

We Shall Be Like Jesus

By Rev. Francis Williams

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:2-3 NKJV).

The hope of every follower of Jesus is to see God face to face. Theologians usually refer to this hope as the beatific vision. It refers to the ultimate state of happiness that believers will experience when they see God face to face in heaven. According to 1 John 3:2, God's children will be like Him because they will see Him as He is. This hope of seeing God in the future inspires us to be like God in the present. This truth is wonderfully illustrated in the following allegory called "The Great Stone Face."

When he was a child, the young man named Ernest had heard from his mother, the local prophecy. It goes like this: Some day there should come to the valley, a person bearing an exact resemblance to the great stone face, which they could see in the neighboring mountain. This would be the most important person of the time. According to the prophecy, when that person comes, he will bring great blessings to those among whom he lived.

Ernest had taken the prophecy more seriously than the inhabitants of the valley. As the years passed, that hope became stronger and of richer meaning to him. As he cherished the hope of the great man's coming, Ernest gave himself to doing good, preparing the valley for the great patron's arrival. He kept doing in his imperfect way, what he thought the great one who would fulfil the prophecy would do in his better way when he comes. He learned a heavenly wisdom and became unintentionally a preacher. When the people of the village saw the simplicity of his life demonstrated by his good deeds with his hands and the words of truth which flowed from his lips, they started coming to him with their needs and troubles.

It happened after a long period of time, when Ernest had grown old, and with the gray about his face like the mists which often hung about the face of the mountain, the people saw that he resembled it. His hope had configured his features. Then the people said, "The man resembling the great stone face is with us." So is it with the grandest of all hopes – that of seeing God. Those who have this hope will be like Him. They will purify themselves even as He is pure. And people will take notice of it.