

THE MASTER ARTIST

An American writer tells the story of a most wonderful stained glass window in a certain cathedral. From far and near the people came to see it. It was indeed a masterpiece of art.

One day, during a great storm, the violence of the elements forced in the window, and it crashed to the floor, shattered into hundreds of pieces. The fragments, however, were carefully gathered up and stored in a box which was placed in the crypt of the cathedral.

Some time afterwards a visitor arrived to see the beautiful window. When he learned of its fate, he inquired what had become of the fragments. They showed him the broken pieces of glass. He asked if he might have them, a request which was readily granted, as they seemed to be of no further use.

The visitor carried the box away. Weeks passed; then came an invitation to the cathedral authorities to inspect a stained glass window in the studio of a famous artist, noted for his master skill in glasscraft. On arriving at the studio there shone before their astonished gaze a window of stained glass surpassing in beauty anything of the kind that they had ever seen. As they stood looking at its rich tints and marvelous workmanship, the artist said:

“This window I have wrought from the fragments of your shattered one, and it is now ready to be placed in position.”

Once more a great window threw its beautiful light into the dim aisles of the old cathedral. The splendor of the new far surpassed the glory of the old, and its fame once more filled the land and brought pilgrims to view its beauty from far and near.

What a tragedy of spoiled lives one meets with among the children of God! If there has not been a violent fall, there has been, in a multitude of cases, a declension of soul that has involved abandonment, one after the other, of cherished ideals.

But is the position hopeless? Not if the Master Artist comes upon the scene. Not if He takes in hand the broken fragments. Not if His skill is available to restore and replace.

What then must we do?

- * Hand over our broken lives to Him.
- * Own our faithlessness, our folly, and the futility of all our efforts to make things different.
- * Put ourselves unreservedly into his hands.
- * *Abandon wholeheartedly everything concerning which we have a will of our own.*
- * Bring the cross to bear upon every concession that we have made to the flesh.

Then, filled with the Holy Spirit, our lives shall once again be radiant *with Christ*, and something of His beauty shall shine in us. Harold P. Barker