



**My Heart~
Christ's Home**

Robert Boyd Munger



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Taken from *My Heart—Christ's Home*
by Robert Boyd Munger.

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In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes these words: “That [God] may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph 3:16-17). Or, as another has translated, “That Christ may settle down and be at home in your hearts by faith” (Weymouth).

Without question one of the most remarkable Christian doctrines is that Jesus Christ himself through the Holy Spirit will actually enter a heart, settle down and be at home

there. Christ will live in any human heart that welcomes him.

He said to his disciples, “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him” (Jn 14:23). But he was also telling them that he was soon to leave them (Jn 13:33). It was difficult for them to understand what he was saying. How was it possible for him both to leave them and make his home with them at the same time?

It is interesting that Jesus uses a similar concept here (*home*) that he uses earlier in John 14: “I go to prepare a *place* for you . . . that where I am, you may be also” (vv. 2-3). He was promising that just as he was going to heaven to prepare a place for them and would one day welcome them there, so it would be possible for them to prepare a place for him in their hearts now. He would

come and make his home with them right here.

This was beyond their comprehension. How could it be?

Then came Pentecost. The Spirit of the living Christ was given to the church and they experienced what he had foretold. Now they understood. God did not dwell in Herod's Temple in Jerusalem—nor in any temple made with hands! Now, through the miracle of the outpoured Spirit, God would dwell in human hearts. The body of the believer had become the temple of the living God and the human heart the home of Jesus Christ. Thirty minutes after Pentecost the disciples knew more about Jesus than they had known in the three years previously. It is difficult for me to think of a higher privilege than to make for Christ a home in my heart, to welcome, to serve, to please and to know him there.

I will never forget the evening I invited him into my heart. What an entrance he made! It was not a spectacular, emotional thing, but very real, occurring at the very center of my soul. He came into the darkness of my heart and turned on the light. He built a fire in the cold hearth and banished the chill. He started music where there had been stillness and harmony where there had been discord. He filled the emptiness with his own loving fellowship. I have never regretted opening the door to Christ and I never will.

This, of course, is the first step in making the heart Christ's home. He has said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20). If you want to know the reality of God and the personal presence of Jesus Christ at the innermost part of your

being, simply open wide the door and ask him to come in and be your Savior and Lord.

After Christ entered my heart, in the joy of that new-found relationship, I said to him, “Lord, I want this heart of mine to be yours. I want you to settle down here and be fully at home. I want you to use it as your own. Let me show you around and point out some of the features of the home so that you may be more comfortable. I want you to enjoy our time together.” He was glad to come and seemed delighted to be given a place in my ordinary little heart.

The Study

The first room we looked at together was the study—the library. Let us call it the study of the mind. Now in my home this room of the mind is a small room with thick walls. But it is an 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 on the table, the pictures on the walls. As I followed his gaze, I became uncomfortable. Strangely enough, I had not felt bad about this room before, but now that he was there with me looking at these things, I was embarrassed. There were some books on the shelves his eyes were too pure to look at. On the table were a few magazines a Christian has no business reading. As for the pictures on the walls—the imaginations and thoughts of my mind—some of these were shameful.

Red-faced, I turned to him and said, “Master, I know this room really needs to be cleaned up and made over. Will you help me shape it up and change it to the way it ought to be?”

“Certainly,” he replied. “I’m glad to help you! I’ve come to handle things like this! First of all, take all the materials you are read-

ing and viewing which are not true, good, pure and helpful, and throw them out! Now put on the empty shelves the books of the Bible. Fill the library with the Scriptures and meditate on them day and night. As for the pictures on the walls, you will have difficulty controlling these images, but I have something that will help.” He gave me a full-sized portrait of himself. “Hang this centrally,” he said, “on the wall of the mind.” I did, and I have discovered through the years that when my thoughts are centered on Christ, the awareness of his presence, purity and power causes wrong and impure thoughts to back away. So he has helped me to bring my thoughts under his control, but the struggle remains.

If you have difficulty with this little room of the mind, let me encourage you to bring Christ there. Pack it full with the Word of God, study it, meditate on it and keep clearly

before you the presence of the Lord Jesus.

The Dining Room

From the study we went into the dining room, the room of appetites and desires. Now this was a large room, a most important place to me. I spent a lot of time and hard work trying to satisfy all my wants.

I told him, “This is a favorite room. I’m sure you will be pleased with what we serve here.”

He seated himself at the table and inquired, “What is on the menu for dinner tonight?”

“Well,” I said, “my favorite dishes: money, academic degrees, stocks, with newspaper articles of fame and fortune as side dishes.” These were the things I liked, thoroughly secular fare. There was nothing so very bad in any of them, but it was not really the kind of food which would feed the soul and sat-

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