

My Heart Christ's Home

By Robert Munger

One evening I invited Jesus Christ into my heart! What an entrance He made! It was not a spectacular, emotional thing, but very real. Something happened at the very center of my life. He came into the darkness of my heart and turned on the light. He built a fire on the hearth and banished the chill. He started music where there had been stillness, and He filled the emptiness with His own loving, wonderful fellowship. I have never regretted opening the door to Christ and I never will --not into eternity!

In the joy of this new-found relationship I said to Jesus Christ, "Lord, I want this heart of mine to be Yours. I want to have You settle down here and be perfectly at home. Everything I have belongs to You. Let me show You around."

The first room was the study --the library. In my home this room of the mind is a very small room with very thick walls, but is a very important room. In a sense, it is the control room of the house. He entered with me and looked around at the books in the bookcase, the magazines upon the table, the pictures on the wall. As I followed His gaze I became uncomfortable.

Strangely, I had not felt self-conscious about this before, but now that He was there looking at these things I was embarrassed. Some books were there that His eyes were too pure to behold. There was a lot of trash and literature on the table that a Christian had no business reading, and as for the pictures on the wall -- the imaginations and thoughts of the mind --some of these were shameful.

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IIANG THIS PICTURE IN YOUR MIND

I turned to Him and said, "Master, I know that this room needs some radical alterations. Will You help me make it what it ought to be, and bring every thought into captivity to You?" "Surely!" He said. "First of all, take all the things that you are reading and looking at which are not helpful, pure, good, and true, and throw them out. Now put on the empty shelves the books of the Bible. Fill the library with Scripture and 'meditate therein day and night' (Joshua 1:8). As for the pictures on the wall, you will have difficulty controlling these images, but there is an aid." He gave me a full-size portrait of Himself. "Hang this centrally," He said, "on the wall of the mind."

I did so, and I have discovered through the years that when my attention is centered upon Christ Himself, His purity and power cause impure imaginings to retreat. So He has helped me to bring my thoughts into captivity.

From the study we went into the dining room, the room of appetites and desires. I spent a good deal of time here and put forth much effort in satisfying my wants. I said to Him, "This is a very commodious room, and I am quite sure You will be pleased with what we serve." He seated Himself at the table with me and asked, "What is on the menu for dinner?" "Well," I said, "my favorite dishes: old bones, corn husks, sour garbage, leeks, onions and garlic right out of Egypt." These were the things I liked -- worldly fare.

When the food was placed before Him, He said nothing but I observed that He did not eat it. I said to Him, "Master, You don't care for this food? What is the trouble?" He answered, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of... If you want food that really satisfies, seek the will of the Father, not your own pleasures, not your own desires, not your own satisfaction, but seek to please me. That food will satisfy you." There at the table He gave me a taste of the joy of doing God's will. What flavor! What nourishment and vitality it gives to the soul! There is no

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food like it in all the world. It alone satisfies.

WONDERFUL HOURS IN THIS ROOM

From the dining room we walked into the drawing room. This room was intimate and comfortable. I liked it. It had a fireplace, upholstered chairs, a sofa, and a quiet atmosphere. He said, "This is indeed a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet, and we can fellowship together."

Well, as a young Christian I was thrilled. I could not think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes apart with Christ in intimate fellowship. He promised, "I will be here early every morning. Meet me here, and we will start the day together."

So, morning after morning, I would come downstairs to the drawing room, or "withdrawing room," as I liked to think of it. He would take a book of the Bible from the case. We would open it and read together. He would tell me of its richness and unfold to me its truths. My heart warmed as He revealed the love and the grace He had toward me. These were wonderful hours.

Little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, the time began to be shortened. Why, I don't know, but I thought I was too busy to spend time with Christ. This was not intentional, you understand. It just happened that way. Finally, not only was the time shortened, but I began to miss a day now and then. Perhaps it was some other exigency. I would miss it two days in a row and oftentimes more.

I remember one morning when I was rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way, that I passed the drawing room and noticed that the door was ajar. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and the Master sitting there. Suddenly in dismay I thought to myself, "He is my guest. I invited Him

into my heart! He has come and yet I am neglecting Him." With downcast glance, I said, "Blessed Master, forgive me. I have you been here all these mornings?" "Yes," He said, "I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I desire your fellowship. Even if you cannot keep the quiet time for your own sake, do it for mine."

The truth that Christ desires my companionship, that He wants me to be with Him and waits for me, has done more to transform my quiet time with God than any other single factor. Don't let Christ wait alone in the drawing room of your heart, but every day find time when, with your Bible and in prayer, you may have fellowship with Him.

TOYS FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

Before long, He asked, "Do you have a workshop in your home?" Down in the basement of the home of my heart I had a bench and some equipment, but I was not doing much with it. Once in a while I would go down and fuss around with a few little gadgets, but I wasn't producing anything substantial.

I led Him down there. He looked over the workbench and said, "Well, this is quite well furnished. What are you producing with your life for the Kingdom of God?" He looked at one or two little toys that I had thrown together on the bench. He held one up to me and said, "Are these little toys all that you are producing in your Christian life?"

"Well," I said, "Lord, I know it isn't much, and I really want to do more, but after all, I don't seem to have strength or skill to do more."

"Would you like to do better?" He asked. "Certainly," I replied. "All right. Let me have your hands. Now relax in me and let my spirit work through you. I know that you

are clumsy and awkward, but the Holy Spirit is the Master Workman, and if He controls your hands and your heart, He will work through you." Stepping around behind me and putting His great, strong hands under mine, holding the tools in His skilled fingers, He began to work through me. The more I relaxed and trusted Him, the more He was able to do with my life.

SORRY ABOUT THAT RUMPUS ROOM

He asked me if I had a playroom. I was hoping He would not ask about this. There were certain associations and friendships, activities, and amusements that I wanted to keep for myself. One evening when I was leaving to join some college companions, He stopped me with a glance and asked, "Are you going out this evening?" I replied, "Yes." "Good," He said, "I would like to go with you."

"Oh," I answered rather awkwardly, "I don't think, Lord Jesus, that You would really want to go with me. Let's go out tomorrow night. Tomorrow night we will go to prayer meeting, but tonight I have another appointment."

"I'm sorry," He said, "I thought that when I came into your home, we were going to do everything together, to be partners. I want you to know that I am willing to go with you."

"Well," I mumbled, slipping out the door, "we will go someplace tomorrow night."

That evening I spent some miserable hours. I felt wretched. What kind of friend was I to Christ when I was deliberately leaving Him out of my associations, doing things and going places that I knew very well He would not enjoy?

When I returned that evening, there was a light in His room, and I went up to talk it over with Him. I said, "Lord, I have learned my lesson. I cannot have a good

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time without You. We will do everything together." Then we went down into the rumpus room of the house and He transformed it. He brought new friends into my life, new satisfactions, new and lasting joys. Laughter and music have been ringing through the house ever since.

SOMETHING IS DEAD IN THIS HOUSE

One day I found Him waiting for me at the door. There was an arresting look in His eye, and He said to me as I entered, "There is a peculiar odor in the house. Something is dead around here. It's upstairs. I'm sure it is in the hall closet." As soon as He said the words, I knew what He was talking about.

Yes, there was a small hall closet up there on the landing, just a few feet square. In that closet, behind lock and key, I had one or two little personal things that I did not want Christ to see. I knew they were dead and rotting things, and I wanted them so for myself that I was afraid to admit they were there.

I went up with Him, and as we mounted the stairs the odor became stronger and stronger. He pointed to the door. I was angry. That's the only way I can put it. I had given Him access to the library, the dining room, the drawing room, the workshop, the rumpus room and now He was asking me about a little two-by-four closet. I said inwardly, "This is too much. I am not going to give Him the key."

Said He, reading my thoughts, "If you think I'm going to stay up here on the second floor with this odor, you are mistaken. I will go out on the porch."

I saw Him start down the stairs. My resistance collapsed. When one comes to know and love Christ, the worst thing that can happen is to sense His companionship withdrawing. I had to surrender.

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"I'll give you the key," I said sadly. "but You will have to open up the closet and clean it out. I haven't the strength to do it."

"Just give me the key," He said. "Authorize me to take care of that closet and I will."

TAKE OVER THE WHOLE MANAGEMENT

With trembling fingers I passed the key to Him. He took it, walked over to the door, opened it, entered, took out all the putrefying stuff that was rotting there, and threw it away. Then He cleaned the closet and painted it. It was done in a moment's time. Oh, what victory and release to have that dead thing out of my life!

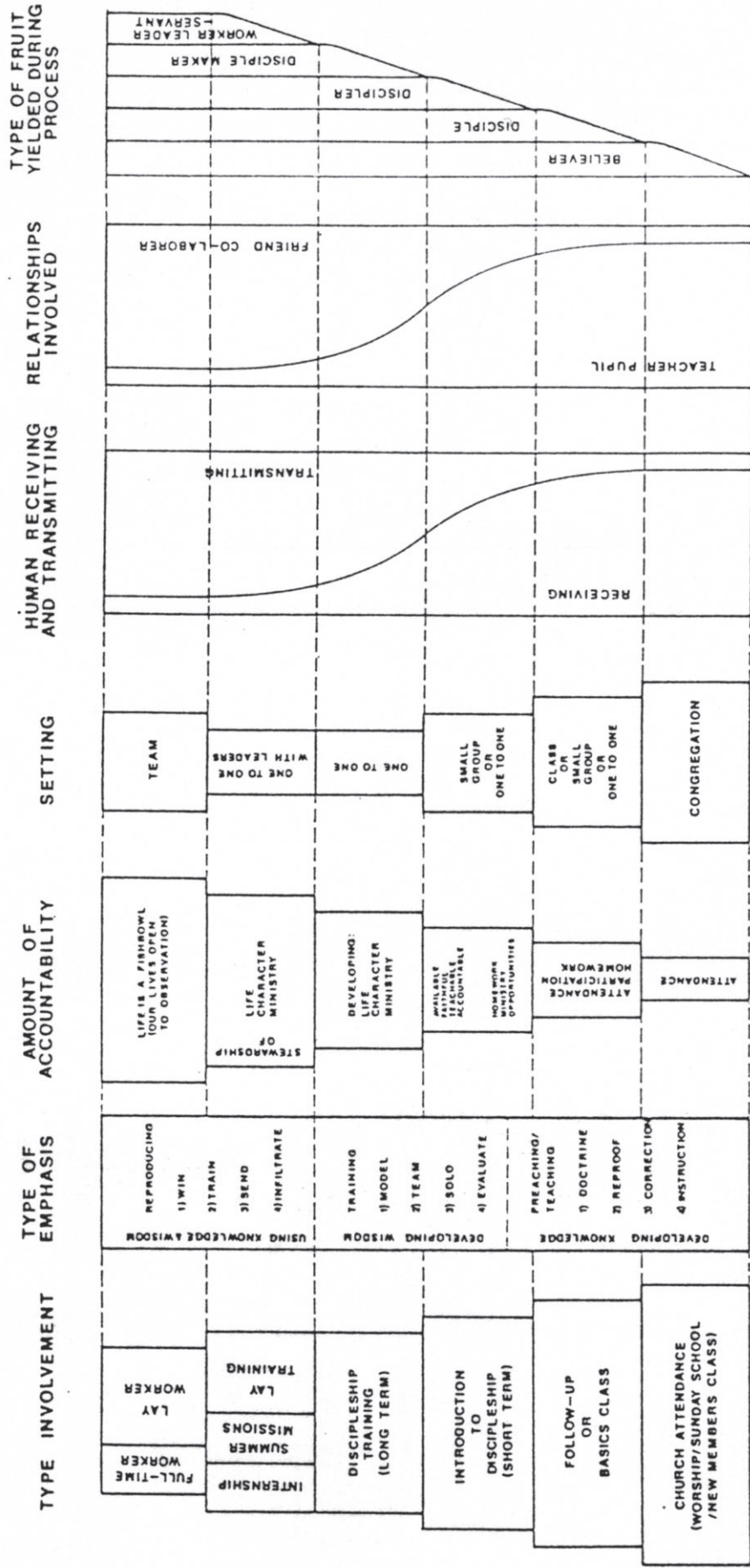
A thought came to me. "Lord, is there any chance that You would take over the management of the whole house and operate it for me as You did that closet? Would You take the responsibility to keep my life what it ought to be?"

His face lighted up as He replied, "Certainly, that is what I want to do. You cannot be a victorious Christian in your own strength. Let me do it through you and for you. That is the way. But," He added slowly, "I am just a guest. I have no authority to proceed, since the property is not mine."

Dropping to my knees, I said, "Lord, You have been a guest and I have been the host. From now on I am going to be the servant. You are going to be the Lord." Running as fast as I could to the strongbox, I took out the title deed to the house describing its properties, assets, and liabilities. I eagerly signed the house over to Him alone for time and eternity. "Here," I said. "Here it is, all that I am and have, forever. Now You run the house. I'll just remain with You as a servant and friend."

THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLESHIP WITHIN GOD'S CHURCH

This diagram represents the ideal process of maturity/discipleship when a person is nurtured and growing in the local church.



"We proclaim Him, administering and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect (complete) in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me."

COLOSSIANS 1:28,29

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

EPHESIANS 4:11-13