am poor and needy." Go on with the quotation. "Yet the Lord thinketh upon me." "Ah" saith another, "I have besought the Lord thrice to take away a thorn in the flesh from me." Remember what he said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." You are not left without the strength you want. The Lord is your Shepherd still. He will provide for you till He leads you through death's dark valley, and brings you to the shining pastures upon the hill-tops of glory. You are not destitute, you need not beg an asylum from an ungodly world by bowing to its demands, or trusting its vain promises, for Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you.

The orphan, too, is left without the instruction which is most suitable for a child. We may say what we will, but there is none so fit to form a child's character as the parent. It is a very sad loss for a child to have lost either father or mother in its early days; for the most skilful preceptor, though he may do much, by the blessing of God very much, is but a stop-gap, and but half makes up for the original ordinance of Providence, that the parent's love should fashion the child's mind. But, dear friends, we are not orphans; we who believe in Jesus are not left without an

education. Jesus is not here Himself, it is true. I dare say some of you wish you could come on Lord's-days, and listen to Him! Would it not be sweet to look up to this pulpit, and see the Crucified One, and to hear Him preach? Ah! so you think, but the apostle says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."

It is most for your profit that you should receive the Spirit of truth, not through the golden vessel of Christ in His actual presence here, but through the poor earthen vessels of humble servants of God like ourselves. At any rate, whether we speak, or an angel from heaven, the speaker matters not; it is the Spirit of God alone that is the power of the Word, and makes that Word to become vital and quickening to you. Now, you have the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is so given, that there is not a truth which you may not understand. You may be led into the deepest mysteries by His teaching. You may be made to know and to comprehend those knotty points in the Word of God which have hitherto puzzled you. You have but humbly to look up to Jesus, and His Spirit will still teach you. I tell you, though you are poor and ignorant, and perhaps can scarcely read a word in the Bible; for all that, you may be better instructed in the things of God than doctors of divinity, if you go to the Holy Spirit, and are taught of Him. Those who go only to books and to the letter, and are taught of men, may be fools in the sight of God; but those who go to Jesus, and sit at His feet, and ask to be taught of His Spirit, shall be wise unto salvation. Blessed be God, there are not a few amongst us of this sort. We are not left orphans; we have an Instructor with us still.

There is one point in which the orphan is often sorrowfully reminded of his orphanhood, namely, in lacking a defender. It is so natural in little children, when some big boy molests them, to say, "I'll tell my father!" How often did we use to say so, and how often have we heard from the little ones since, "I'll tell mother!" Sometimes, the not being able to do this is a much severer loss than we can guess. Unkind and cruel men have snatched away from orphans the little which a father's love had left behind; and in the court of law there has been no defender to protect the orphan's goods. Had the father been there, the child would have had its rights, scarcely would any have dared to infringe them; but, in the absence of the father, the orphan is eaten up like bread, and the wicked of the earth devour his estate. In this sense, the saints are not orphans. The devil would rob us of our heritage if he could, but there is an Advocate with the Father who pleads for us. Satan would snatch from us every promise, and tear from us all the comforts of the covenant; but we are not orphans, and when he brings a suit-at-law against us, and thinks that we are the only defendants in the case, he is mistaken, for we have an Advocate on high. Christ comes in and pleads, as the sinners' Friend, for us; and when He pleads at the bar of justice, there is no fear but that His plea will be of effect, and our inheritance shall be safe. He has not left us orphans.

Now I want, without saying many words, to get you who love the Master to feel what a very precious thought this is, that you are not alone in this world; that, if you have no earthly friends, if you have none to whom you can take your cares, if you are quite lonely so far as outward friends are concerned, yet Jesus is with you, is really with you, practically with you, able to help

you, and ready to do so, and that you have a good and kind Protector close at hand at this present moment, for Christ has said it: "I will not leave you orphans."

II. Secondly, there is, a consolation provided: The remedy by which the evil is averted is this, our Lord Jesus said, "I will come to you."

What does this mean? Does it not mean, from the connection, this -- "I will come to you by My Spirit"? Beloved, we must not confuse the Persons of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit is not the Son of God; Jesus, the Son of God, is not the Holy Spirit.

They are two distinct Persons of the one Godhead. But yet there is such a wonderful unity, and the blessed Spirit acts so marvellously as the Vicar of Christ, that it is quite correct to say that, when the Spirit comes, Jesus comes, too, and "I will come to you," means "I, by My Spirit, who shall take My place, and represent Me, I will come to be with you." See then, Christian, you have the Holy Spirit in you and with you to be the Representative of Christ. Christ is with you now, not in person, but by His Representative, -- an efficient, almighty, divine, everlasting Representative, who stands for Christ, and is as Christ to you in His presence in your souls. Because you thus have Christ by His Spirit, you cannot be orphans, for the Spirit of God is always with you. It is a delightful truth that the Spirit of God always dwells in believers; -- not sometimes, but always. He is not always active in believers, and He may be grieved until His sensible presence is altogether withdrawn, but His secret presence is always there. At no single moment is the Spirit of God wholly gone from a believer. The believer would die spiritually if this could happen, but that cannot be, for Jesus has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Even when the believer sins, the Holy Spirit does not utterly depart from him, but is still in him to make him smart for the sin into which he has fallen. The believer's prayers prove that the Holy Spirit is still within him. "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me," was the prayer of a saint who had fallen very foully, but in whom the Spirit of God still kept His residence, notwithstanding all the foulness of his guilt and sin.

But, beloved, in addition to this, Jesus Christ by His Spirit makes visits to His people of a peculiar kind. The Holy Ghost becomes wonderfully active and potent at certain times of refreshing. We are then especially and joyfully sensible of His divine power. His influence streams through every chamber of our nature, and floods our dark soul with His glorious rays, as the sun shining in its strength. Oh, how delightful this is! Sometimes we have felt this at the Lord's table. My soul pants to sit with you at that table, because I do remember many a happy time when the emblems of bread and wine have assisted my faith, and kindled the passions of my soul into a heavenly flame. I am equally sure that, at the prayer-meeting, under the preaching of the Word, in private meditation, and in searching the Scriptures, we can say that Jesus Christ has come to us. What! have you no hill Mizar to remember? --

**"No Tabor-visits to recount,
When with Him in the Holy Mount"?**

Oh, yes! some of these blessed seasons have left their impress upon our memories, so that, amongst our dying thoughts, will mingle the remembrance of those blessed seasons when Jesus Christ manifested Himself unto us as He doth not unto the world. Oh, to be wrapped in that crimson vest, closely pressed 'to His open side!' Oh, to put our finger into the print of nails, and thrust our hand into His side! We know what this means by past experience.

**"Dear Shepherd of Thy chosen few,
Thy former mercies here renew."**

Permit us once again to feel the truth of the promise, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." And now, gathering up the few thoughts I have uttered, let me remind you, dear friends, that every word of the text is instructive: "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you." Observe the "I" there twice over. "I will not leave you orphans; father and mother may, but I will not; friends once beloved may turn stony-hearted, but I will not; Judas may play the traitor, and Ahithophel may betray his David, but I will not leave you comfortless. You have had many disappointments, great heart-breaking sorrows, but I have never caused you any; I -- the faithful and the true Witness, the immutable, the unchangeable Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." Catch at that word, "I," and let your souls say, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; if Thou hadst said, 'I will send an angel to thee,' it would have been a great mercy, but what sayest Thou, 'I will come unto thee'? If Thou hadst bidden some of my brethren come and speak a word of comfort to me, I had been thankful, but Thou hast put it thus in the first person, 'I will come unto you.' O my Lord, what shall I say, what shall I do, but feel a hungering and a thirsting after Thee, which nothing shall satisfy till Thou shalt fulfil Thine own Word, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you'?"

And then notice the persons to whom it is addressed, "I will not leave you comfortless, you, Peter, who will deny Me; you, Thomas, who will doubt Me; I will not leave you comfortless." O you who are so little in Israel that you sometimes think it is a pity that your name is in the church-book at all, because you feel yourselves to be so worthless, so unworthy, He will not leave you comfortless, not even you! "O Lord," thou sayest, "if Thou wouldst look after the rest of Thy sheep, I would bless Thee for Thy tenderness to them, but I -- I deserve to be left; if I were forsaken of Thee, I could not blame Thee, for I have played the harlot against Thy love, but yet Thou sayest, 'I will not leave you.'" Heir of heaven, do not lose your part in this promise. I pray you say, "Lord, come unto me, and though Thou refresh all my brethren, yet, Lord, refresh me with some of the droppings of Thy love; O Lord, fill the cup for me; my thirsty spirit pants for it.

**"I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me.'**

Now, Lord, fulfil Thy word to Thine unworthy handmaid, as I stand like Hannah in Thy presence. Come unto me, Thy servant, unworthy to lift so much as his eyes towards heaven, and only daring to say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' Fulfil Thy promise even to me, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.'"

Take whichever of the words you will, and they each one sparkle and flash after this sort. Observe, too, the richness and sufficiency of the text: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." He does not promise, "I will send you sanctifying grace, or sustaining mercy, or precious mercy," but He says, what is the only thing that will prevent your being orphans, "I will come to you." Ah! Lord, Thy grace is sweet, but Thou art better. The vine is good, but the clusters are better. It is well enough to have a gift from Thy hand, but oh! to touch the hand itself. It is well enough to hear the words of Thy lips, but oh! to kiss those lips as the spouse did in the Song, this is better still. You know, if there be an orphan child, you cannot prevent its continuing an orphan. You may feel great kindness towards it, supply its wants, and do all you possibly can towards it, but it is an orphan still. It must get its father and its mother back, or else it will still be an orphan. So, our blessed Lord, knowing this, does not say, "I will do this and that for you," but, "I will come to you."

Do you not see, dear friends, here is not only all you can want, but all you think you can want, wrapped up in a sentence, "I will come to you"? "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell;" so that, when Christ comes, in Him "all fulness" comes. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," so that, when Jesus comes, the very Godhead comes to the believer.

**"All my capacious powers can wish
In Thee doth richly meet;"**

and if Thou shalt come to me, it is better than all the gifts of Thy covenant. If I get Thee, I get all, and more than all, at once. Observe, then, the language and the sufficiency of the promise.

But I want you to notice, further, the continued freshness and force of the promise. Somebody here owes another person fifty pounds, and he gives him a note of hand, "I promise to pay you fifty pounds." Very well! the man calls with that note of hand tomorrow, and gets fifty pounds. And what is the good of the note of hand now? Why, it is of no further value, it is discharged. How would you like to have a note of hand which would always stand good? That would be a

right royal present. "I promise to pay evermore, and this bond, though paid a thousand times, shall still hold good." Who would not like to have a cheque of that sort? Yet this is the promise which Christ gives you, "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you." The first time a sinner looks to Christ, Christ comes to him. And what then? Why, the next minute it is still, "I will come to you." But here is one who has known Christ for fifty years, and he has had this promise fulfilled a thousand times a year: is it not done with? Oh, no! there it stands, just as fresh as when Jesus first spoke it, "I will come to you." Then we will treat our Lord in His own fashion, and take Him at His word. We will go to Him as often as ever we can, for we shall never weary Him; and when He has kept His promise most, then is it that we will go to Him, and ask Him to keep it more still; and after ten thousand proofs of the truth of it, we will only have a greater hungering and thirsting to get it fulfilled again. This is fit provision for life, and for death, "I will come to you." In the last moment, when your pulse beats faintly, and you are just about to pass the curtain, and enter into the invisible world, you may have this upon your lips, and say to your Lord, "My Master, still fulfil the word on which Thou hast caused me to hope, 'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.'"

Let me remind you that the text is at this moment valid, and for this I delight in it. "I will not leave you comfortless." That means now, "I will not leave you comfortless now." Are you comfortless at this hour? It is your own fault. Jesus Christ does not leave you so, nor make you so. There are rich and precious things in this word, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you, I will come to you now." It may be a very dull time with you, and you are pining to come nearer to Christ. Very well, then plead the promise before the Lord. Plead the promise as you sit where you are: "Lord, Thou hast said Thou wilt come unto me; come unto me to-night." There are many reasons, believer, why you should plead thus. You want Him; you need Him; you require Him; therefore plead the promise, and expect its fulfilment. And oh! when He cometh, what a joy it is; He is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber with his garments fragrant with aloes and cassia! How well the oil of joy will perfume your heart! How soon will your sackcloth be put away, and the garments of gladness adorn you! With what joy of heart will your heavy soul begin to sing when Jesus Christ shall whisper that you are His, and that He is yours! Come, my Beloved, make no tarrying; be Thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of separation, and prove to me Thy promise true, "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you."

And now, dear friends, in conclusion, let me remind you that there are many who have no share in the text. What can I say to such? From my soul I pity you who do not know what the love of Christ means. Oh! if you could but tell the joy of God's people, you would not rest an hour without it.

"His worth, if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole world would love Him too."

Remember, if you would find Christ, He is to be found in the way of faith. Trust Him, and He is yours. Depend upon the merit of His sacrifice; cast yourselves entirely upon that, and you are saved, and Christ is yours.

God grant that we may all break bread in the kingdom above, and feast with Jesus, and share His glory! We are expecting His second coming. He is coming personally and gloriously. This is the brightest hope of His people. This will be the fulness of their redemption, the time of their resurrection. Anticipate it, beloved, and may God make your souls to sing for joy!

**"Mid the splendours of the glory
Which we hope ere long to share;
Christ our Head, and we His members,
Shall appear, divinely fair.
Oh, how glorious!
When we meet Him in the air!**

**"Bright the prospect soon that greets us
Of that long'd-for nuptial day,
When our heavenly Bridegroom meets us
On His kingly, conquering way;
In the glory,
Bride and Bridegroom reign for aye!"**