

# GOOD NEWS FOR ALL!

by James Smith

---

*Smith's collection focusing on Christ as the Savior for all people, presenting Him as one who saves freely, perfectly, and with pleasure, designed for all classes and situations with something for every reader.*

77 Chapters

## Table of Contents

1. 00 Good News for All!
2. 00 PREFACE
3. 01 Divine Teaching
4. 02 Standing in Grace
5. 03 The Effect of the New Birth
6. 04 Affectionate Inquiries
7. 05 God's Hidden Ones
8. 06 The New Commandment
9. 07 Keeping Back Part of the Price
10. 08 My Savior
11. 09 Lead Me, Teach Me!
12. 10 An Israelite Indeed!
13. 11 Not Orphans!
14. 12 He Shall Save a Soul from Death!
15. 13 Pray for the Peace Of Jerusalem
16. 14 The Breath of Our Nostrils
17. 15 Falling, Yet Safe
18. 16 Behold, the Lamb of God!
19. 17 A Solemn Charge
20. 18 God's Precious Thoughts
21. 19 That Great Shepherd
22. 20 O Sing unto the Lord a New Song!
23. 21 Like-minded
24. 22 Loved and Blessed
25. 23 The Powerful Deliverer
26. 24 After This, the Judgment!
27. 25 Oh, That Satin!
28. 26 What Do I Wait For?
29. 27 Where Is He?
30. 28 Christ a King
31. 29 Joseph's Dying Words
32. 30 Following Jesus
33. 31 The Desires Granted
34. 32 The Inquiry
35. 33 Oh, I am on Fire!
36. 34 I Will Turn Over a New Leaf!
37. 35 The Indispensable
38. 36 Sickness is for God's Glory
39. 37 The Rambler's Rest

40. 38 The Easy Yoke
41. 39 The Christian's Claim
42. 40 Blood-guiltiness
43. 41 The Dry Bones
44. 42 The Sure Resource
45. 43 God's Word must Rule me
46. 44 Looking Upon the Pierced One
47. 45 The Voice of the Charmers
48. 47 We See Jesus!
49. 48 Comfort for Zion's Travelers
50. 49 Miracles Will Not Convict Men
51. 50 O That I Had the Wings of a Dove!
52. 51 God's End in His Goodness
53. 52 The Invitation to the Beloved
54. 53 Gracious Dealings
55. 54 Betrothing
56. 55 The Great Defect!
57. 56 A Child in the Well
58. 57 The Desire
59. 58 The Effect of Pardon
60. 59 The Motions of the Spirit
61. 60 The Bitterness of Sin!
62. 61 The Potter
63. 62 Joy Imparted
64. 63 God's Mercy to the Gentiles
65. 64 Sympathy with Sufferers
66. 65 God's Special Treasure!
67. 66 Time for God to Work!
68. 67 The Spirit of Revelation
69. 68 Hearken and Hear
70. 69 A Pleasant Sight
71. 70 I Need Two Things; Or, Repentance and Faith
72. 71 Ah! That's Hard Work!
73. 72 As Happy as a Prince
74. 73 Deborah's Benevolent Desire
75. 74 The Lost Soul's Request!
76. 75 This Your Day!
77. 76 Past and Present

## **00 Good News for All!**

---

Good News for All!

James Smith, 1860

## 00 PREFACE

---

### PREFACE

Good News! Who does not like to hear, or read good news? There is in all of us a disposition to do so, and God takes advantage of this, and calls his last, his best message to man, Good-News — which is the literal meaning of the word Gospel. It is the good news of a Savior — of a Savior for sinners — for sinners just as they are, with all their sins. This Savior is God's Son, able to save anyone; and willing to save all who are willing to be saved by him. This Savior, saves freely, saves perfectly, and saves with pleasure — all who come to be saved by him. It is his delight to save. It is his greatest work to save, and the work in which he takes the greatest pleasure.

Now, as my little book is full of Christ, I have taken the liberty to call it Good News. And as it contains something suited to all people, and all cases, I call it "Good News for all." I have endeavored to recommend my Lord and Savior, and only regret, that I have not ability to write of his love, power, and grace, in more lofty strains, and in a more befitting manner. I can assure my reader, that if he will go to Jesus for himself, and become experimentally acquainted with him, he will say, after all I have written in my book, "The half was not told to me!" The half! No, nor the thousandth part! Jesus is the great wonder of the universe. He is unequalled. After all God has done in Heaven and in earth, we feel justified in saying, "God in the person of his Son,

Has all his mightiest works outdone."

Reader, I pray that the Holy Spirit may use my book to reveal Jesus to your soul. If you have never seen his glory — you will be filled with surprise and wonder; and you will never rest until you have proved the merit of his blood, and can call him your Savior. If you know him already — may the Holy Spirit reveal him more fully and more clearly to you; and if he does, you will love him, adore him, and rejoice in him, more than you have ever done. Gracious Lord, take this little work, as the offering of a grateful child, and use it to honor Jesus, to benefit your believing people, and to save souls from death! Lord, save souls, save souls, by this feeble instrument, to the glory of your own free and sovereign grace. Amen.

## 01 Divine Teaching

---

Divine Teaching The Holy Spirit is the great teacher of the church of God — and none teaches like him. His great subject is Christ, and to know Christ is life everlasting. It matters but little what we know — unless we know Christ; nor what knowledge we have of Christ — unless it is spiritual and experimental. No one can learn to know Christ of himself — a teacher therefore is necessary; as it is the heart, rather than the head which needs to be taught, and as man cannot get at the heart — a Divine teacher is necessary. This being the case, the Holy Spirit is provided and promised, and Jesus promising the Spirit to his disciples, said, "But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things." John 14:26. And the Apostle John, speaking of the Holy Spirit, as the anointing, says, "The same anointing teaches you." As a teacher, the Holy Spirit . . .

enlightens the darkened mind,

shines on the truth to be taught, and

so informs and corrects the judgment. By degrees, he teaches us to know ourselves — and then to know the Savior. Every new discovery of our depravity, pollution, and misery — is introductory to some new discovery of Christ, in his person, righteousness, and grace. The foundation of our knowledge of Christ — is always laid, in the knowledge of ourselves. His teaching always tends to some practical results; as the effect of it therefore — we apply to Christ, receive from Christ, rejoice in Christ, and devote ourselves to the praise and glory of Christ. Everything the Spirit teaches, has a direct tendency to lead us to Christ. If he therefore teaches us to know the law — it is that we may flee to Christ and seek deliverance from it. If he teaches us to know doctrine — through every doctrine, he teaches us to have fellowship with Christ. If he teaches us to understand gospel ordinances — it is in order that attending to them, we may meet with Christ, and honor him. So from every spot, and from every subject — the Holy Spirit, leads us directly to Christ; and the more we experience of his teaching, the more precious Christ becomes, and the more simple and entire is our dependence upon him. As a teacher, the Holy Spirit displays the greatest wisdom — teaching us as we are able to bear. He manifests the most touching tenderness — even as a mother toward her only, her beloved child. He exercises unequalled patience — putting up with our dullness, waywardness, and inconstancy. He teaches us according to the best, and most approved system, so that his lessons are never forgotten, nor can they be perverted. What we merely learn from the Word, or hear from man — we may pervert; but what the Spirit teaches — is accompanied with grace, and humbles and sanctifies, while it instructs and informs.

Every one taught by the Spirit, so knows himself — as to renounce all dependence on anything, and everything of his own.

He so knows the law — as to realize that he can never be justified by his obedience to it.

He so knows the Savior — as to renounce all, and everything for him. He so knows the world — as to forsake it, preferring, the Savior's worst things, to its best things.

He so knows Satan — as to flee from him, and seek shelter and protection, from the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Reader, is the Holy Spirit your teacher? Methinks from the foregoing remarks, that you should be able to tell. You must be taught of God, or you cannot be a child of God; for thus it is written in the Scriptures, "All your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children." Do you ask, "But how may I know for a certainty that I am taught of God?" We cannot give you a better answer, than the Savior's own words, who quoting from the prophet in the foregoing passage, says, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God, every one therefore who has heard, and learned of the Father, comes unto me." Have you as a poor lost sinner, come to Jesus? Have you come to him for salvation? Are you daily coming to him . . .

as the hungry man to be fed,

as the filthy child to be cleansed,

as the naked beggar to be clothed? In a word, are you coming to Jesus for grace now, the grace you will need through life; and for glory, that when you die, you may be received into everlasting habitations? If so, no doubt but the Spirit is your teacher, for these are the legitimate and invariable effects of his work. To him therefore you may look to be taught all that is necessary for you to know — and on him you may depend to train you up for Heaven. But if you are not taught of God you are in a dreadful state, for . . .

you have no correct knowledge of yourself,

you have no saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus,

you do not understand the gospel,

nor can you be fit for Heaven!

Let me beseech you then to come to a decision upon this point, and if you have the Spirit as your teacher, thank God, and seek more of his gracious instructions. But if you have not, or cannot satisfactorily conclude that you have — then as a free gift from a gracious God, seek this blessing. Fix your mind, and exercise your faith, on this gracious assurance of the Savior, nor rest until you realize its truth. "If you being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children — then how much more shall your Heavenly Father, give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

## 02 Standing in Grace

---

### Standing in Grace

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1-2

Every man by nature is under the law, bound to obey its precepts, and pay its penalty; and unless its requirements are fully met, the law can never justify us. But the gospel invites us to leave the law, and come to the Savior; and coming to the Savior — we are delivered from the law; it has no more power over us than if it had executed the sentence of death on us, it having put Christ to death in our stead. We are dead to the law — and the law is dead to us. We are not under the law — but under grace; Jesus has died for our offences, and has been raised again for our justification. Our privilege is great, our state is most blessed. We stand in grace, according to Paul's words, who speaks of "this grace wherein we stand." Romans 5:2. Grace is favor, law is requirement; we are not under requirement therefore — but under favor. We will look at our Privileged State. We are JUSTIFIED. Justified by his grace. Justified by the blood of Jesus. Justified by faith in Christ.

We are reconciled to God, who meets us at the cross, holds out the hand, and reconciles us to himself.

We are not only reconciled — but are become intimate friends, and are treated as such. Not only intimate friends — but special favorites, and are therefore . . .

allowed to come to God when we will, and wherever we will;

to walk with God all the day, and every day;

to commune with God on all that interests us;

to commit our all to God;

to be preserved and kept safe;

to leave our all with God, without anxiety or perplexity;

to expect from God all he has promised, and all we ask in faith.

Yes, we may expect . . .

sympathy in all our sufferings;

a supply of all our wants; and

support under all our troubles. Can any state be more blessed? Could we be more highly privileged? For us — all the demands of the law are met. To us — all the blessings of the gospel

are given.

We are savingly interested in God's highest love.

We may claim all the merit of the life and death of his Son.

We may look for all the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.

We STAND in this State. Our standing is firm, for there is to us, no condemnation. We shall stand to the last, for we shall suffer no inglorious defeat. Our condition is stable, for we build on a rock. Our privilege is permanent, for grace never changes. The oath, the promise, and the unchangeable love of God secures us. Being in Christ now — we shall be in Christ forever. Being united to Christ now — we shall never be severed from him. Our standing is from grace — grace in God's heart, he had free favor towards us. Our standing is of grace, or it is entirely gratuitous. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Our standing is to the glory of grace. As Adam's fall proved the weakness of standing in law — so the standing of the whole church proves the strength of standing in grace. From this rock . . .

no waves can wash us,

no hurricane can blow us,

no power, either human or infernal, can remove us!

Here grace placed us, here grace preserves us, and here glory will find us! Blessed be God for grace, free grace, omnipotent grace, immutable grace! Blessed be God that we ever heard of grace, that we ever felt the power of grace, that we stand in grace!

Observe, Christ opened the way for us, therefore it is said of him, "By whom we have access into this grace wherein we stand." Jesus removed every impediment, and became the way to the Father — the way to the Father's love, mercy, and grace; the way to the Father's heart. Faith leads us into that way, along that way, to the end of that way; as it is written, "By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." Not by works of righteousness, not by pleasant or painful feelings — but by faith alone. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace. Faith excludes works, as grace excludes desert. Neither on the ground of doing, or deserving — but on the ground of faith alone are we justified, reconciled, and accepted of God.

Glory crowns it, hence it is added, "and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We rejoice in the hope that God will be glorified in our being thus privileged; and we rejoice in hope of being glorified with God and with Christ forever.

Let us take care then, that we do not get back under the law — but let us stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The law being satisfied, having received all it can demand — can now only be a rule, pointing out what God approves, and directing us how to walk and to please God. But let us take care that we do not get to dealing with God on the ground of works. We come not to the bar of justice — but to the throne of grace. We come not to bring a price, that we may purchase or procure some good thing; but that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need.

Let us take care not to block up the way to this grace, it is open to all, free for all, and alike easy to all. There is no difference between Jew or Gentile, bond or free, black or white; all have sinned, and therefore deserve to die — but all are invited to Jesus, and therefore may be pardoned, reconciled, and saved. Under the law, we are all enemies to God; but through the gospel, coming under grace, we become the friends and favorites of God. He treats us, not as the lawgiver treats law breakers; but as a kind and loving Father treats his tenderly beloved children. Blessed, forever blessed be God, for "this grace wherein we stand."

### 03 The Effect of the New Birth

---

The Effect of the New Birth Real religion is of God, making us like God, and so preparing us to dwell forever with God.

It begins in regeneration,

is carried on in sanctification, and

is consummated in glorification.

Real religion sets the heart against sin, and will ultimately free us from the very indwelling of sin. It is distinguished from all its counterfeits, in that it gives sin no quarter, nor allows the believer to make the least excuse for sin. It is strikingly set forth by the Apostle John, when he writes, "No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." 1 John 3:9. The New Birth. This is of God. Of God alone. Hence we are said to be born from above — born again — born of the Spirit. It is a change of nature — not merely a change of opinion, or a change of feeling, or even a change of conduct. A new, a spiritual, a divine nature is imparted; so that we become new creature, and are a new creation, created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works. It is a change from death to life, from darkness to light, from sin to holiness. Its design is to fit us for the service of God on earth, to equip as well as to do the will of God here, and then to enjoy the presence and blessedness of God in Heaven. The EFFECT of the New Birth. "No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." Sin is not his element, as before; it is not his trade or business, as it was once; he is not its servant, or slave. Sin annoys him, troubles him, and at times overcomes him — but it does not rule him. He can say with Paul, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

He may fall into sin, as David did — but he will not live in sin — but repent of it, and rise above it. He may fall more than once as Peter did — but like Peter he will weep and be restored. He is not sinless, for as James testifies, "We all stumble in many ways." But he . . .

hates sin,

flees from sin,

mourns over sin,

prays and strives against sin, renouncing it, and refusing to acknowledge it as his, because he does not act freely in it. As the Apostle said, so does he, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry

it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it!" Romans 7:15-20 The Reasons Assigned for Not Continuing to Sin. "No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." This is called "the root of the matter," — "the incorruptible seed that lives and abides forever" — "the engrafted word," — "the grace of God."

It is that divine principle imparted in regeneration, which is powerful, active, and immortal.

It enlightens us to see our duty and avoid evil; it furnishes us with motives for the performance of all good works; and it regulates the conscience, keeping it clean and tender.

"He is born of God." Therefore his nature is divine, for that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. The new nature in the believer is holy, even as God is holy; and it leads us . . . to love holiness, to sigh for holiness, and to strive to be holy in body, soul, and spirit. His object now is God's glory; as therefore God is dishonored by sin — he avoids it, shrinks from it, and fights against it. And as God is honored by holiness — he seeks to be holy in thought, word, and deed. His way is holiness. In this path he walks, pressing forward in it, keeping his eye upon its end, which is perfect holiness. His fellowship is spiritual, and therefore holy. He walks in fellowship with spiritual people here below, the living members of Christ's church; and he continues in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. His mark is Heaven. There all are holy, and as his heart is set upon it; and he lives in daily preparation for it. Let us beware then of mistaking the meaning of God's Word, or we shall bring our souls into bondage and distress. Let us beware of indulging in any sin — for he who indulges in sin, and lives in sin — is not born of God, nor can he have a good hope of glory.

Reader, are you born of God? How do you feel toward sin and sinful company? Are you like a fish out of water, when in company with the ungodly? Do you feel at home with saints, and especially happy with them, when, saintlike, their conversation is savory and spiritual? The Holy Spirit always makes those holy, in whom he dwells. The grace of God that brings salvation, teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts — we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. Nor can we have any assurance of a title to Heaven — but as sin is dethroned within us — and holiness becomes our element and delight. Blessed Spirit, teach me so to live, that I may prove to all around me that I am born of God, by avoiding sin; and may I prove that because the seed of God is in me, I cannot live in sin.

## 04 Affectionate Inquiries

---

### Affectionate Inquiries

I have just been reading of a Russian Princess, who writing to a good Missionary, in a time of general sickness and mortality, expressed her solicitude thus, "Are you all alive, my dear friend? Are you all safe? Are your souls in peace?"

Now, Reader, whoever you are, I want to put these questions to you, and I do so from a sincere desire to do you good, and make you happy. But unless you can answer these questions in the affirmative, you cannot be really happy, however you may manage to keep your conscience quiet and easy.

There are many, it is to be feared, who live an easy life, and die a quiet death — who are not safe, who know nothing of true peace; and as this may be your case, I wish to try and prevent it. May the Lord teach me so to write, and then so bless what I write — that this great end may be answered. Are You ALIVE? You may think this a strange question at first, and wonder at my proposing it; but all are not alive, who seem to be so, for life is more than mere existence. Many are in the state pointed out by the Apostle, when he says, "She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives." Lovers of pleasure, and all who live in sin — are dead while they live. The living body, is but the coffin of a dead soul. No man is really alive — unless he has been quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit. And no man is quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit — who does not hate sin, love holiness, and study to please God.

If you are alive — you will pray, for prayer is the breath of the living soul; and of every one that is born again, it may be said, "Behold, he prays."

If you are alive, you hunger and thirst after righteousness, for those who are born of the Spirit, want to be right with God, they therefore long for a righteousness, to justify them before God; and for holiness, to fit them to live in the presence of God.

If you are alive, you feed on the bread of life, which is Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ, you feel to be as necessary for your soul, as food is for your body; and as you daily need food, you must be daily fed in order to live, so you feel that you daily need Christ, and must exercise faith in him.

If you are alive, you will be found working for God, for all who are taught by the Holy Spirit, are desirous above all things else, to glorify and praise God; and they can only glorify and praise him, by doing and suffering his holy will, with zeal and patience.

I will not be tedious, let me then without adducing any more proofs of life, ask you to judge, and decide your case by these. Put these questions to your conscience, slowly, seriously, and as if a matter of the greatest importance was to be decided by your reply. Do you pray? Has prayer become to you as natural as breathing? Do you pray alone? Do you pray in your family? Do you pray in the house of God? Do you feel that you may as well try to live without breathing — as

without praying? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Have you discovered that your nature is depraved, and needs to be purified by the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit? And, do you daily desire to be found in Christ, not having on your own righteousness — but his; and do you earnestly seek to enjoy the renewings of the Holy Spirit, that so you may not only have a title to Heaven — but be prepared to dwell there in perfect holiness forever? Do you feed on Christ? Is he often in your thoughts, and do thoughts of Christ revive, refresh, and strengthen your soul; as good food does the body of the hungry man? Are you living for God, desiring to please him, and endeavoring to serve him in your day and generation? If in answer to these questions, you can say, "yes" — then no doubt but you are alive. Or, if from timidity, you can only say, "Well, though I dare not positively say it is so, yet I can say, that it is my daily prayer and desire that it may be so," — then in your case there is a comfortable reason to conclude that you are alive. But allow the word of exhortation — be not satisfied where you are, or with what you have attained — but give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Are You SAFE? Have you carefully examined into your state — and can you on scriptural grounds conclude that you are safe? You cannot be safe — unless you are in Christ. As there was no safety for Noah, when the flood came on the earth — but in the ark; so there will be no safety for the sinner, when the last fire consumes all things on earth — but in Christ. Noah was taught that he would need that ark, he was made willing to enter into that ark, and he actually entered the ark, and was shut in there. Just so, must we must feel that we need a Savior, we must be made willing to come to Jesus, we must actually come to him, and we must venture our souls upon him, and become united to him, before we can be safe.

We may hear of Christ, we may read of Christ, we may talk of Christ, we may attend to the ordinances of Christ — and yet not be in union with Christ. And unless we are united to Christ by a living faith — we are not safe, we cannot be safe. Are you then, my reader, in Christ? Do you remember when you were without Christ — when you first began to feel your need of Christ — when morning, noon, and night, you were thinking about Christ — when your principal fear was, lest you should not be received and saved by Christ — when with trembling steps and palpitating heart you came to Christ — and when you cast yourself down before him, determined to be saved by him, or to perish there?

If so, do you not also remember, how you then and there committed your soul into his hands, and gave yourself away to him, to be his forever? At that moment you entered into Christ, you became united to Christ, and from that moment to the present, you have been safe in Christ. Safe! Yes, for what can separate you from his love? Safe! Yes, for Christ dwells in you, and you dwell in him. Safe! Yes, for having died for your sins, and having arisen for your justification — he is your Advocate with the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for you. Are you safe, beloved? If you are in Christ you are — but if you are not in Christ! you cannot be. Is Your Soul in Peace? If you are alive — if you are safe — it ought to be in peace. If God has quickened you by his Spirit, and if he has united you to his Son — then he is at peace with you; he loves you with an everlasting love, he daily watches over you, and he will make all things that take place, to work together for your good. At peace! Surely you are, for what can harm you? What can really injure you? With . . .

God for your Father,  
the Lord Jesus for your Savior,

the Holy Spirit for your Comforter,

the oath and promise of God for your security, and

Heaven for your final home —

what could agitate, disturb, or distract your mind? At peace! Yes, if you have faith in God, confidence in the Lord Jesus, and implicit trust in the great and precious promises. At peace! Surely you are, unless you have taken your eye off the Savior, and are looking into your own hearts, or on your imperfect lives. At peace! Yes surely, being justified by faith, you have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. But have you peace?

Unless you are reconciled to God — you cannot have peace.

Unless you walk with God — you cannot have peace.

Unless you cast all your cares upon God — you cannot enjoy peace.

But, any believer, who rests on the finished work of Jesus, who sees God working in the dispensations of divine providence, and who exercises confidence in the covenant and promises of God — will have peace at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. Have you life, then, reader? If you have not, you may, Jesus can give it you — and he will, if you apply to him. He has never refused an applicant, or frowned on one who came to him; but he did complain of some of old, and exclaimed, "You will not come unto me, that you might have life." Are you safe? You may be! Jesus says, "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my hand." There is safety. But you may say, "Perhaps, I am not one of the sheep of Christ." Hear his own precious words, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one who sees the Son, and believes on him — has everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." If you therefore perceive that Jesus is the Son of God, and believe on him — then you are one of his sheep, and he will give you everlasting life now, and will raise you up in glory at the last day. Is your soul in peace? It may be, even though you are in poverty, or temptation, or persecution, or trial. For with a consciousness that we are accepted in the Beloved, that we are training for glory, and that all things that concern us, are arranged and provided for, by our Father who is in Heaven — we may well enjoy repose.

O that sinners would come to Jesus, that they might have life, and so live unto God!

O that all who are under convictions or impressions, would seek union to Jesus, that so they may realize that they are safe!

O that all who are in union with Christ, would walk closely with God, in confidence, and filial love — that so they may enjoy peace.

Gracious God, give life to every dead soul that reads these lines — give peace to every troubled heart, whose eye rests on these pages — and may both writer and readers enjoy safety in Christ, be made conformable to Christ, and so be prepared to dwell forever with Christ, for your mercy's sake. Amen.

## 05 God's Hidden Ones

---

God's Hidden Ones God's hidden ones are affected by hidden objects: Their secret SINS affect them. Sins of the heart, which no eye sees, and which no one but God knows — affect them painfully!

Secret FOES affect them — which no one else fears, for they wrestle not merely against flesh and blood — but against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Secret HONORS affect them — which no one else desires, for they aspire to be the sons of God, to sit with Jesus on his throne, to wear a crown of glory which never fades away, and to walk with the Son of God in white as his worthy ones.

Secret ATTAINMENTS affect them — which no one else seeks, for they seek to ascend the heights of holiness, and to sink into the depths of love. But they are most affected by the INVISIBLE ONE, especially with his sovereignty, holiness, and love. As seeing him, they perform secret duties, bear secret trials, and seek secret things which are not seen, which are eternal. Their names are written and hidden in God's book of life. Their life is hidden with Christ in God. Their persons are covered with the shadow of God's hand. They dwell in the secret place of the Most High. They are all glorious within, and they will appear in clothing of wrought gold.

Reader, are you one of God's hidden ones? Have you their secret experience of sin — and sorrow for it? Have you their secret experience of holiness — and ardent longings for it? Have you their secret experience of trial — and support under it? Do you live in secret and habitual fellowship with God? The world will see your works, whether good or bad, and they will judge by them; but God, looks at the heart, and you must judge by its habitual bent. The revealing day is coming, when God's hidden ones will be brought forth to the light — how will it be with you then? Christ who is their life, will appear, and then will they also appear with him in glory; have you this prospect? All will have to appear before him — but mark the difference, "some to everlasting life — and some to shame and everlasting contempt!" In which rank will you stand? In which?

## 06 The New Commandment

---

The New Commandment The distinguishing badge by which Christ would have his people known, is not by a sound creed, or by a conduct in the general correct, as excellent as these are — but by LOVE. Love is the image of his Father, love is the characteristic feature of his nature, therefore he said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples — if you love one another."

Nothing is so frequently pressed upon our attention, nothing is so urgently required of us — as love. Just before Jesus left his disciples, having displayed his own humble love in a most marvelous way, he said to them, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples — if you love one another." John 13:34-35. He does not merely counsel, or recommend — but he commands. He exercises his authority, and displays his love at once. Let us observe, His Command. "Love one another." He requires love to all saints, without any distinction. All who believe in him — all who acknowledge him — all who make his word their rule — every one whom he loves — we are to love. We must love the saints, though in some secondary things they differ from us. They may differ in some points of doctrine, they may differ in their views of ordinances, and they may differ as to Church government. But the dissenter is to love the churchman, and the churchman is to love the dissenter. The Calvinist is to love the Arminian, and the Arminian is to love the Calvinist. Love one another. Love every child of God, whether a babe, a young man, or a father. Whether a prince or a pauper, a peer or a peasant. Whether a youth or a man of grey hairs.

Jesus requires love — not merely pity, or sympathy, or respect — but love — that is, delight in them, and union to them. He calls this a new commandment, because it is a most excellent one — and also because it is novel. The old commandment was, "You shall love your neighbor — as yourself." The new commandment is, "Love one another — as I have loved you." Mark, The Pattern. We are to love one another — just as Jesus has loved us.

He loved us freely — without looking for advantage, or expecting profit. So we are to love each other, not for advantage derived, nor gifts conferred — but freely for Christ's sake.

He loved us tenderly, with more than a mother's love. So are we to love each other tenderly as children of the same family, as members of the same body.

He loved us with a love of preference, preferring the ties of grace to the ties of nature. So should we love the Lord's people with a purer, holier love, than our natural relations. His was a constant love. Having loved his own who were in the world — he loved them unto the end. So should we, displaying forbearance, patience, and compassion, as far as God's honor will allow.

He manifested his love by words and by deeds. So we should use the loving word, and perform the loving deed. From the cup of cold water, given in the name of Christ, up to our laying down our lives for the brethren. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. This love, Jesus displayed to us, and now he says, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Precious Savior, how wonderful your love! May the same mind, the same love be in us —

which was also in Christ Jesus.

"I command you to love each other, as I have loved you. For this purpose I died for you. For this purpose I have provided grace for you. For this purpose I exercise my authority, and command you to love one another. For this purpose I have placed you in your present circumstances to prove you. Will you love my brethren, my sisters? Will you love them — as I have loved you? Do you wish to do it? Will you strive to do it? Are you sorry that you have not done it?"

Beloved, are we not guilty? Have we not forgotten and neglected this new commandment? What is the cause of our divisions but this? What would cure our heart-burnings — what would heal our breaches — what would give power to our testimony — what would bring about a glorious revival in the church — what would render the most beneficial impression on the world? This, this, a practical attention to Jesus, when he says, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples — if you love one another."

## 07 Keeping Back Part of the Price

---

Keeping Back Part of the Price When the Spirit was poured out at the Pentecost, the disciples were of one heart and of one soul, they were full of joy, and of the Holy Spirit, and great grace was upon them all. They were like a body animated by one soul, all were members one of another; and so great was their love, that no one said that anything that he possessed was his own — but they had all things common. Those who had houses or lands sold them, and brought the price of them, and laid it at the Apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according to his need. But even then pretenders crept in, some who wished to be thought a great deal better than they really were. Covetous people, who wanted to be thought liberal — Ananias and Sapphira, agreed to sell their land, bring a part and give it to the church, pretending that they had given the whole — for which they were punished with immediate death, in the presence of the multitude, and against them it stands recorded, that "they kept back part of the price." Acts 5:2.

Now, I am not about to bring a charge against professors of the present day, of committing the same sin to the same extent, or from the same motive exactly, or in the same way; and yet it appears to me, that we do, and have done something very much like it. At our profession of Christ, did we not profess to make a full surrender, and to give him all? Now, have we acted as though we believed that we were entirely the Lord's, and as if our property were the Lord's too? Have we kept back no talent from his service? Have we never withheld the heart, or the head, or the hand — from God? Have we lived, and loved, and purposed, and acted — as consecrated people? We have professed that both we and ours were entirely the Lord's. Are we not guilty of keeping back part of the price?

Again, did we not profess to be prepared to part with all for the Lord, to take up his cross, and follow him wherever he goes? Did he not require us to hate all our relatives, in comparison with himself, and did we not consent to do so? Did he not tell us that if we were not ready to part with all, even our own lives for him — that we were not worthy of him, and that we could not be his disciples? And did we not agree to this? Was not our profession this, "I give myself wholly to the Lord — I prefer him to all, and everything beside — and I will give up everything for him, and to him?" But what does our conduct say? Does it not bear witness that "we have kept back part of the price?"

Once more, did we not profess that we would use all we have as the Lord's, in his work, and for his glory? Was not his honor and glory to be the grand aim of our lives? Did we not engage, that if we lived, we would live unto the Lord; or if we died, we would die unto the Lord? Did we not agree that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do — that we would do all to the glory of God? Was not this a solemn covenant between the Lord and our souls, and is not our witness in Heaven, and our record on high? But have we done so? Have we eaten and drank, dressed and enjoyed pleasure — with a view to the glory of God? Have we conducted our business, made our engagements, and discharged our obligations — in order to glorify God? Has the glory of God been kept before our eyes, and have we valued that, and aimed at that — more than anything, more than everything

beside? If we have not, have we been honest? Have we carried out our profession? Can we be guiltless? Have we not kept back part of the price?

Mothers, have you kept back a child from God — when it was required for his service? Fathers, have you thought more of wealth, respectability, and station, when arranging for the settlement of your sons — than of God's glory, or of Christ's cause? Rich man, have you been more concerned to keep pace with the times, or to keep rank with the world, to make money, invest money, or spend money for your own gratification, than for the honor of Christ? Poor Christian, have you repined at poverty, though your Savior chose the poor man's lot, and have you sought to please your employers, more than to please God? If so, in either case, or in all the cases — have you not kept back part of the price?

Look at Stephen — he carried out his profession, and laid down his life for his Lord. Look at Paul — he suffered the loss of all things, neither did he count his life dear unto him — but lived in a state of readiness to die for the Lord Jesus. Look at the Church at Jerusalem as a whole, and its members made God's glory the object of their lives. Look at the Macedonians, in deep poverty — yet out of love to Christ, they made even Paul to wonder at the riches of their liberality. Look at the Hebrew believers, they took joyfully the confiscation of their goods for Christ's sake, knowing in themselves, that they had in Heaven a better and enduring substance.

There have in every age been some noble spirits, who have held all they had — as Christ's; who have used all they had — for Christ; and who have done all they did — as for Christ. These are our examples. Such reprove us. O how selfish, how carnal, how worldly we have been! How much we have kept for ourselves, and how little we have given to Christ — how generally we have lived to ourselves, and how seldom we have lived to Christ. Yes, Lord, with shame and confusion of face — we must confess that we have too often kept back part of the price!

## 08 My Savior

---

My Savior To every Christian, there is a last enemy, a last conflict, and a last pain — and this prospect cheers us under our trials, and troubles, and temptations. David outlived all his foes, and he sang one of his sweetest songs unto the Lord, in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul; and he said, "The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer! My God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation. He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior — from violent men you save me!" 2 Samuel 22:2-3.

What a precious representation of what the Lord is to his people, and what he does for them. It is not what we are, or where we are — but what the Lord is to us — which makes us safe and happy. God, as revealed in the old covenant, was David's Savior, and God as revealed in the new covenant — as revealed in Jesus — is ours: and a precious Savior, he is too. My soul, meditate for a few moments on what Jesus is to you, and what Jesus has done for you. Look back and glance at the circumstances in which he found you, the deliverance he wrought for you, and how he became yours.

Jesus found me out of the way. God by his law had marked out a way in which his creatures should walk, its character was holiness, and its end His glory. But all we like sheep had gone astray, we had turned every one to his own way. We were in the path of death and destruction, and in the way to Hell.

We were not only out of the way — but we were enslaved. We were slaves of sin, the drudges of the world, and were led captive by the Devil at his will.

We were diseased — as well as enslaved. We were leprous from head to foot. We had the plague of the heart. The whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint.

We were imprisoned, as well as diseased. Shut up in unbelief and sin. Our cell was cold and damp, dark and narrow — and our imprisonment was not merely for a few years, it was forever.

We were dead, though still conscious, and to some things alive. Dead in our sins. Dead in trespasses and sins. For us, there was no help found on earth, nor hope out of Heaven. In this state we were — and we loved it well. At times we dreaded the future — but we neither desired, nor sought deliverance. Left to ourselves . . .

we would have wandered on in darkness, until we had perished in our sins;

we would have continued the slaves of sin and Satan forever;

our disease would have preyed upon our vitals to all eternity;

our prison walls would have enclosed us still;

we would have remained dead while we lived,

we would have suffered all the pangs of damnation forever! But Jesus saved me. He saved me from the roaring lion, who goes about seeking whom he may devour. He saved me from my raging lusts, so that sin shall not have dominion over me. He saved me from righteous wrath, and I, being justified by his blood, shall be saved from wrath through him. And with the Thessalonians, I am waiting for the Son of God from Heaven, even Jesus, who delivered me from the wrath to come. He saved me from death, the 'king of terrors,' depriving the monster of his sting, and giving me the victory over him. He has also saved me from the flaming furnace of Hell — from that lake of fire, and those floods of flame in which the lost must welter forever!

Jesus saved me by his mercy, the depth of mercy that was in his heart — by his merit, the infinite merit found in his obedience and blood — by his might, the omnipotent power of his arm — by his intercession, his living and pleading my cause with his Father in Heaven — by his sentence, your sins are forgiven you, go in peace. O you ever blessed Jesus, you are My Savior, you have saved me, you do daily save me, and you -will save me with an everlasting salvation!

Jesus became mine by believing on him. He is presented to sinners as his Father's free gift; his Holy Spirit taught me my need of him, led me to him, and enabled me to commit my soul unto him. The moment I exercised confidence in him, I felt my soul flow out in love to him. Then I was enabled to place my entire dependence on him, and felt that I had a rock beneath me, a stronghold around me, and a glorious Heaven above waiting to receive me. Then I had fellowship with him, for he opened his heart to me, and I opened my heart to him. He said "You are Mine!" — and I replied, "You are mine!" I told him of my guilt, and he pointed me to his blood — I told him of my fears, and he assured me of his love — I told him of my foes, and he said, "My grace is sufficient for you." Then I bowed before him and asked, "Lord, what will you have me do?" For I longed to obey him, and serve him, and glorify him. Then I enjoyed the Spirit's witness — he shone upon the Scriptures, and I saw my interest in it — he brought home the promises, and I tasted their sweetness and felt their power — he melted my heart, breathed sweet fragrance over it, shed abroad the love of God in it, and looking at Jesus with confidence I could say, "My beloved is mine — and I am His!"

See then the object of my joy, it is Jesus. Jesus in his glorious person — Jesus in his precious blood — Jesus in his magnificent righteousness — Jesus in his infinite grace. It is not what I am — but what Jesus is. It is not what I do — but what Jesus has done. It is not what I feel — but what Jesus is to me.

See too the subject of my songs, if I sing — I will sing of Jesus; if I sing — I will sing to Jesus. They sing sweetly of Jesus in Heaven, and we will sing of Jesus on earth.

See also the cause of my happiness. I have a Savior! A Savior, who is divine. A Savior, who has ever loved me. A Savior who lived, labored, and died for me. A Savior, who before the throne of his Father pleads for me. A Savior, who is in his Father's house, preparing a place for me. A Savior, who will soon come and receive me to himself, that so I may be forever with him! Yes, I have a Savior — one who . . .

watches over me,

walks through the wilderness with me,

and rejoices to do me good.

Reader, have you a Savior? Can you use these two precious words, "My Savior?" Have you realized that you were lost? Have you fled to his cross? Have you fallen into his arms? Have you been cleansed by his blood, and clothed in his righteousness? Do you possess his Spirit? Make sure work, O make sure work, for eternity is just at hand. Death is coming, judgment follows — and then an eternity of happiness or woe! Your eternal all depends on having Jesus for your Savior! No one can save you but Jesus. No one can support you in sickness, comfort you in death, or give you victory over the grave — but Jesus. O make sure then of your saving interest in Jesus! Delay not, rest not, until with well-founded confidence you can say of God's Son, "He is my Savior!"

You glittering toys of earth — adieu!

A nobler choice is mine;

A real prize attracts my view,

A treasure all divine!

Begone, unworthy of my cares,

You specious baits of sense;

Inestimable worth appears —

The Pearl of price immense!

Jesus, to multitudes unknown —

O name divinely sweet!

Jesus, in you, in you alone,

Wealth, honor, pleasure meet! Should both the Indies, at my call,

Their boasted stores resign;

With joy I would renounce them all,

For leave to call You mine! Should earth's vain treasures all depart —

Of this dear gift possessed,

I'd clasp it to my joyful heart,

And be forever blessed.

Dear sovereign of my soul's desires,

Your love is bliss divine;

Accept the wish that love inspires,

And bid me call you mine!

## 09 Lead Me, Teach Me!

---

Lead Me, Teach Me!

Divine teaching is in substance — the same in all ages, and under all circumstances. As we all need the same blessings — we are all led to the same source of supply — and taught to ask the same favors, on the same grounds. How frequently we are struck with this thought, when reading God's Word, especially the book of Psalms: the prayers of David find an echo in our hearts, and we feel that we are the subjects of the same fears, desires, and hopes. How often has my heart ascended, while my lips have uttered, "Show me Your ways, O Lord, teach me Your paths; guide me in Your truth and teach me — for You are God my Savior, and I wait on You all day long!" Psalms 25:4-5 This shows . . .

that we have a knowledge of our ignorance — and desire to be divinely taught,

that we are sensible of our weakness — and our need of a divine Teacher,

that we are aware that the Lord teaches his people — and reveals the truth in its purity, beauty, and glory to the soul,

that we cannot be satisfied with uncertainty, or the mere outside of truth — but that we wish to have an inward, heart-affecting, experimental knowledge of it.

Such a petition, presented to the Lord, with fervor, sincerity, and faith — proves that we are already under the enlightening and gracious operations of the Holy Spirit; for none go to the Lord, seeking to be divinely taught — but such as see their own folly, and realize the inability of man to teach them to profit. The soul, that from time to time, presents this petition —

honors the Lord Jesus Christ as the divine prophet,

proves the drawing power of the Father in the heart, and

glorifies the blessed Spirit, whose office it is to lead us into all truth.

"For You are God my Savior." From this, it is evident that we have felt our need of salvation, that we have sought the Lord on account of it, and have pleaded with God for it. Also that we have received some answers to our prayers, and have now an interest in it. We therefore plead past mercies — for present blessings; and our saving interest in God — when we seek new favors from God. We now need to be led and taught of God, we therefore cry, "I have looked to you for salvation, you have graciously heard my request, I now feel my need of your guidance and instruction — and therefore I come again, and beseech you to lead me in your truth and teach me."

It is the Christian's best plan, and highest wisdom, having received from the Lord — to go to the Lord for present supplies — let him need what he may. As also to make use of past favors, as a plea for present attention — for the Lord loves to hear his people's acknowledgment, and again

appears to bless them. The Lord having manifested himself as the God of salvation, and granted the greater blessing, it would be wrong to doubt his love, or question his willingness to grant us any lesser favor.

"I wait on You all day long!" This proves sincerity, when the soul not only asks for a blessing — but waits for it. It shows that the soul not only needs and desires the good thing sought — but expects it. It is not satisfied to ask for divine teaching — but it really wishes to be taught. It does not compliment the Lord by offering a formal prayer, and then insult him, by expecting to obtain from the creature; but asking of God, expecting from God — it waits on God; waits all the day, and day after day too!

O how many profess to come to God, and seek good things from God — but only for a little time, or at intervals — whereas they should wait on the Lord, and wait on him until they obtain — seeing he has promised, "Those who wait on Me shall not be ashamed." The consistent believer, looks up to God in the morning, calls upon him at noonday, and perseveres hour after hour — until the blessing comes down. As David said, "O my God, I cry in the day-time — but you hear not; and in the night season, am not silent." And again, "Be merciful unto me, O Lord — for I cry unto you daily." The prayer we have been considering, indicates saving personal religion! "Lead me" "I cry unto you!" That is not real religion, which is not personal; or which has not its seat in the heart, influencing the desires, and regulating the life. That soul will be preserved from all destructive errors, and led into all saving truth — which seeks divine guidance and teaching, waiting upon God for it. And those are the best educated in spiritual matters — who are jealous of their own hearts, who fear to trust their own judgments, and from a sense of their own ignorance, constantly seek to be taught of God. But let us endeavor to impress this thought upon our minds: that merely asking is not enough! We must ask from a deep sense of need, with a desire to obtain, and persevere in waiting upon God — until we receive. Nor only so, we must use all the means in our power, as . . .

reading the Word,

hearing the gospel,

conversing with others, and

meditating on what we read and hear. And yet at the same time, we are to expect the blessing to come directly from God, though it comes through the means.

Hence wisdom says, "Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it. Blessed is the man who listens to ME, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord!" Proverbs 8:33-35 But those who profess to seek the Lord's teaching, and to desire to know the truth — and yet listen to error, or read erroneous books — make it clear that they are not sincere, for if they were, they would not tamper with temptation, or play with the snare! Let us then keep close to God's Word, and in every difficulty, either in providence or grace, be this our prayer, "Show me Your ways, O Lord, teach me Your paths; guide me in Your truth and teach me — for You are God my Savior, and I wait on You all day long!"

## 10 An Israelite Indeed!

---

### An Israelite Indeed!

True grace in the heart always manifests itself by a concern for the welfare of others, and an attempt to bring them to Jesus. Where there is no concern for the salvation of others, no efforts to save souls from death — the case is at best very doubtful. When Jesus called Philip, he began to look after Nathaniel, spoke to him, pleaded with him, and met his objections; nor did he leave him, until he had brought him to Jesus. "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and said of him: Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit." John 1:47. Let us look at:

**Nathaniel's Title.** "An Israelite indeed!" As an Israelite — he was distinguished from other nations; and as an Israelite indeed — he was distinguished from many in his own people. He was circumcised in heart, as every true believer is, being renewed in the spirit of his mind. He was taught out of God's law — and therefore knew God's holiness, and his own sinfulness, and the method of salvation by grace. He was savingly interested in the atonement, which was made by Israel's priest, for Israel's race. He was cleansed from pollution and defilement, with the washing of water by the word. He was separated from the world around, separated by God, and for God, as the whole house of Israel were. He was related to God, being part of the people whom the Lord called his own, his first-born. To him as a sincere, sensible, and instructed worshiper of God — no sin was imputed, for to him belonged the blessedness of the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord does not impute sin.

Just so, all God's true Israel are . . .

regenerated by the Holy Spirit — taught of God;

savingly interested in the sacrifice and perfect work of Christ;

cleansed from pollution by the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit;

adopted into God's family; and

justified from all things before God's throne. Consider, then,

**Nathaniel's Excellence.** "An Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit." There was no pretense about him, no hypocrisy, no sham. He was really what he appeared to be — as every professor should be.

He was sincere before God in prayer and praise, offering him the service of the heart, and giving utterance to the feelings of the soul.

He was sincere before men in his profession and in his dealings. He professed to be just what he was — and was just what he professed to be. His word might be taken, and his honesty trusted.

He was honest with himself, examining his own heart, and comparing his inner life and outward conduct with God's own righteous standard. He was all of one piece — the same in all places, in all companies, and at all times, so that you may know him. He hated craft, cunning, duplicity, and artifice; and was open and candid in his dealings. This is just what every professor of religion should be and do. Brethren, let us be deceitless. Let us have no hypocrisy, no pretense, no sham. But let us be sincere, upright, and honest. If we are wicked — let us appear so; and if we are righteous — let us prove it by works of righteousness. But never let us cover hatred with deceit, either toward God or man. Let us now glance at, The Savior's Note of Admiration. "Behold!" Behold the character, for . . .

it is rare and uncommon;

it is excellent and admirable;

it is instructive and impressive. This ought not to be the case — but it is. Let us, therefore, behold, and learn . . .

what Christ admires;

what grace produces;

and what distinguishes man from man — SINCERITY.

Let us behold and imitate, for there is no true religion without sincerity of heart and life. Let us behold and see what God approves, and what glory will crown, for the upright shall dwell in his presence.

Observe, profession and possession differ: many have a profession of Christ — who do not have possession of Christ. All who profess to be God's Israel — are not Israelites indeed; "for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision that is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, whose praise is not of men — but of God." Therefore said the apostle, speaking of himself and his brethren, "We are the true circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." The Savior discerns and distinguishes. His eye penetrates the heart. He is acquainted with every thought, purpose, and motive of the soul. There is no deceiving him, for he has said, "I am he who searches hearts and minds."

Gracious Savior, search me in mercy. Show me just what I am in your sight — and make me just what I ought to be, both before God and man. Save, O save me, from all guilt, hypocrisy, and deceit; and make me open, honest, and sincere; that those who know me best, may say of me, as you did of Nathaniel, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

## 11 Not Orphans!

---

### Not Orphans!

How exquisitely tender is the heart of Jesus! It always was so. He could never break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax. His heart overflows with love to poor sinners. How finely he displayed this, just as he was going to suffer for our sins. He exhorts his disciples to let nothing trouble them — but to exercise faith in him. He teaches them how to pray so as to succeed, by asking of the Father in his name. He directs them to keep his commandments, and promises them the Spirit of truth as a Comforter, to abide with them forever. And then he assures them of his own presence and love. "I will not leave you comfortless, or orphans, I will come to you." John 14:18. A believer cannot be an orphan — for Jesus is the father of the fatherless, and in him the fatherless finds mercy.

"I will not leave you orphans," or without sympathy in suffering — this the orphan often fears. Jesus will ever pity and sympathize with his suffering people, and his sympathy will soothe and support them.

They shall not be left without provision in necessity — this the orphan fears too. But Jesus will ever provide for, and supply his people's needs — for his eye sees them, and by opening his hand, he will supply them.

They shall not be left without protection in danger — this the orphan often dreads. But in every season of danger Jesus will be present, and out of every danger he will deliver. Nor shall they be left without someone to love them, which is the bitterest ingredient in the orphan's cup — for Jesus will love them, in sickness and health, in poverty and plenty, in life and in death.

O believer, however weak your faith, however trying your path; though relatives die, and friends forsake — you shall never be left an orphan!

Jesus will sympathize with you in all your sufferings,

he will provide for all your needs,

he will protect you from all your foes and dangers,

and he will love you with an everlasting love.

Fear not then, for Jesus has more than a father's care, and more than a mother's love — and he has pledged his word, that he will not leave you an orphan. Believe his word, trust his grace — and so you will live a happy life.

"I will come to you." Jesus comes to us . . .

in his providence — to supply us;

in his ordinances — to refresh us;

in his word — to instruct us;  
by his Spirit — to comfort us; and  
he will soon come in person — to take us unto himself.

"I will come to you" . . .

to answer your prayers,  
to defend your person,  
to provide your supplies, and  
to comfort you by . . .  
relieving you in pain,  
manifesting myself to you, and  
assuring you of my love.

Precious Lord Jesus, will you thus then come to me? Will you thus prove the depth of your immortal love! O for grace to trust you, and to live daily under the conviction — that you will visit me, and be more and better than a father to me!

If Jesus comes to me, all will be well. His presence will give me . . .

light in darkness,  
joy in sorrow,  
strength in weakness,  
and happiness in woe.

If Jesus visits me, if Jesus will be with me — then I can . . .

go anywhere,  
carry any cross,  
perform any duty, and  
even glory in tribulation.

Jesus will be with me, he will come to me, for I have his word, and he is faithful; more, I have his heart, and he is immutable. Let me then, in my darkest path, in my deepest trials, in my saddest hours, exercise faith in this most precious promise, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you."

It anticipates all our fears, and removes them, for how can I fear — if Jesus will come unto me. It is intended to strengthen our faith, that we may be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. It ensures our comfort — for left comfortless we cannot be. And it displays the wonderful tenderness of the love of Christ. He wishes us to be happy, and therefore he assures us beforehand, that he

will be with us, and be a father unto us.

## 12 He Shall Save a Soul from Death!

---

He Shall Save a Soul from Death!

"Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death, and cover over a multitude of sins!" James 5:20

Death, to a sinner is dreadful, as it is the end of his comforts, pleasures, and anticipations. But the death of the soul — is the soul of death. The death of the body, as bad as it is — is as nothing compared to the death of the soul. Annihilated — the soul will not, cannot be; it is created to live forever, and exist forever it must.

Yes, light will be extinguished — and it will be in utter darkness.

Hope will be extinguished — and it will be in black despair.

All comfort will be extinguished — and it will be in agony, perfect agony forever.

If the soul dies — its portion will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

If souls are left alone, they will die. Oh, how many are dying all around us! But they may be saved — and in order that they may be saved, God gave his only begotten Son, to be a sacrifice for sin; and to give his life a ransom for many. The Son of God came into our world, kept the law for us, and died the just for the unjust. He invites sinners to come unto him, promises to receive all who come, and to save all he receives. The Holy Spirit joins with the Father and the Son, he has revealed Christ in the gospel, he attends the testimony of Christ with his power; and unites with the Savior and the Bride, in calling to the sinner to come. And now, the Father having given his Son, the Son having given his life, the Spirit having given the gospel, and promised his presence and his power — it is for every believer to set his heart, and use his talents, and seize every opportunity, to save souls from death. May the blessed Spirit apply these words of the apostle to us individually, to animate, stimulate, and stir us up to duty, "He shall save a soul from death." Who Shall? The Christian who aims at it, whose heart is set upon it, and who seeks to do it in God's way. Not only the minister, the missionary, or the teacher — but the private Christian. Not only the gifted, the talented, the influential Christian — but the poor man, the laborer, the child, however few his gifts, however small his talents, or however secluded his situation. The man of prayer, who pleads with God;

the man of faith, who believes God;

the man of diligence, who bears his testimony daily;

the man of love, who out of love to God, and love to his fellow men, sets his heart upon this great, this glorious work. This honor may be obtained by any Christian man, for it is "not by might, nor by power — but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty." Which words are not intended to be a cloak for idleness, or an excuse for inactivity; but to furnish a stimulus and an encouragement to the weakest among us — to attempt great things, with a view to God's glory. For while the Holy Spirit

always maintains his prerogative, and manifests his sovereignty; He at the same time puts honor on the man, who sympathizing with God in his promises, and with man in his misery, seeks to save souls from death.

Reader, have faith in God — have faith in the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation — and in faith bear your testimony, speak the word of warning, invitation, and inquiry, speak in love, and you shall save a soul from death. To this end, there should be earnest, importunate, agonizing prayer. Such prayer takes hold on God, has power with him, and brings his power to bear on the human heart. How little we know of travailing in birth for souls, until Christ is formed in them. Prayer should be associated with direct efforts to obtain the end. God saves souls by the simple, earnest, affectionate, and faithful preaching of the gospel; if therefore we preach, we should seek grace so to preach, that as was said of the Apostles, we may so speak that a great multitude may believe. God saves souls by kind, gentle, loving, teaching; if therefore we teach, whether children or adults, we should endeavor so to teach. God saves souls by direct and personal appeals; we ought therefore to speak and appeal to all about us, with a view to save their souls from death. God saves souls by the reading of his Word, good books, and evangelistic tracts; if therefore we desire to save souls, we should aid the circulation of the Scriptures, lend good books, and give away Christian tracts — in proportion to our means. God saves souls by the influence of example; a holy life is a most influential sermon; we ought therefore to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world, not only that God may be glorified — but that we may save souls from death.

If we would be aided and honored in this work, our hearts must be set on it. But, alas! we see that it is not so. The mind must be occupied with that thoughts of it. We are never likely to do a work — which does not occupy our thoughts. We must think, if we would plan — we must plan, if we would work wisely — and we must carry out our plans in a spirit of prayer and dependence upon God, if we would succeed. The life, so far as lawful business, and other claims, will admit, must be consecrated to it; and with the heart set upon it, the mind filled with it, and the life consecrated to it — we may say of any, of every Christian, "he shall save a soul from death."

Reader, is your soul saved? It was lost once, and if it is now saved, you have passed through a great and important change — you have been born of the Spirit, you have been converted to God — and if this is the case, you know something about it. God does not act upon us as upon passive matter. He does not save man as if he were a horse or a mule. But he saves by producing conviction of sin, a sense of danger, a desire for safety, and a willingness to be saved in his own way, by grace through faith. He then leads to Jesus, gives faith in Jesus, and enables us to commit the soul to Jesus. Having led us to believe in Christ for life and salvation — he then gives a delight in his law, a thirst for holiness, and a desire so to live as to honor and glorify him. Is this your experience? Then you are saved from death. If you know nothing about it — then you are still dead in trespasses and sins, and the wrath of God abides on you!

## 13 Pray for the Peace Of Jerusalem

---

Pray for the Peace Of Jerusalem To the Jew, there was a charm in the very name of "Jerusalem", it was to him the holy city, and the object of his warmest love. And that name has by use, become so associated with Christian churches, and our Heavenly home, that it is almost as precious to us Christians. Indeed, with many of us, when Jerusalem is mentioned, we think, not of an earthly city — but of Christian privileges, or the glory that is to be revealed. Heaven is our Jerusalem, in the highest sense of the word, for there we shall have perfect peace. Where the Lord's spiritual people meet for worship — is our Jerusalem, in a subordinate sense, for there we enjoy the peace of God in the conscience, and are at peace one with another. I have just been reading the exhortation of the Psalmist, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; those who love you shall prosper." Psalms 122:6. And my mind at once reverted to the church of God at large, and then to the little hill, where I meet with the brethren to worship, and as I did so, I thought of — The Exhortation. The object to be prayed for is, "Jerusalem," which represents the church of God in four things:

1. Here the king resides. Yes, Jesus, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, not only meets with his people — but he dwells among them. They have his presence with them always, and when they meet for worship, he manifests himself to them. How often have we seen the goings of our God, the goings of our king in the sanctuary.

2. Here authority is exercised. The laws of Jesus are enforced, and godly discipline is kept up. Not only so — but there is authority in the Word preached, which convinces, condemns, absolves, and sets at liberty, all who believe in his name.

3. Here the tribes meet. From different parts, and places, the people come up. They meet . . .

as pilgrims, to enjoy rest;

as brethren, to enjoy communion;

and as the people of God to worship.

4. Here favors are conferred. The choicest, richest favors, which God can give! The guilty, receive a pardon;

the hungry, obtain food;

the feeble, are strengthened and invigorated;

the ignorant, are instructed and informed;

the sorrowful, are comforted and cheered;

the miserable, find mercy; and

the necessitous, receive grace to help them in time of need.

Here it is, that the Lord . . .

satisfies the hungry with good things,

blesses the provision of his house,

and fills his poor with bread. The blessing to be sought is "peace." Peace is the soul of both domestic and social happiness.

Peace! that is, freedom from foes. Especially from foes within.

Peace! that is union and cooperation, the body one, the members all working in harmony and love.

Peace, that is, brotherly affection, each looking upon all as brethren, and each loving the other, with fraternal love.

Peace! that includes, plentiful supplies. Supplies of temporal good, and supplies of spiritual blessings.

Pray then for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray alone, and in private. Pray together, in the family, and in the house of God. Pray, and pray with energy and fervor. Pray, and pray in faith. Pray, and pray with importunity. Pray, as for an object beloved. Pray, as for necessary and invaluable blessings! The Inducement. "Those who love you shall prosper." Here is a promise, a glorious promise, for all who love, serve, and intercede for the church of God. If we love the saints, we shall sympathize with them; and if we sympathize with them, we shall pray for them. As the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed, not for himself — but for his friends; so the Lord often grants us a peculiar blessing, when we are interceding for others, and employing our talents on their behalf.

Those who love and pray for God's people shall prosper; the prosperity may not be temporal, though it often is — but it shall be spiritual, and it frequently includes both. They shall . . .

grow in grace,

be strong in faith,

enjoy delightful fellowship,

realize solid happiness, and

rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Let us ask then: Are we citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem? Do we love, pray for, and strive to aid the prosperity of the holy city? Are we enjoying the blessing of prosperity — soul prosperity? If not — why? God has promised, and he meant what he said. He has fulfilled his promise in the experience of thousands, then why not in ours? If we love Jerusalem, pray for her peace, and seek her good — we shall enjoy prosperity. This is God's highway to prosperity, let us therefore walk in it!

## 14 The Breath of Our Nostrils

---

The Breath of Our Nostrils "Stop trusting in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Of what account is he?" Isaiah 2:22

We very frequently make too much of men, and then they become a snare unto us, and cause us trouble. Man is not to be trusted, he is not to be relied upon; and if we at all depend on him — he will surely disappoint us. This always has been the case, and always will be, therefore the prophet says, "Stop trusting in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Of what account is he?"

Israel had a king once, of whom they seemed to be proud, and with whom they were pleased. They looked upon him as necessary to their existence, and anticipated from him both comfort and deliverance. But he is slain, and they are sorely disappointed — and in the bitterness of their souls they cry out, "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, under his shadow shall we live among the heathen." Lamentations 4:20. These words are more applicable to Jesus, than to Josiah, or Zedekiah, and to him let us apply them.

Jesus is to his church, as "the breath of her nostrils," that is, the life of man, therefore we read, "He takes away their breath, they die." All our life is in Jesus, and from him it flows to us. If we could be severed from him — it would be like taking away our breath, we would immediately die. Jesus is essential to our very existence, as well as to our comfort and prosperity. He is the anointed of the Lord, appointed to reign, and be sole sovereign in his church. To him we owe obedience,

on him we fix our love, and

of him we make our boast.

Blessed Redeemer, you are as the breath of our nostrils to us; and as the anointed of the Lord, we would love you, obey you, and make you our boast!

"He was taken in their pits." The Jews with Judas for their guide, dug a pit for his feet, and he being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, was taken in their pits. For the sins of his people — he sunk into the horrible pit, and into the miry clay; from whence he cried, "You have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Your wrath lies hard upon me, and you have afflicted me with all your waves!" He fell into the pit of the divine wrath, and there suffered the terrors of Jehovah — which otherwise we must have suffered forever! He descended into the pit of the grave, that from thence he might bring his people. In preparing those pits, his Church and his Father, his friends and his foes took part. He was taken — but not unawares, for all was according to a previous arrangement and plan.

"We said, under his shadow, we shall live among the heathen." He will afford us refreshing shade, and powerful protection. We shall sit down under his shadow with delight, and find his fruit sweet unto our taste. We may be exposed to the scoffs, reproaches, and persecutions of the heathen, which like a fiery sun, may throw its scorching beams upon us — but Jesus shall be our shield and our shade. He will be . . .

our friend in loneliness,

our comforter in distress, and

our Savior in every time of trouble. We expect life with all its comforts, life with all its pleasures, life with all its usefulness — to flow from him.

Yes, Jesus is the breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, and under his shadow we expect to live and be happy. He was taken in their pits — but he could not be detained there — he arose, he ascended, he lives, he rules, and under the shadow of his cross we live, and live happily too!

Reader, is Jesus to you, as the breath of your nostrils? Do you feel, that you could as soon live without breathing — as live without Jesus? Do you look upon him as the anointed of the Lord, the Christ of God, to whom you must pay homage, and to whom you must render obedience? Have you wept at his cross, rejoiced at his empty grave, and sung praises at his throne? O may Jesus become our all in all, and may we daily, more and more feel — that he is the breath of our nostrils, and expect to live under, and enjoy his shadow, among the heathen.

Jesus is precious, says the Word,

What comfort does this truth afford!

And those who in his name believe,

With joy this precious truth receive. To them he is more precious far

Than life and all its comforts are;

Whatever things men precious call,

Christ is more precious than them all.

He's precious in his precious blood —

That pardoning and soul-cleansing blood;

He's precious, in his righteousness —

That precious, holy, Heavenly dress. In every office he sustains,

In every victory he gains,

In every council of his will —

He's precious to his people still.

As they draw near their journey's end,

How precious is their Heavenly friend!

And, when in death they bow their head,

He's precious on a dying bed!

With them, may I in Heaven be found,

And with Your precious glory crowned,  
Join the sweet song, and there adore  
A precious Christ, forevermore!

## 15 Falling, Yet Safe

---

Falling, Yet Safe The Lord's people in the Old Testament, are very generally designated "the righteous;" because as believers in the promised Messiah, they were justified before God. For believing what God had said concerning the Savior, and trusting to what he was to do when he came into the world — they were pardoned, and pronounced righteous for his sake. There has never been but one method of justification; in old time, they were justified by faith in a coming Savior, and now, we are justified, by faith in a Savior who has already come. Every one who depends solely on the work of Jesus for his salvation, is a righteous man.

They were also called "good men," because they walked with God in holiness, and did good to their fellow-men. Or they acted in what they did from a good motive — they lived, and walked, by a good rule, even God's holy law; and they aimed at a good end in all they did, even at God's glory. These righteous ones, these good men, were not perfect men; they frequently veered aside, and sometimes fell. But of all such it is declared, "Though he falls — he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with his hand." Psalms 37:24. A Good Man May Fall. Yes, he may fall into some SINS — as did Noah, and Lot, and Abraham, and David, and Solomon, and Peter, and John Mark, and others. Indeed there are but few sins into which a believer may not fall. It befits us therefore to be watchful, careful, prayerful, and fearful. "Let him that thinks he stands, take heed, lest he fall."

He may fall into some ERRORS. Indeed, it is not easy to say, into what errors a believer may not fall for a time. Therefore we should be humble, keep close to the Bible, and pray much for the constant teaching of the Holy Spirit.

He may fall into TEMPTATIONS and SNARES, and with these his way is lined, hence it is said that "a prudent man looks well to his goings — but the foolish pass on and are punished."

He may fall into any physical SUFFERING, for in this respect, all afflictions come alike to all. Nor are the Lord's people exempt from losses, crosses, or any worldly trials; but many of them seem to have a double share! Our road is slippery, our path is uneven, we are apt to be thoughtless, or to feel secure — and therefore sometimes before we are aware, we are tripped up! Yes, the good man may fall — but though he falls — he shall not be utterly cast down. The Righteous Man Is Safe. He shall not fall . . .

into final despair,

or under the full power of Satan,

or under the dominion of sin,

or into the place of torment.

No! He shall not be utterly cast down, for if he is cast down now — he shall be raised up again. Hope will revive, the Lord will shine on him, and the day of deliverance will dawn. If Satan

overcomes for a season, he shall be bruised under our feet shortly, so that we may say with Micah, "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy, for though I fall, I shall arise; and though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me." The SIN that strives, struggles, and seems too strong for us — shall be subdued by victorious grace: for Paul assures us, that sin shall not have dominion over us, because we are not under the law — but under grace. Blessed be God, Jesus has said of every one of his people, "They shall never perish; neither shall anyone pluck them out of my hand!" This is the reason assigned by the Psalmist, why the righteous shall not be utterly cast down, "the Lord upholds him with his hand." The hand of his grace, and the hand of his providence, are alike stretched out to uphold the righteous man; and God's hand is strong to hold, his arm is long to reach, and he is always near to help. The righteous, the good man, then, shall not finally fall, shall not be utterly cast down. There are three things which especially prevent this:

First, the everlasting love and omnipotent power of the Father. The Father has ever loved his people. He rests in his love to them. Nothing is able to separate them from his love. Having loved them, he will love them to the end. His love to them, engages his power for them; therefore they are kept by the power of God, unto salvation. With the love of God fixed upon them, and the everlasting arms placed beneath them — how can they finally fall?

Secondly, the everlasting merit, and constant intercession of the Son. As the love of the Father, so the merit of the Son endures forever; and as his merit endures forever, so he ever lives to make intercession for us. If therefore the merit of Christ is ever fresh, and if the intercession of Christ is ever prevalent — then how can those for whom he merited everlasting life, and for whom he ever intercedes, finally fall?

Thirdly, the continued influence, and perpetual indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit at the first claims us for Christ, takes possession of us in the name of Christ, and sets us apart as the special property of Christ. Having taken possession of us for Christ, he keeps possession, and will complete his work in the day of Christ. If the Spirit could take possession of us for Christ at first, he can keep possession; and if he can keep possession, for the honor of Christ he will. If therefore the Holy Spirit dwells in us, works in us, and exerts his power for us — how can we finally fall? It cannot be! But as was said of old, so it may be said now, "Though he falls — he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord, upholds him with his hand." The Lord is his keeper, and they are surely safe, whom the Lord keeps. They are the Lord's crown of glory, and he will never part with his crown! But this promise belongs only to the righteous, and none are righteous but those who have a living faith in Jesus; and faith in Christ always produces holiness, and leads to the performance of good works.

If therefore we are not doing good — then we are not holy;

and if we are not holy — then we have not a living faith in Christ;

and if we have not a living faith in Christ — then we are not righteous;

and if we are not righteous — then we have no title to the promise.

Scripture nowhere teaches the salvation of mere professors — but only of sincere believers; it never says that professors shall persevere — but only that saints shall. The doctrine therefore gives no encouragement to sloth, nor does it hold out the least comfort to the sinner, whether a

professor or not. But it is full of the sweetest comfort for the weak, wavering, slipping, sliding, staggering, and stumbling believer in Christ; for it tells him, that he shall be held up, because God is able to make him stand. It assures him, that the grace of Christ is sufficient for him, and that as his day — so shall his strength be.

Reader, are you righteous? Are you one of God's good men? Do you fear that you shall fall, utterly fall? Does Satan harass you with the temptation, that after all, you will perish through the power, craft, and cunning of Satan; or through your own weakness or instability? If so, take the encouragement held out to you in this sweet verse, and believe, because God has said it, and said of every one that relies on his grace, "Though he falls — he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord, upholds him with his hand."

If ever it could come to pass,

That sheep of Christ may fall away,

My fickle feeble soul alas!

Would fall a thousand times a day! Were not your love as firm as free,

You soon would take it Lord, from me.

I on your promises depend,

That you will love me to the end!

## 16 Behold, the Lamb of God!

---

Behold, the Lamb of God! The world needed, and Israel expected, a Deliverer. The types had foreshadowed him, the prophets had predicted his advent, and the poets had prepared hymns to celebrate his coming. At length an extraordinary person appeared; he was reserved in his manner, stern in his appearance, rather unsociable in his habits, and uncompromising in denouncing sin, and demanding repentance. All who professed to repent, he baptized, and pointed them to the coming One, whose way he was preparing. At length, one day, he saw Jesus of Nazareth coming to him, and pointing with his finger to him, with a loud voice, he cried, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29. God's Lamb is come. The great sacrifice is about to be offered. The needed atonement will now be made. The way into the holiest will be made plain.

Jesus Is God's Lamb. In his nature and character, we may see all the excellent qualities of the Lamb. He is holy — free from all blemish. In him is no defect. He is without sin, and full of grace. His entire nature is pure, and spotless — an offering fit for God. He is meek — none need fear him. Bruised, humbled, and afflicted, he has learned what suffering is, and is now able to sympathize with sufferers. He is not a lion — but a lamb. Who would fear to approach, to touch, or to become familiar with a lamb? He is patient, bearing the opposition and contradiction of sinners, without complaint; and bearing the wrath of God in solemn silence, or with deep submission.

He is the gentle One. He calls a child to him, and makes it his text. He receives children from mothers and relatives, heals and blesses them. He allows children to follow him, proclaim him, and sing hosannas to him. The bruised reed he will not break, the smoking flax he will not quench — nor one applicant for mercy, will he refuse. As a lamb, he was intended to be a sacrificial victim. He was to die, the just for the unjust. A lamb was to make atonement for sinful human lions, bears, and a generation of vipers. O mystery of mercy! O wondrous love! God required a lamb, whose life was equivalent to all the lives that had been forfeited by sin. He demanded blood, worth all the blood that had been or would be shed. The victim he required could not be found, therefore he promised to provide one. On that promise, the hope of all believers hung. On that promise, the faith of all that were saved was built.

God himself was to provide a lamb. That lamb was to be put to death. The putting to death of that lamb, was to atone for, and put away sin. That lamb was to be an all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, an infinite atonement for transgression. The lamb promised, was now provided. John saw him, pointed him out, and directed his hearers to him, crying with a loud voice, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" That lamb was sacrificed, was sacrificed for us, and is now presented to us, is now placed before us. He is evidently and clearly set forth, as though he was crucified among us. He is man's accepted substitute. He is God's obedient servant. He is the sacrifice to satisfy God's justice for man's sin. He is God's Son, who did his Father's will; by which all believers are sanctified, by the offering of his precious body once. The Lamb is God — God in our nature — God with us — God in our place — God atoning for our sin — God putting away our sins by the sacrifice of himself! O

mystery of mysteries! O wonder of wonders! Let us,

Behold the Lamb of God! He is set forth for this end. He is presented to us for this purpose. The gospel places him before the sinner's eye, and keeps him there, as God's only ordinance of salvation, and cries, "Look and be saved! Look and be saved, all you ends of the earth!" Let us then fix the mind on Jesus, and keep it fixed there. Let us make him the daily, hourly object of our faith. Life comes by looking. Peace comes by looking. Joy in the Lord comes by looking. In a word, looking to Jesus as dying for our sins, in our stead — will . . .

bring a sense of pardon into the conscience,

spread joy and peace over the soul, and

fill the heart with love.

Let us behold the Lamb — and trust in his blood alone, for the present, complete, and everlasting pardon of all our sins.

Let us behold the Lamb — and love him for taking our nature, that he might save our souls.

Let us behold the Lamb — and make use of him to remove our guilt, banish our fears, and deliver us from the dread of death.

Let us behold the Lamb — and recommend him to all around us, as able to save to the uttermost, and as willing to save them, if they are willing to be saved by him.

"Behold the Lamb of God!" beloved reader, for God bids you, and commands you to believe on his name. Behold the Lamb of God, for it will greatly benefit you, and always benefit you too. Behold the Lamb of God, for it will please the Father if you do — he takes an infinite delight in his beloved Son — and he wishes us to take a delight in him also. Behold the Lamb of God, for in so doing you will be enabled to conquer Satan, overcome the world, and surmount the fear of death. By this we conquer, namely, "Looking unto Jesus." Let us therefore look to him . . .

in life, and all its joys;

in sickness, and all its pains;

in adversity, with all its sorrows;

and in death, with all its agonies.

Behold the lamb of God!

## 17 A Solemn Charge

---

A Solemn Charge "Yet there are some of you who do not believe!" John 6:64 What is it to believe in Christ? Look at a few of his own illustrations, and you will soon perceive.

He is the bread of life, and believing answers to eating that bread.

He has the living water, and believing is receiving and drinking that water.

He is set forth for the healing of the soul, as Moses placed the brazen serpent on the pole, and believing is looking to him, and expecting to be saved.

He is compared to clothing, and believing is putting on the Lord Jesus, for covering, comfort, and defense.

He is the deliverer from guilt, condemnation, and death, and believing is applying to him, and trusting in him for salvation.

Reader, do you believe? Is Jesus the food of your soul, without which you faint and die? Is he your clothing, in which you array yourself to appear before God? Do you look to him, as Israel did to the brazen serpent, expecting to receive everlasting life thereby? Do you trust in Christ, and in Christ alone for salvation, from guilt, condemnation, and eternal death? Some do not, and it is brought as a charge against them. Let us consider then, Who May Be Charged with this Sin? Some of you! Some of his hearers, some of his admirers, for admiration is not faith. Some of you who have the Bible in your hands, and read it — who have the gospel sounding in your ears, and listen to it — who have the epistles of Christ before your eyes, and see the power and love of Jesus as displayed in them — who have the Lord's day set apart for your good, that you may hear the Word of God and live — yet you believe not. Some of you who are the children of godly parents — young people who have been often addressed both from the pulpit and privately — who have so many privileges! And some aged people who have sat under the word, and heard the gospel from their childhood — and yet they do not believe. My friends, unless you believe — you shall perish; for he who believes not, shall be damned. And will you perish, willfully perish? Perish, with the Bible in your hand! Perish, with the invitations of the gospel sounding in your ears! Perish, with the Savior's living epistles placed as examples before your eyes! Young man, will you refuse to believe in your father's Savior, and force your way to Hell, despite his efforts and prayers? Will you, young woman, despise your mother's Redeemer, and determine to destroy your soul, notwithstanding her entreaties, and tears. Yours must be a difficult way to Hell. You must be determined, if you perish under such circumstances.

Aged friend, what can you say, after hearing the gospel so many years, being convinced of sin so often, and having promised to come to Christ so often, if you perish in "your sins? And you will, you must — if you believe not! But, Who brings This Charge? Not one who is prejudiced against you, or one who is partial, or severe, or suspicious — but Jesus. Jesus who lived and labored, suffered and died — to save sinners. Jesus who wept over unbelieving souls, and whose heart

was wrung with agony when he gave them up. Yes, it is Jesus brings this solemn, this affecting charge. Jesus who is generous and kind. Jesus who only desires your welfare, and who aims at your salvation. Has he spoken to you in his word? he says, "These things I say, that you might be saved." John 5:34. Do you ask, What does God require of me? He replies, "This is the work which God requires of you — that you believe on him whom he has sent." John 6:29. Does he leave you at all in doubt, or in the dark? He does not — but tells you plainly, "If you believe not that I am he — you shall die in your sins!" John 8:24. And again, "He who believes is not condemned; but he who believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:18-19.

We wonder not at the heathen, that they do not believe, for they have not the gospel. We wonder not at some of our villagers nursed in ignorance and superstition, if they do not believe. But for you, with so much light, with so many privileges, with such helps — that you should not believe! And yet it is plain that many of you do not, for if you did . . .

you would hate sin,

you would follow after holiness,

you would confess Christ, and

you would spend your time and talents to promote his cause. But tell me now, be honest — do you love private prayer? Do you hate sin, heart sin, hidden sin, all sin? Do you admire, desire, and earnestly seek holiness of heart and life? Do you confess Christ openly, fearlessly, in all companies, as your only beloved Savior? Is it the aim and happiness of your life to extend, strengthen, and help on the cause of Christ? If not, you do not believe. You have not faith, for faith works, and works thus. And to you, and all such as you the Savior points when he says, "Yet there are some of you who do not believe!"

## 18 God's Precious Thoughts

---

God's Precious Thoughts The power to think, and to turn our thoughts to a practical account, is a great privilege. By this we are distinguished from the brute creation beneath us, and are associated with the angelic nature above us. But intellect varies, and is differently influenced — hence the difference in thoughts. We love to be thought of, especially by noble men, men of renown.

Now God's intellect is infinite, his heart is holy, and therefore his thoughts are wonderful. O what a privilege to have a place in God's thoughts, and to know what God thinks of us! The Psalmist was affected with this, and therefore he cried out, "How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them!" Psalms 139:17.

God's thoughts must be like his nature, there must therefore be a vastness and perfection in them. His nature, like his law — is holy, just, and good, and therefore every thought must be a holy thought, a good thought, a just thought. God could never think an unwise thought, an unjust thought, an unholy thought, a cruel thought. Every thought of his heart must be consistent with love, for his nature is love. God has thought of us, and he has thought for us.

Thought occupied his mind from all eternity — and we were in his thoughts. The ancient council, and the everlasting covenant — were but the effect of his thoughts.

He thought of us as sinners — and thought of how he could deliver us, and bless us with the highest blessings.

He thought of our guilt — and provided an atonement for it, in the service and sacrifice of his own Son.

He thought of our weakness — and provided a remedy for it, in the gift of his Holy Spirit.

He thought of our proneness to wander — and provided against it, by constituting his Son our Shepherd, and giving us into his custody and keeping.

He thought of our fears — and provided an antidote for them, in his precious promises and solemn oath.

He thought of our foes — and provided that we should be a match for them all, by making his strength perfect in our weakness. The thoughts of God illustrate his relation to us. Having determined to adopt us for his children, and to become our covenant God and Father — his thoughts of us were paternal. He thought to prevent evil — and he made such perfect arrangements, that no penal evil can happen to us. We may be afflicted, put to pain, and sorely tried — but we shall never be condemned or punished. He thought to supply all our needs, and for every need he has provided, and every one of his people prove that there is no lack unto those who fear him. He thought to raise us to honor — and therefore he made us his children, calls us his treasure, and brings us into union with himself. He is therefore our husband — and his

thoughts are those of the kindest, wisest, and best of husbands — all love. He thought to enrich us — and therefore made us his heirs, and joint heirs with his Son. He thought to make us happy — and therefore appointed us to dwell in his presence forever. The thoughts of God are very deep — so that we cannot fathom them. Hence David said, "O Lord, how great are your works! and your thoughts are very deep." His thoughts are very high — so that we cannot attain to the full meaning of them. "As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." His thoughts are peaceful — as he says, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end." His thoughts are efficient — and will secure his people, as says the prophet, "Many nations are gathered against you. But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord; they do not understand his plan, he who gathers them like sheaves to the threshing floor." His thoughts are immutable, "The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." His thoughts must be carried out, must have their fulfillment, "The anger of the Lord will not diminish until it has finished all he has planned. In the days to come you will understand all this very clearly." The thoughts of the Lord are precious to the believer. They are his Father's thoughts, his Savior's thoughts; and as the Holy Spirit unfolds them to his mind, or leads him into them — they are esteemed by him to be as valuable as wealth — as sweet as honey — and as delightful as perfect health. The thoughts of the Lord are very numerous, extending to all objects and subjects, all times and seasons, all connections and relations. Therefore he says, "Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare!" God's thoughts are incalculably important, and should always regulate ours; for just in proportion as God's thoughts regulate our thoughts, feelings, desires, and pursuits — shall we be holy, and happy, and useful.

Reader, what are your thoughts of God? Do you think of him as a child should think of a father — as a creature should think of his beneficent Creator — and as a sinner, saved by grace, should think of his gracious and almighty Savior? Do you? Are your thoughts of God honorable? Are they befitting? Are they such as you will never be ashamed of? I am afraid we do not always think of God as we should. I fear also that we do not realize the sinfulness of our thoughts as we should. Holy Spirit, you search all things, yes the deep things of God — unfold God's thoughts to us; and regulate our thoughts in reference to God, that we may think of him with reverence, love, and holy fear. O to have the heart filled daily with God's precious thoughts!

## 19 That Great Shepherd

---

That Great Shepherd The offices of the Lord Jesus Christ are all important — and are fraught with comfort and consolation to the Christian. His titles are full of meaning — and cannot be devoutly studied without great benefit. Perhaps no title was more early assumed, or was better understood in the East, than that of a Shepherd. In this character, the dying patriarch spoke of him. In this character, the Psalmist sung of him. In this character, the prophets predicted him. In this character, the Apostles preached and wrote of him. He called himself "the good shepherd," Peter called him "the chief shepherd," and Paul called him, "that great Shepherd of the sheep." Hebrews 13:20.

Jesus is styled "That GREAT Shepherd." That great shepherd that was promised, that was predicted, that was expected, and that was so greatly needed. He may be called that great Shepherd — on account of . . .

the dignity of his nature, for he is divine;

the derivation of his authority, immediately from God;

the number of his sheep;

the many under-shepherds he employs;

and the extent of his qualifications.

Look at the strength of his love — he laid down his life for his sheep.

Look at his exact knowledge of his flock — the name of every sheep and lamb is in his book.

Look at his untiring diligence — if only one goes astray, he goes after the one that is lost, until he finds it.

Look at his gentleness and his unceasing care — he gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom.

Look at his infallible skill, therefore he heals all their diseases.

Look at his power to preserve from danger, for he has power over all flesh.

Look at his wisdom to select their pasture, leading them in green pastures, beside the still waters.

Look at his authority to give eternal life. As he said, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand."

Put these things together, and say,

if our Shepherd is divine in his nature;

if he is commissioned to take care of the flock immediately by the Father;

if his flock is innumerable;  
if his under-shepherds are so many;  
and if his qualifications are perfect —  
ought he not to be called "that great shepherd of the sheep!"

Look at his qualifications, and say,  
if his love is stronger than death,  
if his knowledge of his sheep is exact,  
if his diligence is untiring,  
if his gentleness is great,  
if his skill is infallible,  
if his power is universal,  
if his wisdom is perfect,  
if his care is incessant, and  
if he has authority to give eternal life to every one of his flock

— are not his qualifications complete? The Lord's people are styled "The Sheep." By this figure they are set forth, and it describes their excellencies, for like their Lord they are . . .

meekest and lowly in heart,  
patient under privations, tribulations, and trials,  
and useful always and everywhere.

Every Christian should be meek, patient, and useful, nor do they prove that they are the sheep of Christ, if they are not.

It describes them in their failings too. They have . . .

not the strength of the lion,  
nor the fleetness of the deer,  
nor the cunning of the fox,  
nor the courage of the dog —

but they are timid, defenseless, and prone to wander. So timid are they — that half their time, they are filled with doubts, fears, and misgivings! So defenseless are they — that all their safety lies in their shepherd's presence, power, and love! So prone to wander are they — that they turn aside like a broken bow.

Reader, are you one of the Savior's sheep? Do you hear his voice? Do you follow him? Do you answer to the character given above? Are you in the fold of Christ? Do you feed there, find repose there, and enjoy the shepherd's care there?

If you are not of the sheep of Christ now — then you will be eternally separated from them by and by; if you are not folded with them on earth, you cannot be in Heaven. The day is coming, when his word will be fulfilled, as it is written, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in Heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right: Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world!

Then he will say to those on his left: Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25:1-46

## 20 O Sing unto the Lord a New Song!

---

O Sing unto the Lord a New Song!

Praise is lovely for the upright, and it befits the Lord's people to be thankful. God loves to be praised. He loves to hear us praise him, as it indicates . . .

that we have a due sense of our obligations,

that we value our mercies, and

are happy in our souls.

We have many psalms of praise written for us, and hymns of thanksgiving should constantly ascend from us. O for a heart to praise God! O for a warm, loving, grateful heart! And now let me see if I can awaken gratitude in my soul, and raise a song of thanksgiving to my gracious God. Let me listen to the Psalmist, and try and unite with him. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm has gotten him the victory." Psalms 98:1.

"He has done marvelous things," and marvelous things for me.

He laid all my sins on his own beloved Son, and punished him — that he might never punish me. How marvelous that the Son of God should take my place; and bear, expiate, and remove from the sight of God forever, all my sins! Jesus was treated as a sinner — that I may be treated as a righteous person. And in consequence of my sins being laid on Jesus, and his righteousness being imputed to me — I am justified, and declared righteous by the God of justice and holiness. In addition to this, he entered the lists with Satan on my behalf, and he defeated, condemned, and fastened a chain on that monster — so that he can never condemn, or do me any lasting injury.

He has also abolished death, given me everlasting life, and placed immortality in a clear light before me; so that Heaven is now presented to my faith, as open to receive me whenever I fall asleep in him. Not only so — but he is gone himself into Heaven as my Advocate, to confute my accusers, carry my cause, and secure to me an honorable reception there.

"With his right hand and holy arm," he . . .

rescued me from death,

delivered me from Satan,

brought me out of the world,

subdued my stubborn will,

broke my hard heart, and

made me a new creature! In me, his omnipotent power and glorious majesty have been displayed. In me, Christ Jesus, as the Captain of salvation, has triumphed. In me, the Holy Spirit has

displayed his sovereignty, and wrought wondrously, bringing me to know, love, and enjoy God as a covenant God in Christ. In me, the Lord has gotten himself the victory, every enemy has been subdued, and subdued by himself. Every power has been led captive, and brought into obedience unto Christ. He has gotten the victory, and it was glorious, triumphant, and complete. I shall grace his triumphs, share his honors, and eternally praise his name.

Let me therefore join with the Psalmist, and sing a new song. Sing, because he has done so much for me, and so much in me — and all by his own power, to the glory of his own grace! He did all, unsought by me, unexpected by me, of his own free mercy and love. He has recorded his doings, put the record into my hands, and made the reading of it a blessing to my soul.

O for a new song for new mercies, for his mercies are new every morning! O for a daily song, for the daily discovery and enjoyment of his mercies! O for an angel's harp, a seraph's fire — to sing aloud and sweetly unto the Lord!

Let me sing, because I see that it is the Father's delight to bless me!

Let me sing, for the Son has displayed his love to me in every possible way!

Let me sing, for the Holy Spirit takes a pleasure in making me holy and happy, and will make me most blessed for evermore.

O for grace to tune my heart, elevate my affections, and inspire my soul with gratitude and praise! Father of mercies, I will praise you, for you have done marvelous things, and marvelous things for me! Son of God, I will praise you, for you have done marvelous things, and marvelous things for me! Holy and ever blessed Spirit, I will praise you, for you have done, and are doing marvelous things, and marvelous things for me! Yes, while I live, will I praise the Lord; when I die, will I praise the Lord! On earth, in time, will I praise the Lord; and in Heaven, through eternity, will I praise the Lord.

## 21 Like-minded

---

### Like-minded

We cannot expect all the Lord's people to think exactly alike, or feel exactly alike, nor act exactly alike. Our degrees of knowledge differ; our views influence our feelings, and our feelings affect our practice. Yet it is desirable, that in reference to God's truth, and our duty towards each other — that we should be as much like-minded as possible. On this — our peace, our harmony, and our union depends. The Apostle felt this, and therefore he uttered his ardent desire for his brethren at Rome thus, "May the God of patience and consolation, give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:5-6. What a beautiful representation is here given of our Covenant God and Father, how encouraging to us in approaching the throne of grace.

"The God of patience," who is himself possessed of infinite patience, so that he can bear with us, and notwithstanding much that is amiss in us, bless us. How patient has our God been with us in the past, both as individuals, as families, and as communities! How patiently he bore with us in the days of our unregeneracy, and how patiently has he borne with us since! Not only so — but he works patience in us by his Spirit, and deepens, strengthens, and increases it, by sanctifying our various afflictions, trials, and troubles.

"The God of consolation," who comforts those who are cast down. Who has . . .

sympathy for sufferers,

comfort for troubled hearts, and

salvation for perishing souls. From him alone, can true consolation flow. He has laid a firm foundation for consolation in his word, and opened a fountain of consolation in his Son; and having provided consolation for us, watches over us, and in our deepest sorrows imparts consolation to us. Blessed forever be his name, he has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. What an endearing view is this of our gracious God — he has patience to bear with us, and consolation to impart to us. May he grant unto us, to be like-minded with himself, and with his spiritual and holy people, that we may patiently bear with each other's weaknesses and failings, and endeavor by every means to comfort and console one another. May we be like our God, who has devised means to comfort us, and watches for opportunities to impart comfort to us. And may Christ Jesus be our pattern, who sought not to please himself — but devoted himself to seek the happiness of his Church. Who laid aside his glory, humbled himself, and became a pattern of humility and forbearance to all his followers. Who prayed for his murderers, pitied the weakness of his disciples, and even looked Peter into penitence and love. The Lord alone can make us like-minded with himself and his beloved Son, he alone can give us grace to approve and practice the precepts of his holy word. Our one grand object should be, that God "may be glorified." This is God's highest end in all he does, or permits to be done, and it should be our highest end too. God is glorified when the members of his Church are like-minded, when they see alike, or if they do not

see alike — yet feel alike. When they observe his commands, strive for each other's peace and comfort, and meet in harmony to . . .

talk of his dealings,

publish his truth, and

celebrate his praise.

O for grace that we may glorify God for his mercy! O to realize, that we are never in a right gospel spirit — but when we are seeking God's glory, in union with our brethren's benefit! The indulgence of a narrow, intolerant spirit — is sinful, highly sinful, it robs God of his honor, and the church of her right. A spirit of pride and self-importance is contrary to the gospel, and is sure to create trouble, both in the experience of the party, and in the church with which we are connected. A believer can have no greater plague, or a greater source of discomfort — than a high opinion of his own knowledge, attainments, and rights; for there will be sure to be some Mordecai, who will not bow down to him: "When Haman saw that Mordecai was not bowing down or paying him homage — he was filled with rage!" Esther 3:5 May the Lord then, grant unto his people:

oneness of mind in doctrine, experience, and practice;

much genuine humility, which will lead us to esteem others before ourselves;

a sweet spirit of earnest, constant prayer;

and much patience and consolation, that with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God.

If ever there was a day in which unity was desirable, it is this; if ever there was a time when patience and forbearance were necessary, it is now. If ever God is to be glorified by his church in this world — it must be by our becoming like-minded, and imitating our Lord Jesus Christ. O that the breaches of the church were healed! O that we were all little in our own eyes! O that we lived . . .

not to gratify our appetites,

not to indulge our lusts,

not to amass wealth,

not to get name and fame;

but simply to . . .

spread abroad the truth of God,

extend the kingdom of the Lord Jesus,

bring sinners to repentance,

make our fellow believers happy, and

to the utmost of our ability glorify God.

God of patience — make us patient, that we may bear reproach, suffer insult, endure pain, and work hard, with an uncomplaining spirit! O for patience to carry our cross, do our work, and wait and watch, for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

God of consolation — comfort us in all our tribulations, in all our privations, and in all our sufferings for Christ's sake!

O to be happy!

Happy, in fellowship with God; happy, because employed by God; happy, in the prospect of being forever with, and forever like God!

O to be like-minded with Christ, in the world, the family, and the Church!

O to be humble, as Jesus was, that we may think rightly of ourselves, and rightly of each other!

O to be filled with love — brotherly love — so that we may live in love, and realize a union with all who are united to Jesus!

## 22 Loved and Blessed

---

Loved and Blessed To love, and be loved — is real happiness. When we look around and feel that we love all we know, and believe that all who know us have kindly feeling towards us — it is most pleasant.

Much of the happiness of Heaven consists in this, that each one loves the whole, and the whole loves each one. Yes, all is love there. The saints love the angels, and the angels love the saints, and God loves them both. Our highest honor, and our sweetest happiness below, is to be beloved of God. For if God loves us, he will bless us; and however he may try us, he will withhold no truly good thing from us.

He used Israel of old to punish his foes, and to execute the decrees of his justice; to encourage them in which, his servant Moses assured them, "The Lord your God shall keep unto you, the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto your fathers; and he will love you, and bless you." Deuteronomy 7:13. Israel represents true believers; and what was spoken to them — will apply to us. If therefore we are . . .

doing the will of God from the heart,

making his word our rule, and

making his glory our aim —

he will love us and bless us!

"He will love you." WHOM will he love? Israel, as delivered from bondage Egypt, brought into the wilderness, and now a poor helpless people. That is, he will love US, who are delivered from . . .

the bondage of the law,

the tyranny of Satan, and

the spirit of this world.

He will love us, to whom the world is a wilderness, yielding us neither contentment, satisfaction, nor delight. He will love us, though poor — poor in this world, poor in spirit, and poor in our experience. He will love us, having nothing to present to him, and unable to do anything worthy of him. He will love us, not only poor — but ungrateful, and often complaining — when we ought to be praising; and murmuring — when we ought to be filled with gratitude. Therefore we are utterly unworthy — unworthy of the lowest place in his house, to be the lowest drudge in his service, or to share in his most distant regard. But, as believing in Jesus, as united to Jesus, as acknowledged by Jesus — he will love us, tod bless us.

WHAT will God do for His people? He will LOVE them freely!

He will prefer you to all others — setting His eye and His heart upon you.

He will take you into fellowship — the nearest, dearest, sweetest fellowship with Himself.

He will make you happy with the persuasion of the facts . . .

that He has loved you with an everlasting love,

that He delights in His love to you, and

that He will ever love you freely!

O blessed state — that the great, the infinite, the holy Lord God, will love a worm like me . . .

preferring me even to the angels;

indulging me with the freest, sweetest fellowship with Himself;

and sweetly persuading my soul of His eternal love to me!

"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely — for my anger has turned away from them!"

Hosea 14:4

WHY will He love me? Just because He will. The cause, the reason — is to be found in His loving heart, and sovereign will alone. Not because I am good, or amiable, or can repay His love — for He loves freely, and fixes His love on the most unlikely and unworthy objects!

Lord, help me to believe the love which You have to me, and to love You in return! O shed abroad Your sweet love in my heart, and fill that heart with glowing love to You! "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you!" Jeremiah 31:3 "He will bless you." Yes — and bless you like a God!

He will bless you with the knowledge of himself — with such an acquaintance with himself, as will .

..

draw out your heart to him,

fix your affections upon him,

divorce you from all beside him.

He will bless you with likeness to himself, stamping his image on the soul, and making your life reflect his moral perfections.

He will bless you with a fitness to dwell with himself, in the world of light, holiness, and love. O what a mercy to know God in Jesus, to be like God, and to be qualified to dwell with God forever!

He will bless your temporal mercies — your bread and your water, your going out and coming in. He will bless you, not only in your person — but in your relationships, and will make you a blessing to others.

What an inestimable privilege to be blessed by God . . .

blessed in body and soul,

blessed in temporals and spirituals,

blessed in time and eternity! To be blessed as only God can bless, and to be blessed by God with all his heart and soul.

Precious state! My soul, hide it deep in your heart, that God, the Author and giver of every good and perfect gift, will indeed love you and bless you!

God's love is always free and unchangeable. Everything outside of God will change — but his love is immutable!

God's blessing is infinite and eternal. We cannot fully understand, what it is for God to bless — as an expression of his love. There is a vastness, a dazzling glory in it. To be blessed of God — is to be blessed forever. But HOW may I know that God will love me? Hear his word, "I love those who love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." Do you love God? If not, will you seek him? If you do, you will find him, perceive his glory, and soon love him. Hear the Savior, "The Father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." Do you love Jesus? Do you believe that he came from God? If so, you . . .

entrust him with the salvation of your soul,

rely on his precious promises,

and obey his holy precepts. In so doing, you prove your love to him, and there can be no question but that "he will love you, and bless you." Would you be truly blessed — blessed of God, blessed now, and blessed forever more? Would you be blessed with all that you need, all that you can enjoy, and all that you can turn to a good account? Just follow the Savior's advice, and you shall be so, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Seek principally, seek especially, to enter the kingdom, to extend the kingdom, to be an ornament to the kingdom. Seek . . .

to possess the righteousness which Jesus has wrought,

to experience the righteousness, which the Holy Spirit produces,

and to perform the righteousness which Jesus requires

— and so will you be entitled to appropriate the language of Moses to yourself, "He will love you, and bless you!"

My Savior's ever watchful eye,

Is over me for good;

What will he not on me bestow,

Who has himself bestowed?

Sorrows, and agonies, and death,

You did endure for me,

When all the sins of God's elect,

Were made to meet on thee.

Exult, my soul, your safety stands

Unshaken as his throne,

His people's everlasting life

Is founded on his own!

## 23 The Powerful Deliverer

---

The Powerful Deliverer "Their Redeemer is strong — the Lord Almighty is his name!" Jeremiah 50:34

Israel had been given into the hand of the oppressor — for sin had brought its punishment. The sufferings of the captivity were great. The time appointed was long. But the covenant still stood firm. The promises must be fulfilled. Their relationship with God was not disannulled. They were his people still. He was engaged to them still. He had power to deliver them. He was but waiting for the fittest time. Then,

the captive would be delivered;

the oppressed would be set free;

the scattered flock would be gathered;

the lost sheep would be found;

the Lord's heritage would be restored;

and the remnant of the house of Israel would be pardoned

— for "their Redeemer is strong, the Lord Almighty is his name!"

What the Lord was then to Israel — he is now to his redeemed people; and the power he then exerted for them — he will now exert for us. He is the Lord Almighty — the God of armies, the God of battles. Victory or defeat lies with him. He is strong — so strong that all created power is as nothing in comparison with him. He is almighty. Wondrously did he display his power, when he made a way through the Red sea; when he threw down the walls of Jericho; and when he delivered his people out of Babylon. These were only samples. They are recorded to . . .

strengthen our faith,

excite our hope, and

draw forth our prayers.

What he has done — he can do, and if necessary will do again. He will deliver us in six troubles, and in seven will not allow us to be overwhelmed. Let us remember, however weak we are, our Redeemer is strong. The Lord was Israel's Redeemer, or strong Deliverer, and he is our Redeemer too. He redeemed them by the exertion of his power, and the sacrifice of their foes. But he has redeemed us by the sacrifice of himself, and by the operations of his Holy Spirit. He laid down his life, as the price of our ransom; and he sends the blessed Spirit, to claim us for his own. He took our nature — and he became near of kin to us; he became near of kin to us — on purpose to be qualified to redeem us, and that he might come under obligation to do so. He paid all our debts, met all our obligations — so making our cause good; and having made our cause good —

he will carry it despite of Satan, sin, and death! Yes, he will thoroughly plead our cause — answering every charge brought against us by Satan, and meeting every demand made upon us by the law. Our Redeemer is our Advocate. He who died for us on earth — now pleads for us in Heaven. Against our disobedience — he places his perfect righteousness; against the sentence passed on us — he pleads his own most precious blood. His pleading is powerful — because he meets and answers all claims. His pleading is prevalent — because he silences every accuser. His pleading will infallibly secure our salvation — because he ever lives, is ever in office, and is always in court.

While he pleads above — he exerts, and employs his power below.

He works in us — while he pleads for us. And while he appears in the presence of God for us above — he watches over us here below.

He will therefore give us REST.

Rest from every anxious care.

Rest from every cross and burden.

Rest from all our toils and troubles.

Rest in his presence, and in the enjoyment of his love forever!

Nothing shall then disturb us — or cause us to fret. No one shall then harass us — or put us in fear.

How precious the Lord's people are to him! Notwithstanding all their unworthiness, sin, and sinfulness. Notwithstanding all their departures from him, and unkindness to him. There is nothing on earth, or in Heaven, except his only begotten Son, who are as precious to the heart of God, as his people are!

## 24 After This, the Judgment!

---

After This, the Judgment! The Lord Jesus has appeared once to put away sin, by making an atonement for it; and he will come again a second time, not to put away sin, as before — but to punish the impenitent sinner, and complete the salvation of his own people. And so, "it is appointed unto men once to die — but after this, the judgment!" Hebrews 9:27.

Then the great white throne will be set, the books will be opened, and the dead will be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works. Let us meditate on this solemn subject for a short time. The Event is the most momentous possible; nothing that concerns us can be more so. The judge of all will appear in his majesty and glory, invested with the highest authority, to reward every one according to his works. All must appear before him, either as justified — to be rewarded; or as criminal — to be condemned and punished.

What multitudes will be there! The writer and the reader will be there, and each one will feel that he is there on his own account, not as a spectator — but as a party intensely interested in the consequences of the day. All will be tried, "for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." Then, every one of us will give account of himself to God. Oh, solemn situation in which to be placed, after a life like ours! A just sentence will be past on each, on all. Eternal life — or eternal death. Endless joys — or interminable woes. How momentous, how solemn, that day! How fearful the results to many! Let us keep that day before us. Let us devoutly meditate upon it, and as we cannot avoid or escape it; let us prepare for it, that all may be well with us at last. The Prospect should influence our conduct. Do what we may, be where we may, we should remember, "after this the judgment!" After this folly, be it what it may — after this evil practice — after this course of crime — comes the judgment, when I must give an account to God! After this painful affliction, in which God speaks to me, and by which God warns me — comes the judgment. After death, which may be sudden — soon — after death — comes the judgment!

Think of this, young man, when invited to the theater, the races, the card party, the tavern, the alehouse, the ball — you may be inclined to go, you may follow your inclination — but remember, "after this the judgment!"

Think of this, young woman, when tempted to waste your time in reading novels, in paying frivolous visits; or to waste money in unnecessary finery, or to give up your company to mirthful young men; you may do so — but remember, "after this the judgment!"

Think of this, man of business, when about to indulge in dangerous speculations, or to take advantage of the ignorance of your customers, or to practice any of the tricks of trade. You may appear to succeed, all may go well for a time — but there is the account, the reckoning, "after this, the judgment!"

Think of this, inconsistent professor, when yielding to temptation, when giving way to loose conduct, when neglecting the means of grace, or when privately indulging in any sin, "after this,

the judgment."

Let every one of us keep the thought of the coming judgment daily before our minds!

It will prevent many sins,

it will preserve us from many snares,

and will be a stimulus to many duties. When tempted . . .

to be idle, or selfish, or worldly;

to indulge in finery, frivolity, or folly;

to go into questionable society, or engage in questionable amusements

— let us think before we give way: what reason can I assign for it, how I can justify it before God, for "after this, the judgment."

Disease will probably seize us soon;

death is certain, and may be very near;

retribution is inevitable, in this world or the next;

the judgment is at hand. The day is fixed. The preparations are nearly ready. The judge is appointed. The books are nearly full. The last indictment will soon be made out. The Heavens and the earth will soon roll away like a scroll. The graves will open. The dead will rise. The separation between the sheep and the goats, the chaff and the wheat, will soon take place.

Each one will know his doom — his eternal doom!

Each one will stand alone, and hear the sentence: "Come, you who are blessed of my Father — inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world!" Or, and oh, how terrible the supposition! "Depart, you cursed ones, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels! And these shall go away into everlasting punishment — but the righteous into life eternal!"

Reader, you are now solemnly warned, you are now affectionately cautioned, you are now earnestly exhorted to prepare for that day. You must be born again — or you cannot see the kingdom of God. See to it that you are. Do not put away the thought, or stifle the conviction, or trifle with the impression — for remember however you may act, you cannot escape the judgment. "After this, after this, after this — the Judgment!"

## 25 Oh, That Satin!

---

Oh, That Satin! A Young woman in London had been employed to make satin stocks, and by contriving and working in the odd bits for bows, etc, she had managed in course of time to save enough to make herself a dress. With the views she then had, she considered that she came honestly by it, and anticipated much pleasure in wearing it. But before it was made up, she was laid upon a sick bed. A minister of Christ visited her, and she appeared to derive much light and comfort from his visits; and as there was no hope of her life, he expected to find her happy in the prospect of death, and then see her depart in peace. But one morning when he visited her, he was surprised to find her very sad and sorrowful, something oppressed her spirits, and filled her with distress. In answer to his inquiries, she told him the circumstances; her conscience was now made tender, and her soul was full of trouble. She now found that she had not done right, death terrified her, and with a piercing look, and a cry of anguish she exclaimed, "Oh, that satin! I wish it was out of the house!" Death was near, eternity was just at hand, there was guilt on her conscience; and what was intended to feed her pride — now filled her with grief!

Reader, are you scrupulously honest? Do you hold what belongs to others sacred, even when it is in your power? It is to be feared that many do not. They have a low standard of morals. They manage to quiet their consciences, while they purloin from their employers. They imagine they shall never be detected, and therefore they need not fear. But things appear very different in the light of eternity — to what they do in the light of time. Death often startles the sinner, and fills his conscience with alarm. The thought of appearing before the judgment seat of Christ, to answer for the deeds done in the body, and that soon — makes the guilty, cowards; and even hardened sinners quail.

Then it appears to be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Then with shame and confusion of face, secret sins must be confessed, or conscience will not cease to accuse. And then Satan who tempted to sin, takes advantage of the sinner's state, and tempts him to despair. Let us do nothing now, upon which we cannot look with satisfaction on a death-bed; or for which we cannot give a good account at the judgment seat of Christ. The young woman I have referred to, spent much time and thought in saving out enough satin from her employer's material, for a new dress, and no doubt admired her ingenuity, and looked forward to the pleasure she should enjoy in wearing it. But she was disappointed. Not only disappointed — but that from which she expected pleasure, was the cause of her bitterest sorrow!

Let us beware, for we too must die! On a dying pillow our consciences may be awakened, and our last moments may be embittered by that, from which we are now expecting pleasure. If we have sinned in any such way — let us deeply deplore it, frankly confess it before God, plead the blood of Jesus for our pardon, and if possible make restitution to man; for without this, we cannot prove our repentance to be sincere.

O what a mercy it is for us, that pardon may be obtained! O how thankful we should be, that God is ready to forgive, and that he has promised abundantly to pardon! O what a glorious truth it is for

sinners — that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin! Let us then seek pardon through that blood for the past, and let us also seek grace for the future — that we may live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.

Young friends, if ever tempted to take what is not your own, or in any way to appropriate to your own use what belongs to another — think of this young woman. O if you could have heard her cry, and have seen her distressed countenance when she cried, "Oh, that satin! I wish it was out of the house!" You would never have forgotten her, you never could. Gracious Lord, give us tenderness of conscience, an eye that will quickly discern sin, and an honest heart — that we may provide things honest in the sight of all men, and when we come to be on a sick, or dying bed — may we have your peace, and rejoice in the prospect of departing to be with Christ. Amen.

## 26 What Do I Wait For?

---

What Do I Wait For? This question was proposed by David — and may very well be proposed by us. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have already received much. Our Heavenly Father has sent the Spirit of adoption into our hearts — he has given us many exceeding great and precious promises — he has wrought faith in our hearts — and he has given us a good hope through grace. But we expect much more, and are brought to wait for much more; though sometimes, when we look upon what God has already given us — we are overwhelmed with a sense of the Lord's great goodness, and are ready to cry out, "And now, Lord — WHAT do I wait for?" Psalms 39:7.

Well, we are waiting for our great change, which will begin at death, and be completed at the resurrection. We expect to be made perfectly holy, perfectly healthy, and perfectly happy. We expect soon to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord — and we expect too, that he will change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. O what a change will that be, to be made exactly like Jesus, in body, soul, and spirit! This we expect, and therefore wait for it, as the perfecting of our salvation. Like Jacob, when he was dying, so may we say, "I have waited for your salvation, O Lord." This is what Peter calls the end of our faith, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of our souls." And as we wait for it, we are kept unto it, as it is written, "Kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Thus we wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, when the perfect likeness of Jesus will be stamped upon us, and we shall belike him, seeing him as he is.

We wait also for the coming of Jesus, and all the saints with him. Like the Corinthians, we are "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Like the Thessalonians, we are turned to God, "to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." This is the blessed hope, the glorious expectation of the Church of God.

Jesus is coming! He is coming in glory. He is coming to gather his people, and complete his work of salvation. We therefore wait for this rest, for there remains a rest unto the people of God. Then we shall cease from all toil, be free from all suffering, and take possession of the inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that never fades away.

Then our graces will be perfected, and our characters completed, and we shall be filled with knowledge, love, peace, joy, and purity. And then we shall fully understand the meaning of Paul, "Now we see through a glass darkly — but then face to face; now I know in part — but then shall I know even as also I am known."

We wait also for the close, felt, uninterrupted, and perfect union of Christ and his people, with each other, and the Father. Who beside him who uttered them, can fathom the depth of meaning in those glorious words, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world!" John 17:20-24

We wait for the enjoyment of the beatific vision, for the pure in heart shall see God; and then shall we possess the kingdom, and enjoy all that God has prepared for those who love him. Truly the best is all ahead of us, and the prospect should cheer, animate, and embolden us, under all our sufferings, sorrows, and labors here below. None of these things are seen by us — they are objects of faith and hope at present; but as we hope for that we see not, therefore with patience do we wait for it. This is our proper posture, waiting as servants for their master, or as the espoused bride for her bridegroom.

We wait — but HOW do we wait? We ought to wait in faith, believing the reality and certainty of these things. We should also wait with patience, doing and suffering the will of God, whatever it may be. We wait praying to be made fit to enjoy the glorious object of our hope; mourning over our failures in duty, and undue attachment to earthly things; and fearing, lest a promise being left us, any of us should seem to come short of it. We should wait in profound humility, until the Lord's time comes; watching for the first intimations of the master's approach; longing for the period to arrive, and daily preparing for this honored event. With the loins girt, with the lamp burning, with the heart longing, and with the eye watching — should we wait for the objects of our hope. But if the Lord's people are waiting for such great, grand, and glorious things — for what are others waiting? Sinner! unconverted man! unconverted woman! What are you waiting for? You are only waiting for death to arrest you, and cast you into prison — for the judge to come to try you at his bar — then you will hear your awful sentence, then will end all your pleasures, then will you be driven from the presence of God, then will you taste, feel, and know what hopeless despair, endless torments, and the just wrath of an insulted God means!

Think, O think of those terrible words which will be pronounced in your hearing, if you die outside of Christ, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Everlasting fire! Everlasting fire prepared for God's chief enemy and his accomplices! For this to be your doom, your doom forever, how dreadful! Ponder, ponder the terrific questions, "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Will this be your lot? Will this be your doom? If you die in sin, it must. Repent, therefore, believe in Jesus, and so escape the wrath that is to come!

## 27 Where Is He?

---

### Where Is He?

I have just heard of another sudden death. How many have died suddenly of late! Sudden death is very solemn. We do not sufficiently think of its solemnity. Any one of us may be called away without a moment's warning. If we should be — what would be the consequence? A question proposed in the book of Job, impresses my mind at this moment: "But man dies and is laid low; he breathes his last and is no more — and where is he?" Where is the departed one? He is somewhere, for the soul must live, must be conscious. Where, then, is he? Let me look at two or three other questions which may help me to answer this. Where WAS he? He was in a land of light, and within the sound of the gospel — but was he in the world, or in the church? Was he in Christ, or in his natural state. What was he! Profane, or moral? Natural, or spiritual? Was he a Christian, or an undecided character? If he had never experienced the new birth, if he had not a living faith in Christ, if he was not a holy man, whatever else he may have been — he is not in Heaven! For, "except a man is born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "He who believes not, shall be damned." "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."

Nothing can be more positive, more plain, or decided, than these testimonies from God's Word. He may have been moral, harmless, and a well-meaning man; but if he was not a new creature — then he is not in Heaven! Not in Heaven! What, are none in Heaven of all who have died — but such as were new creatures? Not one! The Word of God is clear upon this point. But if he is not in Heaven — where is he then? Ah, the sentence may seem severe — but it is true: if he is not in Heaven — then certainly he is in Hell. Where IS he? Is it possible for the man who died suddenly yesterday, to be in Hell today? What, go from such a comfortable home, from such a respectable family, from such an honorable position in society — to Hell? How dreadful the thought! To be mixed up with the devils, and the vilest of the human race! To be tormented in flames that cannot be extinguished, and by a worm that cannot die! To be accursed of God, and to be treated with contempt forever!

O how terrible is the supposition! It is terrible — but it is the doom of all who die unconverted, for the Lord Jesus has said, "Except you are converted, and become as little children — you shall never enter the kingdom of Heaven." There is but one way to Heaven, and Jesus is that way; no one therefore can go to Heaven — but through Jesus. And it is not hearing of Jesus, or reading of Jesus, or talking of Jesus, or using the name of Jesus in our prayers — which will take us to Heaven! We must have personal dealings with Jesus, we must be washed in his blood, we must be clothed in his righteousness, we must eat his flesh, and drink his blood; our souls must live upon Christ — or we cannot be saved.

Reader, suppose you were to die suddenly, to die today — where would you be? Have you secured an a saving interest in Christ? Is your heart right with God? Are you fit to go direct to Heaven? Remember, death does not fit us for Heaven. It neither changes our state, nor our nature. It simply separates the body from the soul; and what the soul is when death finds it — such

it will be when death leaves it.

If death finds us pardoned, justified, and sanctified — it simply delivers us to the angel who is to conduct us to Heaven. And if death finds us condemned, in our sins, or in our natural state — it delivers us to the devil, who is to drag us to the place of torment.

It is therefore of the greatest moment that we should be found ready. And as death may suddenly meet us at any moment — we should not delay an hour in seeking that preparation which would warrant our friends to say, if the question were proposed, "Where is he?" "In Heaven! Unquestionably in Heaven!" Who can tell the distress of a parent, weeping over the corpse of a beloved child, when left in a state of uncertainty: "Where is he? Where the soul of my beloved son? Where is she, the soul of my beloved daughter?" If you would not therefore add to the pangs of a beloved parent, and almost break the heart that throbs with intensest love to you — seek and obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

Or, think of a wife, or husband standing by the coffin that contains the corpse of one tenderly beloved, in a state of uncertainty as to the destiny of the immortal soul. What piercing pangs would the question produce, "Where is he?" "Where is she?" The mere doubt would be dreadful. But to be obliged to fear the worst must be unspeakably dreadful. If you, therefore, O wife, love your husband — or if you, O husband, love your wife, and would not pierce the bereaved one through with many sorrows — then make sure to yourself, and evident to all around you, that you are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

If I were to die suddenly, if I were to die suddenly today — where would I be? Could I be admitted to God's holy Heaven in my present state? Am I fit to meet the eyes of a just and holy God? Am I prepared to share in the employments and enjoyments of a world where all are holy, as God is holy? Have I a title to Heaven, without which there can be no admission? Am I made fit for Heaven, for I can never be allowed to enter there if I am not. Lord, impress these solemn questions on my mind, for Christ's sake. Lord, by your Holy Spirit, prepare me, if I live, to live to you; or if I die, to die to you; so that whether I live or die, I may be yours!

## 28 Christ a King

---

Christ a King The Lord Jesus has authority over all — all things are put under his feet — he is head over all things for the good of his Church. The Father says, "I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion." He has not yet received the throne of his father David — but still he is king in his own Church, and rules over the world. Let us therefore daily look upon everything — as under the direction, control, and management of Jesus. He rules by his power forever, and causes all things to work together for the good of his people.

Jesus as a king, is Powerful and Peaceful. Nothing can withstand his power, for he is omnipotent — God Almighty. He meets with no difficulties — but with perfect ease . . .

rules the elements,

controls his enemies,

and protects his friends. But he is peaceable as well as powerful. He loves peace. He made peace for sinners at the expense of his own life. He preached peace to sinners, first in his own person, and then by his ambassadors. He gives peace to sinners when they believe his word, and trust in his most precious blood. He bequeathed peace to his followers, that they may be . . .

calm in tumult,

constant in trial, and

courageous in conflict.

Yes, when we keep the eye fixed on Jesus as powerful and peaceable, as ruling and reigning, as managing and directing all things — we can . . .

live in peace,

enjoy calm repose, and

walk humbly with our God.

Jesus as a king, is Mild and Merciful. He is more the lamb, than the lion — being meek and lowly of heart. There is no boisterous wrath, or blustering rage about him; but with calmness and quiet, with patience and long forbearance, he rules among the children of men, and especially so in his church. He can have compassion on the ignorant, and on those who are out of the way. He . . .

feels for our infirmities,

allows for our weaknesses, and

mercifully pardons our transgressions. His heart is large and tender, his mercies are new every morning, and his compassions fail not. O what a privilege to have such a king! To be in the hand, and at the disposal of one so mild and merciful!

Jesus as a king, is Wise and Holy. In him dwells all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He knows . . .

all that has occurred,

all that is now occurring,

and all that will occur! And he has wisdom to manage all with perfect ease. He can . . .

direct the whole machinery of providence,

infallibly accomplish his purposes,

and fulfill his promises — all without the shadow of a failure!

He is as holy as he is wise. Nothing that is sinful can ever be sanctioned by him. He may permit it — but it is only in order to overrule it, to promote the principles of holiness, and the rule of love. He is holy in all his works, and all his ways. His precepts are as holy than as his works, as the king of nations and the king of saints. O my soul, confide in the wisdom of Jesus, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness!

Jesus as a king is Just and Righteous. Justice and righteousness are the foundation of his throne. He will exercise his adorable sovereignty — but never at the expense of his justice. What he does is just. All that he sanctions is righteous. His salvation is as just as it is generous; as righteous as it is merciful. He holds the just balance, and administers justice to all who are under his government. And when he winds up the affairs of the present economy, every one will be constrained to admit his justice, if they do not admire his wisdom, or rejoice in his grace. He will never justify the wicked, or take away the righteousness of the righteous from him. Every man shall have his righteous due. No one shall ever have cause to complain that he has not been dealt with righteously. My soul, is Jesus your king? Have you elected him to reign over you? Have you submitted yourself to him? Have you crowned him, Lord of all? If not, surrender at once, that he may . . .

save you by his grace,

sanctify you by his Spirit,

and rule you by his laws.

If you have yielded yourself to him, then be careful to render to him hearty, daily, and universal obedience; and rejoice that Jesus your Savior and your king, is at once . . .

powerful and peaceable;

mild and merciful;

wise and holy — just and righteous!

## 29 Joseph's Dying Words

---

Joseph's Dying Words The words of the dying, are often striking and impressive. We remember them, and derive benefit from them. This has always been the case, especially with the saints of God. How affecting the dying sayings of Jacob, Moses, and David! How many have derived the richest blessings from them. The words of the patriarch Joseph to his brethren, when he was dying, are so peaceful, so prophetic, so encouraging — that I feel inclined to meditate on them a little this morning. His sun was going down in a calm clear sky: all behind was mercy — all before was glory. His brethren are gathered around him to see him depart, and he said, "I am dying! But God shall surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Genesis 50:24.

"I am dying." Death is always solemn. It generally awakens painful reflections. It is often attended with the sweetest joys.

"I am dying," that is, I am about to leave . . .

the wilderness — for the promised land;

the strange country — for my pleasant home;

the field of conflict — for the abode of peace.

"I am dying," that is, I will soon . . .

heave my last sigh,

utter my last groan,

feel my last pain,

taste the cup of sorrow for the last time.

"I am dying," that is, I am about . . .

to depart to be with Christ,

to enjoy the glorious presence of God,

and to be one with all the glorified forever.

"I am dying," that is, I will soon bid an eternal farewell . . .

to all my doubts and fears,

to all my sins and sorrows,

to all my foes and follies, and

enter into peace, safety, and perfect holiness! To me, as a believer in Jesus . . .

death has no sting,

the grave has no terrors,

eternity awakens no alarms! My sins are pardoned, for his name's sake,

my soul is justified, by his blood, and

my person is in union with his. To die is gain! To die is to be perfectly holy and happy! To die, is simply to go home to my Father's house — to inherit and inhabit the place that Jesus has prepared for me!

"I am dying," and shall I regret it? Shall I dread it? Oh, no, may the Lord give me grace, to hail my dying day with pleasure, and to rejoice in the thought of being absent from the body, and present with the Lord!

"God shall surely visit you." When I can visit my beloved Christian friends no more — God will. He visits all of his children, walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. His church is his garden, in which he takes his pleasant walks.

It is his city, in which he loves to dwell.

It is his family, with which he feels at home. When his people meet, he meets with them, whether in public assemblies, or in the social circle.

He visits every individual Christian also. To the babes — he shows tender care, and nurse-like kindness. To the young men — he imparts strength and courage. To the fathers — he opens his heart, and shows them the depths of his infinite love. To the afflicted — he manifests sympathy. To the tempted — he affords support. And to the poor — he brings supplies.

He visits his children . . .

in the prayer-closet,

at the family altar, and

in the house of prayer.

He visits them as they sit around his table, and sing his praise.

He visits them in the valley of trouble — where they sigh and weep.

He visits them when oppressed — to support and set them free.

He visits them in sickness — to comfort and make their bed.

He visits them when they backslide — to restore them.

He visits them in the valley of the shadow of death — to conduct them safely through. The Lord has visited me at times in the past — and, blessed be his name, he will surely visit me in the future. He will visit . . .

to sweeten every bitter cup,

to sanctify every trying dispensation, and  
to enable me patiently to bear every cross.

He will visit, to bring me up out of this land — this land of trial and tribulation, this land of sins and sorrows. His last visit will be the sweetest, as introductory to his eternal presence and glory! But he will visit in the use of the means of his own appointment. For however positive the promise — prayer and the use of means, are always supposed.

He will surely visit His children — but it may be to bereave. It may be to remove some idol. Or it may be, to strip me of something which encumbers and hinders me in my journey.

He will visit, and His visits will be in mercy — whether He comes . . .

to commend — or reprove;

to comfort — or grieve;

to give — or take away;

to clothe — or strip;

to fill the mouth with songs — or the eyes with tears! Our prayers call for mercies, and our sins call for stripes — and He will surely answer our call.

Observe, his visits are sure, for he has promised — he is in one mind, and none can turn him. One love-visit is the pledge of many more. His visits on earth, ensure us his presence in Heaven. My soul, has the Lord visited you of late? Has your Beloved manifested himself to you, and drawn out your love to himself? Has he drawn you to his mercy-seat? For your visits to him — are always the effect of his visits to you!

He visited me first! Indeed he has always been beforehand with me. Never would I have visited him on his throne of grace — if he had not first visited me in the open field, where I was lying in my blood, and perishing in my sin!

Blessed, forever blessed, be his holy name . . .

for every visit he has paid me,

for every loving look he has given to me,

for every sweet word he has spoken to me, and

for every blessing he has conferred upon me! And now, O Lord, visit me often, stay with me long, and manifest yourself to me more fully, and more gloriously than you have ever done. In every ordinance of your house, in my private retirement, and when meeting with your people — Lord, visit my soul. Especially visit me when on the bed of sickness, and in the hour of death, when I am descending into the grave, that land of darkness and corruption! Then, then let me hear the voice of mercy saying, "God shall surely visit you, and bring you out of this land!" When Jesus with his mighty love

Visits my troubled breast,

My doubts subside, my fears remove,  
And I'm completely blessed!  
I love the Lord with mind and heart,  
His people and his ways;  
Envy, and pride, and lust, depart;  
And all his works I praise.  
Nothing but Jesus I esteem,  
My soul is then sincere;  
And everything that's dear to him,  
To me is also dear. But ah! when these short visits end,  
Though not quite left alone,  
I miss the presence of my Friend,  
Like one whose comfort's gone!  
More frequent let your visits be,  
Or let them longer last;  
I can do nothing without thee;  
Make haste, my God, make haste!

## 30 Following Jesus

---

### Following Jesus

"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road." Mark 10:52 This poor blind man sat by the way-side begging. He had heard of Jesus, and the wonders which he had wrought. But he had never had an opportunity of appealing to his pity, and testing his power. Now he hears the noise as of a multitude, and asks what it means. He is told that Jesus is coming. At once he is determined to apply to him, and endeavor to obtain a blessing from him. He begins to cry with a loud strong voice, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" At length Jesus stands still and commands him to be called. In a moment he casts aside his beggar's cloak, and comes to him. Jesus asks, "What do you want me to do for you?" He replies, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Jesus says, "Go your way, your faith has made you whole." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus along the road.

What an example for sinners — for us. Whatever we require — Jesus can do. Whatever we need — Jesus can give. He is not far from every one of us. He is within call.

Woe can apply to him if we will; and if we really feel our need of him, and have faith in him — we shall. Faith in the heart always . . .

leads to Jesus,

applies to Jesus, and

obtains blessings from Jesus.

If we come to Jesus for pardon, or peace, or sight, or spiritual life, feeling our need of it, and heartily desiring it — we need not ask, have I faith? for this coming to Christ, is faith. If we did not believe that he is, and that he can do that which we ask of him, we would not come to him. And the faith that now brings us to him, and leads us to plead with him — will by and by be strong enough to . . .

trust his word,

rely on his merit, and

rejoice in his salvation.

Those who come to Jesus, are healed and blessed by him; and the result is, they follow him. He becomes their leader, example, and guide.

"He followed Jesus along the road." He was not particular as to where Jesus led him — as he would follow Christ anywhere. So is it with all his true disciples. They follow him, and thereby prove that they have . . .

spiritual life — enabling them;

spiritual perception — inclining them;

and an inward call — impelling them.

"The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice." John 10:3-4. All of Christ's sheep hear his voice and follow him. They follow him, because they know him, have confidence in him, and expect to receive good things from him. They follow him out of love to his person, from gratitude for his mercy, and in hope of future blessings. They follow him through evil report and good report, into the wilderness of affliction, and into the field of labor. They follow him, and enjoy the privileges of his house, exercising the graces of his Spirit, and performing the duties laid down in his word. They follow him, to be saved by his grace, to enjoy his presence, and labor in his cause.

"They follow the Lamb wherever he goes!" Revelation 14:4

Reader, are you following Christ? Have you ever come to him as a poor, blind, lost sinner? If not, you cannot follow him. No one follows Christ, who has not received sight, salvation, and comfort from him. Are you ashamed to follow Christ fully? In every ordinance he has instituted, in every duty he has marked out, in every path he has gone before us — he expects, and requires us to follow him. Are you desiring to follow Christ? Then seek grace from him to enable you to do so, and make haste, and delay not to keep his commandments. Jesus will lead you into green pastures, and beside the still waters. He may lead you into the fiery furnace, or into the deep chilling water-floods; but wherever he leads you — he will go before you. He will certainly lead you . . .

to Heaven, to his Father's house,

to the kingdom prepared for you,

to the glorious incorruptible inheritance.

Reader, unless you come to Jesus, and follow him to Heaven, you will be found following Satan, who will conduct you to Hell.

## 31 The Desires Granted

---

The Desires Granted "The desire of the righteous shall be granted." Proverbs 10:24 Not every desire of a righteous man shall be granted — but such as are in accordance with his character. A righteous man not only believes in the Son of God — that he may be justified; but seeks to be ruled entirely by the will of God — that he may be sanctified. Receiving the offered righteousness of Jesus — he is justified from all things at once, and forever; and being justified by grace — he seeks to abound in every good work. He takes God's Word for his rule in all things, and desires to be internally and externally conformed to it.

He is regenerated — as well as justified; he possesses a new nature — as well as a new righteousness; and this new nature is holy, and will influence and characterize the man. Thus he will be justified before God, by the work of Christ alone; but he will be justified before men by his own work, called the work of faith and labor of love. The desires referred to are only good. They are generated in the heart by the Holy Spirit, they center in spiritual things, are according to God's will, and have a tendency to glorify his holy name.

We have many desires and wishes which God cannot grant — unless he became our enemy. For we often wish for things which would . . .

inflate our pride,

harden our hearts,

sear our consciences, and

lead us directly away from God and holiness!

Such desires cannot be granted. Nor does the righteous man desire temporal things, so much as spiritual blessings.

Righteous desires shall be granted. Such as are . . .

warranted by the promises,

suited to our condition, and

tending to the good of the church and the world. And we may be sure too, that if God grants us our desires, he will greatly try us, for we shall certainly desire that God may be glorified; and in order to this, our faith, patience, fortitude, and love will be tried. And we shall be tried too, very much, in reference to the object desired. Abraham desired a son, it was granted — but how he was tried in connection with that son! Job desired to reason with God; his desire was granted — but how deeply he was humbled by it!

Let us desire . . .

the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby;

those mercies from the God of Heaven, which will sanctify and satisfy the soul;

to serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life;

to dwell in the Lord's courts, that we may behold his beauty, inquire his will, and enjoy his ordinances.

Such desires shall be granted. So also, let us desire the better country, to depart and be with Christ, and to be clothed with our Heavenly dwelling; these desires shall be granted.

All good desires find their objects in Jesus, and in the well-ordered covenant, hence David could sing, "He made with me an everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation, and all my desire."

Reader, are you a righteous man? Have you been stripped of self-righteousness, being led to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and from sheer necessity embraced the righteousness of Jesus? If so, you are righteous before God — and your aim will be to be righteous before men.

What are the ruling desires of your soul? Are they spiritual, or temporal? Are they found in Christ, or in the world? As the heart is — so will the desires be. If the heart is under a carnal bias — then carnal things will be principally desired; and if the heart is under a spiritual bias — then spiritual things will appear all important.

It is a mercy that God does not fulfill all our desires — for we would be in a sad state if he did! And it is as great a mercy, that he does fulfill every desire that . . .

flows from the new nature,

accords with his promises, and

will promote his glory and our good.

Gracious Lord, we beseech you, so to sanctify our natures, that we may only desire what you have provided; and only ask for what you have promised, so shall we realize the encouraging declaration, that "the desires of the righteous shall be granted!"

## 32 The Inquiry

---

### The Inquiry

It is very refreshing to the spiritual mind, to meet with people who are asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. To hear people inquiring about the Lord Jesus, and his glorious salvation. No doubt the church of old found it so, when the daughters of Jerusalem inquired of her, respecting her Beloved, "Where has your Beloved gone, most beautiful of women? Which way did your Beloved turn — that we may look for him with you?" Song of Solomon 6:1 WHO Makes this Inquiry? They are called, "the daughters of Jerusalem," and they represent those who have been affected with the descriptions of Christ which they have heard — who are impressed with a sense of the beauty and excellency of the Savior — and who begin to feel interested in all that they hear respecting the person and work of Jesus. They feel a desire to know him, and enjoy him, working within them. They also perceive the loveliness of the Church, as the bride of Christ; to them, or in their estimation, the Lord's people are the excellent of the earth, and occupy the most enviable position. They are convinced of the excellency and worth of Jesus, and therefore they ask, "Where has your Beloved gone, most beautiful of women?" Of WHOM Is this Inquiry Made? Of the Lord's people — the bride, the Lamb's wife. Observe the title given her, "most beautiful of women." To the quickened and enlightened soul, the Lord's people always appear lovely. In this they sympathize with Christ, and it is one of the first proofs that they are becoming like-minded with him. It is an evidence that the Spirit of Christ is with them.

Mark the conduct of the Church. She was seeking to enjoy the presence and favor of the Savior. She had been attempting to describe him, and set forth his excellencies. Her whole heart and soul was set upon him. To her he was the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely one. Let us notice then, For WHOM Do They Inquire? For the Beloved! The lovely One. He who had so won the heart of the spouse — and divorced her from all others. Yes, it is for Jesus, that the seeking soul inquires. His person is supremely lovely. His presence is satisfying and delighting. His absence is unbearable.

Jesus is incomparable!

Therefore, Jesus is altogether desirable. Having heard of him, having witnessed her intense concern about him, they are prepared to seek him.

WHAT Then Do They Ask?"Where is your Beloved gone?" They know not where he is — but they would like to know; therefore they ask, for information. Every one who is born of the Spirit, has . . .

the mind directed to Christ,

the thoughts filled with Christ,

the desires drawn out after Christ, and

will be found making inquiries respecting Christ.

What Is the DESIGN of this Inquiry? Not to gratify curiosity, or merely to inform the mind — but that "we may seek him with you." As if they had said, "We wish to seek Jesus, for we feel our need of him! We long to see him; we wish to know him; we would also be united to him. We are sure we should be happy, could we but enjoy a saving interest in him."

They were prepared to accompany her in her search for him, though she was deserted, despised, opposed, censured, and exposed. This manifested . . .

humility — the proud heart was humbled;

strong desire — for a painful sense of need was felt in the soul;

and the working of faith, hope, and love.

Faith, for they believed that he was, and was all the church declared him to be.

Hope, for they expected that if they sought him in company with his church — they would find him.

Love, for if there had been no love, there had been no desire, no inquiry, no proposing to seek him.

If we therefore are taught by the Holy Spirit . . .

we also shall feel our need of Christ;

we shall long to see him;

we shall wish to know him;

we shall desire to be united to him;

and shall feel persuaded that we shall only be happy, if we possess and enjoy a saving interest in him.

Reader, are you one of these inquirers? Are you seeking for Jesus? Is the desire of your soul to him, and the remembrance of his name? If you do not feel your need of Christ, and so feel it, as not to be able to live without him — then you are not under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Christ always . . .

teaches man his need of Christ;

shows him that he is wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked, without Christ;

produces an all-conquering desire to know and possess Christ;

leads the soul out to seeking for Christ, and

at length brings it into union and communion with Christ. Have you experienced this? Have you found Jesus? Have you found him as your own Savior, your own beloved? Have you felt . . .

the sweets of full pardon;

the peace that flows from justification;

the overflowing love, produced by a sense of personal interest in all Christ is, and has?

If ever you have found Jesus, you know it, you cannot have forgotten it. The day of our espousals, is a day we never forget, even when under temptation, or when harassed with doubts and fears. Do you enjoy Jesus now? Is he your Beloved? Do you daily find that no substitute can be found for Jesus, or his gracious presence?

If our hearts are right — then Christ is precious — most precious — and we are prepared to part with anything — before we part with him; and to give up anything — for the enjoyment of his presence and his love. He who finds Jesus — finds life, and obtains favor of the Lord. Yes, life, a life of peace and comfort here on earth — and a life of perfect holiness and happiness in Heaven!

But, friend, if you are a stranger to Christ — if you have never discovered his beauty — if you have never felt your need of him — if you have never made any inquiry about him — if you have never sought him — or if you have not found him — then you are in a sad state indeed! You have no one to save you from the wrath to come!

You have no real happiness in life!

You will have no good hope in death! Nor will you have any Heaven beyond the grave!

If you are a Christless sinner, you are in a fearful state, in a most dangerous situation. Seek Jesus, Seek Jesus — and seek him until you find him! When strangers stand and hear me tell

What beauties in the Savior dwell;

Where he is gone, they fain would know,

That they may seek and love him too. My best-beloved keeps his throne

On hills of light, in worlds unknown;

But he descends, and shows his face

In the young garden of his grace.

O may my spirit daily rise

On wings of faith above the skies,

Until death shall make my last remove

To dwell forever with my Love!

## 33 Oh, I am on Fire!

---

Oh, I am on Fire!

(Editor's note: This is an excellent evangelistic tract for children!) A quiet family living nearby, was alarmed one evening when going to bed at night, by a loud cry of, "Oh, I am on fire! I am on fire!" The little granddaughter had gone to her bedroom, placed her candle on the table before the window, and in reaching over it to shut the window — her clothes caught fire, and she was soon in flames! She cried with all the strength she had, and her grandmother, whose name is Mercy, flew to her help, and soon extinguished the flames. She was slightly burned — but if her grandmother had not been at hand, or had not been prompt, or had not known how to extinguish the flames — the consequences would have been fearful!

Young people should be careful where they place their candle. Never put it near curtains, or by any light material that may be blown into the flame. Never lean over it on any account, or your life may be the price paid for your folly!

If that little girl had been burned to death — then what would have become of her soul? I have no idea that she was a believer in Jesus, though she had always sat under the preaching of the Gospel. O how sad it would have been to have died unprepared — and in a moment to have been summoned to appear before God!

Reader, sin is a fire — and is the beginning of a more terrible fire, even the fire of Hell. When the Holy Spirit of God awakens the soul to perceive its true state and condition, it discovers that, like the little girl referred to — it is on fire, and it cries out for a deliverer! It was grandmother Mercy who saved the burning child — and it is God's mercy in Jesus that saves the poor lost sinner.

What a good thing it was that grandmother Mercy was within hearing, and could come to her granddaughter's assistance; and, O what a good thing it is that Jesus is at hand to save the sinner who cries to him!

Reader, whether you know it or not — you are on fire! The fire may be only smoldering now — but the flames will break out by and bye. Dreadful indeed — if they should not be felt by you, until you are beyond the reach of mercy! Fearsome indeed — if you should go on, until, like the rich man in the Gospel, you cry out in bitter agony, and in the horrors of despair: "I am tormented in this flame!" How sad, how very sad will your case then be!

Young friends, let me beseech you to think of these things. If you sin — then you must suffer. And having once sinned — none of the sufferings you can endure, can ever atone for your sins. There is no hope for you — but in God's mercy. No one can extinguish the fire, and save you — but the Lord Jesus Christ. He is now near to you. He is now watching to save you. Cry, O cry unto him, in real earnest, as the little girl cried for help when on fire! And if you do, as sure as grandmother Mercy saved her child, so will the Lord Jesus Christ save you!

If the child had delayed only a little time, or had tried to extinguish the fire herself — she would soon have been burned to death! Just so, if you delay, if you think that by your prayers, or sufferings, or by doing the best you can — that you will be saved; then you will find out your dreadful mistake, as thousands have done already.

Cry, then, to the Savior at once! Cry, and cry mightily to God for mercy! Let nothing stop your crying . . .

until the love of sin is extinguished,

until the power of sin is destroyed,

until the guilt of sin is removed, and

you are saved, as a brand plucked out of the fire! With holy fear and humble song,

The dreadful God our souls adore;

Reverence and awe becomes the tongue

That speaks the terror of his power.

Far in the deep where darkness dwells.

The land of horror and despair,

Justice has built a dismal Hell,

And laid her stores of vengeance there.

Tremble, my soul, and kiss the Son;

Sinners, obey your Savior's call;

Else your damnation hastens on,

And Hell gapes wide to wait your fall!

## 34 I Will Turn Over a New Leaf!

---

### I Will Turn Over a New Leaf!

Many of our old sayings are very pithy, and are full of important meaning. But they are too often used lightly, or with an improper motive. Some always have them at their tongues' end, to serve a purpose. How often, have I heard the one at the head of this article employed as a mere excuse, or to silence the voice of reproof. Yes, yes, it is very easy to say, "I will turn over a new leaf." But the question is, how many times have you said so — and yet have never done it? Some are very ready to promise — but we generally find that those who are most ready, with their promises, are very backward with their performances.

I would like to turn this good old saying to some account — but if I do so, I am afraid I shall strike some hard blows, and while I reprove others, it is ten to one, that I shall not escape without a bruise myself.

There is Deacon Kiffen — he is a stout heavy man, and very nervous also. No one that looked at him would think that he kept many fast days, or beat his body to bring it into subjection. The deacon has a very good gift in prayer, and when he uses it, the friends profess to profit by it. But sometimes you will not see him at a prayer meeting for months together, and if his Pastor or fellow-deacons speak to him of his lax attendance, he always meets them with "I must turn over a new leaf!"

Many a new leaf has the deacon professed to turn over — but they have all been blanks — or have soon been as bad as the old one. If any particular stir is made, or if a new Pastor is chosen, the deacon will be very regular in his place, and will use his gift of prayer very acceptably for a little time; but it will not be long before he will be seized with one of his nervous fits, and then the prayer-meeting must be given up.

Brother Kiffen, this is wrong, very wrong of you. Let me exhort you to be honest, and confess the true cause of your neglect. Are you not too fond of self-indulgence? Do you not prefer your warm parlor, cheerful fire, and exhilarating glass — to the Bible, and the prayer meeting? I am afraid you do. But I will not be uncharitable! Think over the matter, "turn over a new leaf," and either fill up your place or resign your office, assigning the true reason for your doing so.

There is Jacob Swift — he cannot afford to give to the cause of God, other people must build the house of prayer, pay for its being kept clean, warm, and comfortable, and they must support the minister, too.

Jacob likes a comfortable seat, and you will generally find him in one of the best; but if you ask him to subscribe to the support of the cause, or the Missionary Society, or to the Bible or Tract Societies — he assures you that he cannot afford it. Nor would you question the truth of his statement, if you knew how much he spends weekly out of his wages on tobacco and strong drinks. Jacob, Jacob, it is quite time that you "turned over a new leaf." Smoking is injuring your

lungs, and drink is undermining your character, and you are forming habits which will let out all your spirituality, if you have any; or will ruin your soul if you have not. Tamper not with temptation any longer, give up your injurious and expensive habits — and you will be able to do much good, and in so doing will enjoy much comfort and peace.

If Paul would say to a thief, "He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need," — then I would say to the man who, by smoking and drinking, so impoverishes himself that he cannot discharge his duties to the church and the world, "Let him that smokes and drinks, smoke and drink no more — but rather let him abstain, that he may have something to share with those in need, and glorify God."

Jacob, take my advice, break your pipe, cast away your tobacco-box, drink no more than is absolutely necessary for your health, and "turn over a new leaf," it will be for your good and God's glory.

Evan Solomon is a good man — but he is weak. He imagines himself to be well taught of God, and of some importance in the church. He can pray, converse, and pass muster among his fellows as a true Christian. But either he is deficient in knowledge, or principle, or confidence in God; for he grieves his fellow-members, by yielding to the promises or threats of his fellow-men. He cannot, or will not commit himself to God, determine to do right, or act up to his principles, let the consequences be as they may. He thinks, "if I should lose my trade, or if I should displease my customers, or if I should have my reputation taken away — what shall I do?"

He professes to trust God with his soul — but he cannot trust him for the body; he talks of trusting God for eternity — but he cannot trust him for time. If there is a political contest, you are almost sure to find Solomon on the wrong side; and by his practice condemning his principles. He has no doubt some difficulty in quieting his conscience — but as Satan is always ready in deceiving those who are willing to be deceived — he is much more ready to help them who wish to deceive themselves. I am afraid the time will come, when such characters will find out their mistake. I would advise all such to "turn over a new leaf," and either change their principles, or their practices — that so both may square together. The words of Jesus are solemn words, "You cannot serve both God and mammon."

Sarah Aldridge is always late when she attends the public worship of God. Unless if she thought the place would be crowded, so that she could not get her own comfortable seat, you would never see her there in time. I am afraid things are not very orderly at home, for I always imagine if people are orderly in their families, they will be orderly out of them; but surely no one will say it is orderly to come into the house of prayer ten or twenty minutes after the service has commenced. Such conduct interrupts the minister, disturbs the congregation, and insults God.

Now, though there are very few but may occasionally be compelled by circumstances to come in after the service has commenced, there are none that are compelled to be always late. My friend Sarah, is destitute of good manners, has not a sufficient measure of self-respect, and forgets the duty that she owes to others and to God. I should advise her to "turn over a new leaf," rise a little earlier, sit less time over her meals, do no more on the Lord's day than is necessary, and above all make it a matter of conscience to be always in her place before the service begins.

Distracted as our minds frequently are, we should be in time to unite in the first prayer, beseeching God to collect our thoughts, calm our minds, and fill us with devotional feelings. And as loaded as we are with the divine benefits, we should be present to join in the first hymn, and so express our gratitude to God for his mercies. Reader, if you have contracted the habit of being late at worship, "turn over a new leaf," and turn it over at once.

Jane Elliot, I have observed, has become very fond of dress of late. I am sure she dresses above her station, and spends more money in finery than her wages will justify. She seems to forget that God has given precepts to regulate the dress of his people: they are not to adorn themselves with gold, pearls, or costly array; but to dress as befits women professing godliness, wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. When the love of dress creeps in — the concern to please God and to honor the Lord Jesus Christ departs. Spiritual people will not be anxious to be in the height of the fashion, much less will they spend that money in dress, which ought to be given to supply the widow's needs, to dry the orphan's tears, or to spread the everlasting gospel over the face of the earth. True religion does not require us to make ourselves singular in point of dress — but it does teach us to live within our income, and to inquire how much of that income may justly be spent in dress, before we spend it: or, as Solomon says, it teaches to "guide our affairs with discretion."

There are many professing Christians, whom I should like to recommend to "turn over a new leaf." They would look much nicer, be respected much more, and enjoy more of divine things, if they dressed plainer, or more in accordance with the situation in which God has placed them.

Christina Adams is one of a class who has sat under the Word for years, has often trembled at the threatenings of the law, and been affected with the invitations of the gospel. She has often determined to give her heart to God — but has put it off. She is fond of trifling companions, indulges in foolish conversation, and stifles the convictions of her soul. Very often, in times past, it may have been said to her, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." She has been heard weeping and praying in her bedroom, she has been terribly alarmed in a storm of thunder and lightning. But again she has yielded to temptation, and I am afraid she is becoming "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Christina, listen to me, and take my advice, and "turn over a new leaf;" give up your mirthful and giddy companions, and set your heart to seek God. Daily go upon your knees, and pray for the Holy Spirit, whom God has promised to every one that asks him. Fix your mind upon the Lord Jesus Christ, believing all that you read of him in his word, place confidence in him, and solemnly commit your soul to him, that he may cleanse it in his blood, sanctify it by his Spirit, justify it by his righteousness, and so save it for evermore. It would be a sad thing for you, after having heard the Word for so many years, after having been impressed so many times, after being on the very threshold of the kingdom of God — to be lost forever. But you will be, you must be lost — except you "turn over a new leaf." Turn it over then, Christina — or whoever reads these lines and is in such a state, nor rest until salvation is enjoyed in your heart. But I must proceed no further, for if he who despises reproof errs — then he who carries his reproof to an undue length, errs too. In many things we offend all, and I am sure the writer, as well as the reader, has much cause in many respects "to turn over a new leaf." Conscience has spoken more than once, while I have been penning these lines, and Satan has suggested once or twice, "In so saying — you condemn

yourself!" Well, let me condemn myself if I deserve it, and let me write what condemns myself, if by so doing I may benefit others. May the Lord, grant his great mercy, show us all wherein we are wrong, set our heart against whatever is displeasing to himself, cleanse us thoroughly from the guilt of all our past sins, give us grace, that in future we may live more like the Lord Jesus, and so not only talk, read, or write about it — but really, and in good truth "Turn over a new leaf."

## 35 The Indispensable

---

The Indispensable "One thing you lack." Mark 10:21

How very near some people come to true religion — and yet they are not true believers. They are so nearly like Christians, that we can scarcely distinguish the difference; and yet they are not the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ. The conduct is changed — but not the heart. They have never passed from death unto life. They are not born of the Spirit. They are not taught of God. Like the young man who came to Christ, they are prepared to do many things — but not to make a full, free, and absolute surrender to the Savior. They are moral, well disposed, kind hearted, and have tolerably correct views of gospel doctrine — and yet they lack one thing.

We must be born again. We must be created anew in Christ Jesus. We must be brought under the training and teaching of the Holy Spirit. Everything short of this, leaves us in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity.

Yes, we must have the life of God within us, and where that is:

sin is perceived, loathed, and forsaken;

the Lord Jesus Christ is received — to save, to teach, and to govern;

the affections are weaned from earth, and are set upon things above;

the treasure is in Heaven, and consequently the heart is there;

everything needed, or desired, is treasured up in Jesus, and therefore he is precious to the soul;

the one grand object and aim is, to be like Christ, to honor Christ, and be with Christ;

everything is given up to Christ, and if required, even life itself. With Mary at the Savior's feet — we choose the good part, enjoy the one thing needful, and have no reason to fear, that it will be said to us, "One thing you lack!"

If we have not the one thing — we cannot be happy. If we have not the one thing — we are not safe, for we are not holy. But if we are in possession of the great secret, then we receive grace from Christ, realize union to Christ, and live in fellowship with Christ. We submit to his will, lay down at his feet, and contentedly follow wherever he leads. Now we are . . .

fit for Heaven,

prepared for sickness, and

can triumph over death.

We have Christ now, and we shall possess Christ forever. He is our portion, and on him we shall live, and in him we shall rejoice, in time and eternity. With Christ ruling in the heart — we shall be holy;

with Christ pleading for us in Heaven — we shall be safe;

with Christ working for us in providence — we shall be supplied.

Instead then of lacking one thing, and that the grand thing — we have all things.

Reader, how is it with you? Don't stop short of the mark. The young man brought a question to Christ to be solved — but he did not bring his soul to be saved. He had no objection to do many things, but he would not part with all for Christ. He loved his wealth, his station, and his respectability — more than the Savior. He had not been soundly convinced of sin, or stripped of self; nor did he know, that without Christ, he was wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked. And therefore he went away from Christ very sorrowful, to . . .

live rich,

die in sin, and

perish forever!

He was not far from the kingdom — but he never entered it. He was almost saved — but he was completely lost. And methinks, one of his bitterest reflections in Hell must be — that he came to Christ and would not make the required surrender; that he found the pearl of great price — but would not go and sell all that he had and buy it. By the gates of Heaven, he passed to the depths of Hell!

Ah, foolish choice of treasures here!

Ah, fatal love of tempting gold!

Must this base world be bought so dear,

Are life and Heaven so cheaply sold? In vain the charms of nature shine,

If this vile passion governs me:

Transform my soul, O love divine,

And make me part with all for Thee.

## 36 Sickness is for God's Glory

---

Sickness is for God's Glory "This sickness is for the glory of God." John 11:4

God's glory should be our constant object and aim. For this we were created, redeemed, and converted. In order to this, we are taught, tried, and delivered. Everything that befalls us, or is required of us, is in order that God may be glorified. But, for our comfort and encouragement, we learn from his holy word, that our good and his glory are so united, that we cannot seek the one — but we must produce the other. What a gracious, what a glorious arrangement is this! Our bodily sickness, even when not designed to issue in death, or be preparatory to a miracle — is for God's glory.

Sickness is intended:

1. to wean us from the things which are seen and temporal — that we may be taken up with things which are unseen and eternal;
2. to draw us from this world, and worldly things;
3. to bring us nearer to God, that we may enjoy closer communion and fellowship with himself;
4. to afford a better opportunity for the Lord, to grant brighter and sweeter manifestations of himself to the soul;
5. to allow the Lord to display his power and grace — in supporting, consoling, and restoring us again;
6. to draw out the heart in prayer, and bring down sweet and encouraging answers;
7. to quicken our pace in our journey homewards;
8. To exercise all the graces which the holy, and ever blessed Spirit, has wrought in the soul.

There is also a sickness of SOUL, which is for the glory of God — when it is sick through conviction of sin — which makes it loath itself, and sets it against sin. Then it can no longer enjoy the vain, empty, and frivolous amusements of the world, nor feel at home in the company of the carnal. Then the soul becomes sick of SELF, from a discovery of its inherent vileness, wickedness, and opposition to God. It becomes weary of looking to duties, or religious observances, and looks from all — to the Lord alone. It wearies of the world, its customs, fashions, and carnal pleasures. And sickening of all confidence in the flesh, it learns to place its trust, confidence, and dependance in the Lord alone. Thus, God is glorified in his grace, who has provided a suitable and sufficient portion, for us in himself; and thus by the Spirit's work in the heart, God becomes all in all.

Let us then, in all times of bodily sickness, make it our first, our earnest, and importunate prayer — that God may be glorified. That by every pain we feel, and all the weakness we suffer — he may get glory to his ever blessed name.

Oh, to prefer God's glory, to our own ease, comfort, and health! And this is our encouragement to do so, that while we seek to glorify him — that he will be sure to support, sanctify, and comfort us. The more we lose sight of SELF, and keep God's glory in view — the better. And, whenever we . .

feel deep convictions of sin,

have painful discoveries of the emptiness of the world,

or experience the breaking up of the great deep of corruption within — let us remember that even this is for the glory of God, and that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. In this way, God glorifies . . .

his own free and sovereign grace;

the precious, cleansing, and soul-healing blood of his Son; and

the sustaining, comforting, and sanctifying operations of his Spirit. In the prostrate body, weakened and worn by disease and pain; and in the stripped, emptied, and humbled soul — God alike glorifies himself. Not only so — but the trials and afflictions, which bring us into such a state, are appointed and arranged for the very purpose. Oh, may the Lord be ever glorified in us, whether by health or sickness, by life or death! Amen.

## 37 The Rambler's Rest

---

### The Rambler's Rest

One can seldom go far, if one is in a meditative mood — without meeting with something that will suggest food for the mind. My attention is now arrested, by a sign over the door of a tavern called, "The Rambler's Rest." But I am persuaded that it is a very poor rest that can be found there. If there is rest for the body — there is ruin for the soul! It is a mere temptation, a lure to entrap men to drink — that they may . . .

waste their property,

destroy their health,

deprave their minds, and

endanger their souls!

Strong drink is a mocker, it should therefore be avoided. Beer-shops, and taverns, are generally synagogues of Satan, and should therefore be shunned. If men have any concern for . . .

the peace of their families,

the comfort of their homes, or

the salvation of their souls —

they should avoid the alehouse!

"The Rambler's Rest" may talk of rest, promise rest, and invite us to come and find rest, in its parlor, or tap-room — but there is no rest to be found there. Sinful excitement, foolish jokes, vain songs, and trifling mirth — is all that we shall find there. Rest indeed! Rest for whom? Rest from what? Rest for how long? Rest at what price? Poor rambler, don't be enticed by such a sign, or seek for rest where you will find none!

"The Rambler's Rest."

Well, man is a rambler.

He has rambled from God.

He has rambled in the forbidden paths of sin.

He has rambled in company with Satan.

He has rambled until he has become restless and uneasy.

He does need a rest — but not such an one as the alehouse offers him. He needs a rest for his soul, and blessed be God — there is such a rest provided, and over the cross of Jesus, over the

throne of grace, and over the church of God, may with great propriety be written, "The Rambler's Rest."

Yes, there is rest provided by God's mercy for poor rambler. It is to be found at the feet of Jesus, who lovingly calls to every poor rambler, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." This is the rest that the soul needs. This is the rest that just suits the sinner's case. Let us spend a few minutes n thinking of this rest. For WHOM is it provided? For poor rambling sinners. No matter how poor, how depraved, how unworthy; for every weary soul, for every one that needs rest — it is intended. For WHAT is it designed? To give rest — sweet rest, perfect rest.

Rest from the lashings of a guilty conscience.

Rest from the thunderings of a broken law.

Rest from the exhausting labor of working for salvation.

Rest from the accusations of Satan.

Rest from the fears of eternal death. For how LONG may we enjoy rest here? Through the whole of life, in the trying hour of death, and throughout eternity. Here, poor rambler, is a rest for you — better, cheaper, sweeter, more peaceful, more refreshing, and more lasting than you will find anywhere else!

Ramble then to the feet of Jesus — and leave off your rambling there.

Ramble to the cross of Jesus — and find peace, comfort, and the beginning of Heaven there.

Ramble to the church of God — and lie down with the sheep of Jesus there. The green pastures and the still waters are there. The rest and the refreshing for the weary are there. The joy and peace in believing, are to be realized there. At the feet of Jesus, at the cross of Jesus, and in the church of Jesus — you will find "The True Rambler's Rest."

Rest from all your cares.

Rest from all your fears.

Rest from all your toils.

Rest from all your foes.

Rest akin to the rest of Heaven — where there is rest that will not be broken for evermore.

Once more then, I say, Ramble to Jesus. Ramble to the church of God. Ramble to the cross — and there you will find rest, sweet and permanent rest, for your weary soul!

## 38 The Easy Yoke

---

### The Easy Yoke

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:29-30 The Lord Jesus is put in possession of things by his Father. As possessing things, he invites the laboring and heavy laden, to come to him for supplies and rest. He proposes that they should enter his service, and become wholly his. He says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls." The yoke symbolizes subjection and obedience; he therefore proposes that we should be subject unto him, and obey him; and he holds out this inducement, "My yoke is easy." Matthew 11:30. Yes, blessed Jesus, we who have proved it, have found it to be easy and pleasant too, therefore we can well recommend your yoke to others! The yoke of Jesus includes the subjection of the understanding to His teaching. We must receive the kingdom of God as little children. We must learn divinity of Him. All that He says — we must believe; and all that He commands — we must do. The yoke of Jesus includes the subjection of the conscience to His authority. He must be sole Lord of conscience. As cleansed by His blood, enlightened by His truth, and sanctified by His Spirit — the conscience must bow to Him, be zealous for Him, and maintain His honor. The yoke of Jesus includes the subjection of the will to His pleasure. We must prefer His will to our own, and make His pleasure ours. The yoke of Jesus includes the subjection of the heart to His love. His love must inflame, regulate, and elevate the heart. He must become the object of its highest, warmest love. Love to Him must rule our thoughts, words, and actions. The yoke of Jesus includes the subjection of our abilities to His service. For Him, the duties of life must be performed. To Him, every power must be dedicated. His glory must be the end in all things sought.

Unless, therefore, we submit . . .

the understanding to His teaching,

the conscience to His authority,

the will to His pleasure,

the heart to His love, and

the abilities to His service —

we do not take His yoke upon us. The yoke of Christ may be represented by the subjection of . . .

the child to its parents,

the servant to his master, and

the scholar to his tutor. In each case, the authority within its proper sphere is absolute. Authority on the one side, and subjection on the other, are the ideas suggested by these relations. The yoke

of Christ includes . . .

allegiance to Him as our king,

reliance on Him as our Savior,

confidence in Him as our guide,

imitation of Him as our example, and

attachment to Him as our best friend.

Spirit of Jesus, incline each reader's heart to take the yoke of Christ and wear it! O that we may be the subjects, the servants, the brethren of the Son of God! The yoke of Christ is EASY. Compare it with . . .

the yoke of Satan, which we wore in our natural state;

the yoke of Moses, as worn by the Jews of old;

the yoke of superstition, as worn by pagans and papists now.

It is easy, because connected with it, for every trial, there is assistance:

for every temptation — there is support;

for every difficulty — there is help;

for every sorrow — there is solace;

for every trouble — there is tranquility;

for every loss — there is unspeakable gain;

and for every service — there is a rich and eternal reward!

O reader, have you taken the yoke of Jesus upon you? Each one of us must wear some yoke, we cannot be absolutely free. The alternative is, the yoke of Jesus — or the yoke of Satan, the yoke of the law, the yoke of superstition, or the yoke of some system of errors. Let me beseech you to choose the best, and then I know that you will choose the yoke of Jesus. It is lined with love, it is an honor to its wearer, and will, by and bye, be exchanged for a crown of glory. To you, once more Jesus says, "Take My yoke upon you . . . for My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

## 39 The Christian's Claim

---

The Christian's Claim "They are of the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them.

We are of God, and whoever knows God listens to us" 1 John 4:5-6 "We are of God." So said the apostle John, of himself and his fellow believers.

"They are of the world," so he testified of unbelievers.

These two companies comprise the whole world. We are either "of God," or "of the world." Which is it? Is the matter settled — settled to our satisfaction — settled to the convincing and silencing of others. John wrote to believers that they may be assured, and have no doubt upon the point. Without this, they were not prepared to do battle with sin, Satan, and the world. Let us then think over the subject, and may the Holy Spirit throw light upon it, and comfort and bless us by it. We will consider, The CLAIM. To be especially and peculiarly the Lord's. To be HIS as no others are: His choice. Chosen from among men. Chosen from the beginning. Chosen in Christ. The elect are predestined to be like his Son, and to obtain and enjoy all spiritual blessings. His purchase. Bought with a price out of the hands of justice. Redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus, who gave his life a ransom price for us. He redeemed from all iniquity, to be God's purchased, and peculiar people, zealous for good works. His workmanship. His new creation. Created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. Being born of God. Begotten of God. And bearing his image and likeness. His children. Partakers of his nature. Possessing his Spirit. Forming part of his family. His servants. Employed on his property. Fed at his table. Ruled by his will. Endeavoring to please him. Obeying him from the heart. His witnesses. Who know his will. Are entrusted with his truth. Are called forth to speak for him, and are requested to bear testimony before his foes. His anointed ones. Such as have an unction from the Holy One, and have been anointed to speak in his name, intercede at his throne, and reign over themselves.

Such are God's peculiar people: His people. His family. His flock. His jewels. His crown. His treasure. His inheritance. His portion. Happy are the people, who can make the claim, and say from the heart, "We are of God." Let us now notice, The PROOF. He who claims such a high distinction, so great a blessing, should be prepared to prove his title.

We are of God — for we have God's Spirit. This is a good proof, if we can indeed say, "We have received the Spirit who is of God," for "if any man has not the Spirit of Christ," have what else he may, "he does not belong to Christ."

We are of God — for we observe God's Word. This also is a good proof, for Jesus said, "Whoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven — the same is my mother, and sister, and brother." If we believe his promises, observe his ordinances, and do his commandments — then we are his.

We are of God — for we know God's mind. We have the mind of Christ. We know his will. We know the things that are freely given to us by God. By the teachings of his Spirit, by the Word of

his grace, and by fellowship with himself — -we know his mind.

We are of God — for we enjoy God's company. When alone with God, we are like a child with its father. When he communes with us along the way, our hearts burn within us. When we behold his beauty, see his goings in the sanctuary, and inquire in his temple — we are happy.

We are of God — for we exhibit God's virtues. We resemble him in his moral excellencies, and show forth his justice, mercy, patience, truth, and holiness, in the world. The exhibition is very imperfect. The reflection is very faint. But the likeness is real, and will become more and more striking.

We are of God — for we speak God's truth. His gracious truth, that sinners may believe and live. His moral truth, that professors may understand and obey. Being put in trust with the gospel, we not only carefully preserve it — but widely spread it.

We are of God — for we aim at God's glory. This shows that we are like-minded with God, that we sympathize with him, being taught by him. The end he always keeps in view, the mark at which he always aims — is his own glory; and if we do so too, unquestionably we are his. We will now observe, The RESULT. We are the Lord's, and therefore:

1. We shall be kept by his power. His omnipotence will be our garrison, through which no foe can ever break, over which no enemies can prevail.
2. We shall be hated by his foes. If we are of the world — then we shall be loved by the world; but if we are not of the world, if God has chosen us out of the world — then the world will hate us.
3. We shall be tried by his providence. For providence tries every professor, and every grace of every Christian. It is often God's furnace, into which he casts his precious metals, purging away their dross.
4. We shall be employed in God's work. He never brings up his children in idleness. He has something for every one of his children to do, and he requires them to do it. Out of love to his name, from zeal for his glory, and a desire to benefit his creatures — we shall be found employed in his service.
5. We shall be taught by his Spirit. Taught, not only at first — but all through life. Taught to feel our need of Christ, to see the exact suitability of Christ to us, and to close in with Christ, by precious faith. Taught to feel more and more our own weakness, vileness, and utter unworthiness; and more and more of Christ's strength, merit, and glory.
6. We shall be supplied by God's hand. He may pinch us — but will not neglect us. He has ever provided of his goodness for the poor, especially his own poor. He may deny us luxuries — but he will give us necessities. Our bread shall be given us, and our water shall be sure. He will keep us dependent, that we may . . .

see his hand,

read his heart,

believe his Word,

watch his working, and  
prove his faithfulness.

7. We shall be received into God's glorious house. Heaven is the house of God. It is the family residence. There, every member of the family is to be brought. Jesus has gone there to prepare our places, and he has promised to come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.

O the blessedness of being the Lord's! Happy, thrice happy are the people who can lay claim to the distinction, and say, "We are of God!" But if we are of God now — then we were not once. We were once strangers and foreigners — hopeless and godless in the world. We were dead in our sins, and were children of wrath, even as others.

If we are of God now — then it is all of God's grace. He . . .

chose us,

purchased us,

new created us,

adopted us, and

called us to his kingdom and glory

— and did it all of his sovereign grace! So that each one of us must say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am!" Yes, it is of grace, not of works — so that none can boast.

If we are of God's now — then let us walk answerably. Let us walk as children of the light. Let us walk worthy of the calling with which he has called us, in all holiness and honesty. Let us live godly, soberly, and righteously in the present world.

If we, are of God now — then Satan will try and test us. He will desire to have us, that he may sift us as wheat. He will tempt us to doubt, to presume, to despair, to trifle, to sin secretly, and to be proud of our privileges. He will . . .

inject evil thoughts,

excite evil passions, and

try by all means to get us to indulge in evil practices.

We must watch him, resist him, and refuse to give him place — or he will . . .

fill us with gloom,

fire us with lust, or

beguile us into frivolity.

He goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. May the Lord make us grateful, watchful, and prayerful; and give us grace so to walk and so to talk — that all who see us may confess of us, that "We are of God!"

## 40 Blood-guiltiness

---

Blood-guiltiness Sin always brings sorrow — whether it is the sin of omission or of commission. The believer suffers in this world — the unbeliever suffers in the world to come. David sinned — but how acutely and how long did David suffer! His psalm of repentance was introduced into the temple service, and has soothed, assisted, and comforted many a penitent since his day. There is one point in this psalm, on which I wish to fix my attention for a few minutes, as it appears suitable to me, and I trust that it is suitable to many besides me. David has just been praying that he may be made happy, in order that he may be useful in converting sinners; and then his own past conduct coming up before him again, he cries, O how plaintively, how piteously, with what energy: "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation!" Psalms 51:14. He had no dread of Hell before his eyes, for mark, The Title He Employs.

"O God," that is, the great, the good one. The omnipotent, the benevolent. What a mercy that power and benevolence are united in the Divine nature and character. His goodness and omnipotence are linked together.

"The God of my salvation." The gracious One, for salvation flows only from grace.

God is the AUTHOR of our salvation. The thought of it arose spontaneously in his mind,  
the purpose was formed in his heart,  
the plan was drawn by his wisdom, and  
all the means were from his resources.

God is the GIVER of our salvation. He does not set us to work for it, or ask us to purchase it — but he freely bestows it. He bestows it at once, so that the moment we believe — we are saved. Faith brings us into vital connection with himself, and so we "are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Nothing can be more gratuitous than salvation. It is only, "Ask — and have." "Believe — and it is yours."

God is the END of our salvation. He saves us — for his own honor, for his own praise, to get himself a glorious name. Just as it was said of Israel — it may be said of us, "He saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known!" By becoming the author, giver, and end of our salvation — he has laid us under the DEEPEST OBLIGATION. We should live for him. We should act for him. Our whole conduct should be regulated by his precepts. He has saved us, to use us as instruments in saving others — and when we lose sight of this, we lose sight of one of the grand ends of our salvation. Our vocation is, instrumentally, to save souls from death. This leads us to notice, The Dreadful Crime. "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation." The guilt of blood. That is, literally, from murder. Murder is the greatest crime that we can commit against our fellow-men, and it is a crime that calls for punishment, both from God and man. David was guilty of Uriah's blood, whom he had slain with the sword of the children of Ammon. But there is soul-murder — and it is a most awful thing in any way to be accessory to

this. Souls are murdered directly by false doctrine, as in the Church of Rome; and by others who teach dependence on works, instead of the merit of Christ; and inculcate trust in a creature, instead of trusting in Christ alone. There is salvation in the name, and by the perfect work of Christ alone; and, therefore, to teach salvation by sacraments, ceremonies, duties, prayers, or penances — is to poison the soul, and destroy it instead of saving it. But we may be accessory to soul-murder indirectly, as for instance if we saw a fellow-creature attempting to commit suicide, and did not endeavor to prevent it — if we stood and looked on, or carelessly passed by on the other side. Now sinners are destroying themselves all around us, and we by our negligence, our unholy walking, our misrepresenting the gospel in our lives, or by our unfaithfulness — become accessory to their destruction! We see them destroying themselves by sin — but from cowardliness, we neglect to warn or caution them. We know that the only means of saving them is the gospel — and yet from the indulgence of a natural shyness, or some other cause, we neglect to present that gospel to them, or press that gospel upon them.

We hide the remedy — and the patient dies!

We conceal the pardon — and the criminal is executed!

Ought we not to have endeavored to get the patient to take the remedy? Ought we not to have carried the pardon to the criminal's cell? In a word, ought we not to have set the gospel before those who are perishing around us, and have tried by all means to bring them to Jesus? But we have been careless, prayerless, and comparatively indifferent! May we not have the blood of souls upon us.

Think of being guilty, directly or indirectly — of the damnation of a neighbor, friend, or relative! To have laid to our charge, the blood of a son or a daughter, whom we neglected to train up for the Lord! The blood of a sister or a brother, whom we neglected to warn and invite to Jesus! The blood of a mother or father, for whose salvation we never agonized with God, or sought by every means in our power to save! Well, well may we cry out with David, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation!" Let us now look at, The Fervent Petition. Deliver me — by pardoning the past, and so freeing me from the guilt of blood. Deliver me — by preventing me in future, and so preserving me from the crime. Give me sanctifying grace, which will set me apart for your service, consecrate me to your praise, and qualify me to pluck sinners as brands from the burning. Fill me with the Spirit of Christ, that my heart may glow with love, that I may be fired with holy zeal, and be prepared to make any sacrifice — in order to save souls from death. Raise me above myself. . . that I may conquer my natural shyness — and speak for Christ;

that I may overcome timidity — and warn sinners of their danger;

that I may no more indulge in idleness — but work for God and souls, while it is called today;

that I may despise indifference — and throw my whole heart into the service of my Savior;

that I may no longer consult my own ease, or comfort, or respectability — but be willing to do anything, be anything, or suffer anything — if I may but be clear from the guilt of blood; or rather if I may but win the honor of saving some from Hell.

Ministers of the gospel, allow me to ask you: Brethren, beloved in the Lord, are you clear from the blood of all men? Have you been faithful — tender — earnest — persevering — self-denying —

accommodating yourselves and your ministry to all men — that you may by all means save some? Can the illiterate understand you? Are the careless aroused by your energy? Are the thoughtless affected by your sincerity? Are the poor attracted by your love?

O that we could, each one of us say to our congregations, and to all around us, as Paul did, "Remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every man day and night with tears."

Sunday School teacher — are you free from blood, the blood of every pupil in your class? Have you taught, as for eternity? Have you invited your students to Jesus, as if you saw the burning lake of fire open just before them? Have you collected them alone and prayed for them, and pleaded with them, as immediately beneath the eye of a heart-searching God! Has the salvation of each child, been your constant, your highest aim?

Church member, are you free from blood? Have you seized every opportunity to speak with all around you, especially with such as meet with you in God's house, of . . .

the value of the soul,

the danger of delay,

the pleasantness of true religion,

the preciousness of Christ,

the glory of heaven, and

the only way that leads to it?

O have you? Can you be quite free from blood-guiltiness, if you have not?

Parents — are you free from blood — the blood of your children?

FATHER, could you do no more for that son of yours? Could you not have prayed for him more? Could you not have prayed with him more? Could you not have wept over him, have pleaded with him, and have shown him that you were in real earnest for his salvation, more than you have?

MOTHER, could you do no more to save that daughter? Had you been . . .

more gentle — or more firm;

more devout — and more cheerful;

more spiritual — and more humble

— might not things have been different? A mother's religion, if it is the genuine article, the religion of Christ, making her Christlike — has an astonishing power over the heart of a daughter or a son! Can nothing more be done now? A letter in a different strain, to what you formerly have written, or a course of conduct different to what you latterly pursued, and set times for energetic determined prayer — may yet prevail. Try it! Try it — if by any means you may save your child from Hell.

Think, friends, O think, how awful to be accessory to the death of souls, the murder of those we love, or in the language of David, to be guilty of blood! Let us look around on our families,

congregations, neighborhoods, and acquaintances, and ask, "Am I guilty, as to any among them?" If so, let us humble ourselves before God, plead as David pleaded, and seek grace from God — that we may be wise to win souls — at least that we may be faithful, and so be clear of their blood.

Think of eternity — an eternity of torment! Think of the wrath of God, which like a consuming fire, will fasten and feed upon lost souls! And think, O think, that the blood of souls stains deep! O how deep — who can tell?

Gracious God, pardon our lack of zeal for you, and love to our fellow men. Forgive, O forgive us, that we have allowed our garments to be stained with the blood of souls! Give, O give us grace, that in future we may live for you, live like your beloved Son, live to save souls from damnation!

Here are a few lines by a Clergyman, on hearing the bell toll for one of his parishioners:

O should he meet me at the bar of God,  
And on my conscience charge the guilt of blood!  
My vital warmth grows chill through all my veins,  
O! wash me blood divine from all my stains  
But should he meet me in that day of days,  
And tell it to the dear Immanuel's praise,  
That I was made the instrument of good,  
While speaking of my Savior's precious blood!  
Then love divine shall fill my raptured soul,  
And grace, free grace, resound from pole to pole!

## 41 The Dry Bones

---

### The Dry Bones

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones! He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry!"Ezekiel 37:1-2

Many and striking are the representations given, of the state into which sin plunged Israel of old. But perhaps none are more striking than the valley of dry bones. This shows most clearly that their deliverance must be of God — and of God alone. Means of themselves were wholly insufficient. And this representation suits the state of the sinner, and sets forth most clearly, the true condition of all men in a state of nature, concerning spiritual things. We, like the prophet, are in a valley which is full of bones, and like him we may say, "I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry!" Let us consider these words, as giving us: A Description of the Sinner's State. Man is helpless, for what can dry bones do? But dry bones are not more helpless in a physical sense — than sinners are in a spiritual sense; for they are totally destitute of all life and power. Being thus helpless, they are considered, in themselves hopeless — for what can dry bones expect? Just so, man, being a sinner, an enemy of God, cannot expect any spiritual good from God. Neither does he, or so much as desire it. But he is not only helpless and hopeless — he is unconscious of his state. The physically dead know nothing; just so, the dead in sin know nothing spiritually. They are unconscious of their real state and condition before God, therefore they imagine that they are all right — when they are all wrong; and cry 'peace and safety', while they are in the greatest possible danger! And this is not merely the case with some — it is universally the case. They have all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that does good — no not one! See then, The Necessity of Divine Intervention. They are beyond the power of man or of any creature to help them; for as no creature can raise the dead, or form dry bones into a living man — so no creature can raise the dead in sin, or form living saints, out of dead sinners! They are beyond the power of the Word of God alone — they may read it, or hear it preached — but without the operation of the Holy Spirit, it will produce no saving effect. God himself must work. We are shut up to this, for except God comes into the "valley of dry bones", and exerts his omnipotent power — no soul will ever be saved. It requires as much power to convert a sinner — as it did to create the world, or to form men out of the dust of the earth at first! It is not by human might, nor by any creature's power — that souls are raised from a death in sin, to a life of righteousness — but by the Spirit of the Lord alone.

What Then, Will Sight Views of this Subject Produce in Us?

PITY, for we can but pity creatures who are so helpless and so hopeless, even though they have become so by their own fault.

PRAYER, for surely if we pity them, we shall desire to rescue them, and if we see that none but God can deliver them, we shall beseech him to do so.

EFFORT, for if we pity and pray for them, we shall exert ourselves, and use all the means in our power on their behalf.

DEPENDENCE ON GOD, for if we realize that God only can save, we shall pity, pray for, and make use of every effort — in dependence on God alone.

EXPECTATION FROM GOD, for if he has encouraged us to pity, pray for, and endeavor to save souls from death — he will work by us, and crown our efforts with success.

CONTINUED APPEALS TO GOD, for if we see aright, and feel aright — we shall be constantly looking up to God, and appealing to his pity and his power, for the success of our feeble efforts.

What is the place where we reside? What is England? What is the world at large? A valley of dry bones! And there are many bones in the open valley; and, lo, they are very dry.

What is man spiritually considered? A skeleton, or a collection of dry bones.

How long has he been in such a dreadful condition? Long enough for the bones to have become very dry. Who can effectually help him? God, and God alone!

What then are we? Living, spiritual people — or, dry bones?

If spiritual people — then who raised us from the dead? Who called us into a state of spiritual life? The Lord in the exercise of his sovereignty, and by the exertion of his almighty power, and the Lord alone!

What is now required of us? To live a resurrection life, or as those who are raised from the dead, and who make the life of the risen Jesus, their copy and example.

What should be rendered by us? The praises of our lips, the sacrifice of our persons, body and soul; and the earnest, hearty service of our lives. We should live, not only like him who raised us — but for him, and for his honor and glory alone.

Brethren, we live under solemn circumstances, surrounded by perishing immortals! We live in a very heart-affecting situation — a valley of dry bones! We have become accustomed to it — or we would be very seriously and deeply affected by it.

Let us remember that Jesus who raised Lazarus, and who quickened us — can quicken and raise any, or all of those around us. He has said "as the Father quickens whom he will, so he has given to the Son to quicken whom he will." And again, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live."

Let us then, not only speak of Jesus, and write of Jesus — but let us go and tell Jesus, and beseech him to come down into the valley, and breathe upon the slain — that they may live!

O Jesus, author and giver of life, of life natural, and life spiritual — look upon the dry bones in our open valley, for they are very many, and they are very dry! But speak, Lord — and they shall live, and stand up an exceeding great army, to witness to your power, to testify of your grace, and to praise your name. Come, O come, Spirit of the Lord, and breathe upon these slain — that they may live!

Look down, O Lord! with pitying eye  
See Adam's race in ruin lie;  
Sin spreads its trophies o'er the ground,  
And scatters slaughtered heaps around. And can these moldering corpses live?  
And can these perished bones revive!  
That, mighty God — to you is known;  
That wondrous work is all your own! Your ministers are sent in vain  
To prophesy upon the slain:  
In vain they call, in vain they cry,  
Until your almighty aid is nigh! But if your Spirit deign to breathe,  
Life spreads through all the realms of death;  
Dry bones obey your powerful voice;  
They move, they waken, they rejoice!  
So, when your trumpet's awful sound  
Shall shake the heavens and rend the ground,  
Dead saints shall from their tombs arise,  
And spring to life beyond the skies!

## 42 The Sure Resource

---

The Sure Resource "A friend in need — is a friend indeed." Such a friend we often want — but often seek in vain. Our need of a friend, arises from our troubles, trials, and difficulties, which we meet with in our way home; and God in his holy word, proposes to be that friend. He therefore . . .

invites us to come to him in trouble,  
promises to be with us in trouble, and  
engages to deliver us out of trouble.

We cannot escape trouble — but we may have our troubles sanctified, and turned into real blessings. Let us not then be discouraged, or disheartened, by the prospect of troubles — but with the Psalmist say, "In the day of my trouble I will call upon you; for you will answer me." Psalms 86:7. He looks forward to: A Trying Season, "the day of my trouble," or my day of trouble. Our troubles sometimes flow from God — in the form of bodily diseases, bereavements, or death.

Sometimes they come from men — from good men, who may painfully disappoint us; or from bad men who may deal severely with us. But our worst troubles are traceable to ourselves, to . . .

our inbred sins,  
our fleshly lusts,  
our unwatchfulness,  
our worldly mindedness, and

our tampering with temptation. But however severe our troubles may be — they are limited; it is "the DAY of our trouble." We have months of pleasure, and years of health — but only days of trouble. The period is short — though painful. It may appear long — when we are in it. For days of trouble now — we have an eternity of happiness before us. Nor only so — but in trouble we have a sure resource:

the throne of grace is erected for us,  
the gracious promise is given us, and  
God waits to be gracious unto us.

Let us therefore with David, form, This Settled Purpose, "I will call upon you." I will turn from creatures, and from circumstances — to God. I will not complain to man, I will cry to God. I will not murmur at your dealings, or complain of my lot — but I will turn to God.

I will cry unto you — for you have bidden me, and will therefore be gracious unto me.

I will cry unto you — for necessity is laid upon me, I must cry or sink under my burden.

I will cry unto you — for my relation to you, and connection with you, warrants me — you are my God, my Deliverer, my Father.

I will cry unto you — and so relief will be afforded me, for you have said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."

I believe your word, I rely on your faithfulness, I will test your veracity, and I shall prove that you will deliver me in six troubles, and in seven — you will not forsake me. Here then is my, Firm Persuasion, "You will answer me."

You will answer me — for it is your character, your conduct, "O you who hears prayer."

You will answer me — for you have promised, "Then shall you call, and the Lord shall answer; you shall cry, and he shall say, Here I am." "Call upon me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you know not."

You will answer me — for it is your nature, for "for God is love."

You will answer me — for it is your delight, you delight in mercy.

Yes, you will answer me — though I am poor and needy.

You will answer me — though I am weak and feeble.

You will answer me — though I am destitute and friendless.

You will answer me — though I am sinful and unworthy.

You will certainly answer me, and answer me speedily too!

Beloved, we may expect trouble. It is appointed for us. It is needful for us. But let us not be alarmed at the prospect of trouble, for it is provided for in the covenant, and deliverance is secured to us by promise. Let us then beseech the throne of grace. God will . . .

hear us,

sympathize with us,

acknowledge his word,

give us present support, and

in the end complete deliverance!

Let us therefore expect deliverance. He who has delivered his people in all times past — delivers now; in him therefore we may confidently trust that he will yet deliver us. The last day of trouble will soon be here,

the last cry of distress will soon be uttered,

the last application for relief will soon be made,

the last answer to prayer will soon be received — and

then all will be peace, pleasure, and perfect holiness forever!

Lost sinner, what will you do in trouble? Evil is before you. The evil days draw near. What will you do, with . . .

no God to go to,

no promise to rest on,

no deliverance to expect.

What will you do? Seek the Lord now — before the day of trouble comes. Make the Lord your friend now — before your great need of a friend is felt. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ now, be reconciled to God now, seek and obtain peace by the blood of the cross now — and then you too may say, "In the day of my trouble, I will call upon you; for you will answer me!"

Dear refuge of my weary soul,

On you, when sorrows rise,

On you, when waves of trouble roll,

My fainting hope relies. To you I'll tell each rising grief.

For you alone can heal;

Your word can bring a sweet relief

For every pain I feel. Your mercy-seat is open still,

Here let my soul retreat;

With humble hope attend your will.

And wait beneath your feet.

## 43 God's Word must Rule me

---

### God's Word must Rule me

Bad men sometimes give utterance to very good things — things worth remembering, things which should influence our conduct and our hearts. This was the case with Balaam — he was a bad man, covetousness ruled his soul, he wanted to curse Israel to make money, and gratify King Balak — but he was not permitted. How many sweet and blessed things he said of the safety, honor, and happiness of God's people. And when Balak tried by all means to get him to curse Israel, and could not prevail, and then tried to prevent his blessing them, how well he said, "All that the Lord speaks — that I must do." Numbers 23:26. What a text for us! True, he was influenced by fear, and we should be influenced by love; still our language should be the same, and our conduct should correspond with our words.

Here Is a Fact Supposed. A fact containing three points.

First, it supposes that the Lord communicates his mind. This he has done most fully, in his most holy word. Here he tells us what he would have us do — and what Holy Spirit would have us avoid.

Second, it supposes that the Lord's word can be understood. True, the Scriptures contain some things that are hard to be understood — but this only applies to some doctrines or prophecies, which are confessedly mysterious. Upon all practical matters — the Scriptures are exceedingly plain.

Third, it supposes that the Lord requites obedience. His Word is not given to amuse us — but to sanctify us, and regulate our lives. "Your Word is a lamp to my feet — and a light for my path." Psalms 119:105 In a word — we are directed what to believe, what to expect, what to avoid, and what to do. Nor is there an unnecessary precept in all God's Word, all are, or were necessary; and all are, or were, designed to promote God's glory and our happiness and holiness.

Here is an Obligation Felt. "All that the Lord speaks, that I must do." I must, for . . .

I am a creature — and am bound to obey my Creator;

I am a subject — and am bound to obey my Sovereign;

I am a pardoned criminal — and am bound to obey my forgiving Lord;

I am a child, made so by adoption and grace — and am bound to obey my gracious and loving Father.

I am not at liberty to object to any one of his commands. I cannot be justified in delaying to obey. There is no excuse for neglecting to do.

Here is a Confession Made. "All that the Lord speaks — that I must do." I must do all the Lord bids, whether painful or pleasant, civil or religious. I must obey, for the Lord is . . .

my Master — and requires;

my Sovereign — and observes;

my Father — and deserves;

my Judge — and will demand an account.

I must do it — for it is for my God who loves me, supplies me, and will glorify me with himself.

I must do it — for it is for my Savior's honor, who died for my sins, rose for my justification, and now pleads my cause in Heaven.

It is but little that I can do, especially when compared with what he has done for me — and therefore I must do what I can, and do it as promptly, cheerfully, and as perfectly as I can.

I must do it, for it is required as a proof of my love, for Jesus says, "If you love me — keep my commandments." As one therefore, who . . .

knows and believes the love that God has to me;

feels his obligation to the Lord Jesus as my sin-atonement Substitute;

can do little in return, for all the wondrous things done for me;

loves Jesus, because he first loved me;

desires to evince and prove my love to him

— I must do all that he commands.

I feel that I am under his authority;

I know that I am bound to walk by the rule of his holy word;

I realize that I am obliged to obey —

and therefore, I must do what he requires.

We may apply the subject to the Lord's ordinances, which too many professed Christians neglect, or treat with lightness. Has not God spoken of these ordinances in his word? Has he not spoken intelligibly? Does he not require us to observe his ordinances, and keep his laws? Have we carefully, prayerfully, and deliberately, examined the New Testament for ourselves, in reference to these ordinances? The whole will of Christ in reference to the nature, design, and obligation to observe the institutions of Christ — is recorded in the New Testament. Have we then, as those who . . .

must give account of our conduct to God;

must be judged by the Word of Christ at the last day;

profess to prefer his will before our own;

profess to honor him in all things —

have we examined the New Testament on the subject as we ought to do? Have we . . .  
carried out our convictions,  
obeyed the commands of Jesus, and  
done the will of God from the heart?

Obedience is better than sacrifice. Hence he says, "Only obey my voice." If we have not observed his ordinances — or if we do not observe his ordinances — have we an allowance from himself to neglect them? Some act as if they had a dispensing authority, and could set aside the ordinances of Christ as they please; and so while they protest against the pope of Rome — they claim a right to exercise one of his most arrogant assumptions, and thus set up to be popes themselves! But such will, sooner or later, see that they are guilty of a presumptuous sin, for no one has a right to object to, or neglect, or set aside — any one of his ordinances. They . . .

were devised by his wisdom,  
are enacted by his authority,  
are intended for his honor, and  
are continued for the glory of his name.

Let us, therefore, as we love the Savior, as we would be found of him in peace, as we would not be ashamed before him at his coming — seek to know his will, to prefer his will to our own, to do his will; and esteeming all his commandments, concerning all things to be right — may we hate every false way. Let us seek grace from God, that we may say with Balaam, not from fear — but from love, not merely with the lips — but with the life: "All that the Lord speaks — that I must do."

## 44 Looking Upon the Pierced One

---

### Looking Upon the Pierced One

"He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:5 The senses affect the soul. Some impressions are made through the ear — but perhaps more and deeper through the eye. A look has led into sin — and a look has led away from sin. A look has ruined — and a look has brought salvation. A look has hardened the heart — and a look has softened it.

Looking in Scripture, represents believing; because in believing the mind is . . .

fixed on an object,

affected by the object,

drawn to the object.

If we would enjoy peace, grow in grace, and walk with God — there is one object on which the eye of the mind should be constantly fixed. Therefore it is written, as the language of our crucified Lord, "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced!" Zechariah 12:10.

Pierced! WHO pierced him? We did, and pierced him to the heart! Nor were we satisfied with piercing him once, for we have pierced him often, and pierced him through and through! Our unbelief pierces Him;

our ingratitude pierces Him;

the coldness of our love pierces Him;

our forgetfulness pierces Him;

our preferring the world to Him pierces Him;

our disobedience to His Word pierces Him;

and our doubting of His love pierces Him.

It was we who pierced him on Calvary!

We put the nails and the hammer into the hands of the executioners!

We put the spear into the hand of the Roman soldier!

Yes, it was we who gathered the thorns, picked out the sharpest, formed them into a mock crown, thrust it on his head, and with the staff beat the thorns into His temples!

See, see, there he hangs — pierced in his head, hands, feet, and side — pierced for us — pierced by us!

Look, my soul, at the pierced One!

God's only Son that hangs on that cross!

He created the Heavens and the earth.

He was before all things, and by him all things hold together.

He is naturally and eternally Divine — and yet human.

He was God by nature.

He became man by choice. As God-man, he suffers, bleeds, and dies.

O my soul, look at Jesus!

He is your Substitute.

He is there for you!

He is suffering death for you!

He is bearing the desert of your sins in His own body on the tree!

He is enduring your curse, being made accursed for you!

He is revealing . . .

what is in man's nature,

what is in God's heart, and

what He is willing to do and suffer — rather than I should perish!

Yes, Jesus is there for me!

He represents my person!

He answers for my crimes!

He dies in my stead!

O Savior, was ever any love, was ever any agony, was ever any death — like Yours!

Look, my soul, look to Jesus, the pierced One, as Israel of old looked to the brazen serpent, until your guilt is removed, your fears are dispersed, and your soul is saved! Look to him as the one great and all-sufficient sacrifice for sin; by which . . .

sin is put away forever,

God's justice eternally satisfied, and

your salvation made easy and honorable.

Look, and mourn — because your sins degraded, disgraced, and put him to grief! Look, and rejoice, for you shall have . . .

dignity by his degradation,  
honor by his disgrace, and  
life by his death.

Look, and be sorry that you have ever sinned, and so caused Jesus to suffer. Look, and rejoice that you shall live forever to glorify and praise his name. O my soul, Jesus was wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities! His blood has made your peace with God, his righteousness gives you a title to eternal life, and his death delivers you from dying!

I wish to fix my eye intently on Jesus . . .

in Gethsemane,

in Pilate's hall,

before Annas, Caiphas, and

more especially on the hill Calvary, and marking all his tears, wounds, and agonies — feel that I was the cause of all. I myself did it. Yes, I bruised him, scourged him, spit on him, crowned him with thorns, smote him with the fist, and nailed him to the cursed tree! I inflicted it all. He patiently endured. God allowed it, because he voluntarily undertook to endure it, and I, O wonder of wonders! I derive pardon, holiness, and eternal life from it!

## 45 The Voice of the Charmers

---

The Voice of the Charmers The everlasting gospel is the greatest blessing which God can confer on a people. It has lifted our own country from a state of barbarism, delivered it from oppression and despotism, and made it the wonder of the world! And as much as it does for countries and communities, it does more for individuals; and yet, such is man's enmity to God, and the delusion under which he labors — that he rejects that gospel, and all the blessings which it presents. To this subject may be applied the language of the Psalmist, "Their venom is like the venom of a snake, like that of a deaf adder that has stopped up its ears, that will not hearken to the voice of the charmers, however skillful the enchanters may be." Psalms 58:4-5. The everlasting gospel is the instrument intended to charm sinners. It is God's voice in its most melodious tones — not like his voice in the law, which was harsh, solemn, and alarming; it is gentle, sweet, and winning.

It is God's voice to adders — or to men as fallen, accursed, and depraved. As the adder is one of the most poisonous, degraded, and hateful of reptiles — so sinners of mankind are represented as . . .

having adder's poison under their lips,

their mouth being an open sepulcher, and

their hearts deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

It is God's voice proclaiming . . .

pardon for the guilty,

righteousness for the ungodly,

holiness for the polluted, and

Heaven for the wretched, the miserable, and undone!

It is God's voice, beseeching sinners to be reconciled, and become his friends; that they may live in fellowship with him on earth, and enjoy all the glory of his happy home.

It reveals God in a charming character — as a Father pitying his prodigal and apostate children.

It reveals the Son of God in a charming relation — as the Savior of sinners.

It reveals the Holy Spirit in a charming office — as the Paraclete — or monitor, instructor, and comforter of poor sinners. This instrument is used, not by angels, who may by their glory and majesty fill us with fear and dread; but by men, men of like passions with ourselves. Men whom God has appointed to the work, anointed with the Holy Spirit, and so qualified them for the business. Men whom God has commissioned — and so authorized them to speak for him. Men whom God has owned — so making them blessings to their fellow men. O what wisdom they need to charm souls! What patience is required to endure their discouragements! What fortitude is

necessary to face their foes! What perseverance is demanded, until God crowns their efforts with success! Well may the ministers of Christ cry, "Brethren, pray for us!" The treatment these servants of God receive is here set forth. Like the deaf adder, who thrusts its tail into one ear, and presses the other so firmly on the ground that no sound, however sweet, can enter; so some openly refuse to listen to them. They will not even lend an ear, or give God's message a thought.

Others hear — but will not be charmed; they stifle convictions, and get rid of all impressions. They put the gospel away from them. They will not yield. To be charmed, is to be drawn forth from all their holes and hiding-places; from all their old customs, companions, and enjoyments — from the hole of self-righteousness and self-dependence. To be charmed, is to be rendered harmless — the charmed adder will not sting; so the sinner, however hurtful once, is hurtful no longer. As it is written, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." To be charmed, is to be led to the Savior:

to his throne for pardon,

to his cross for peace,

to himself for satisfaction and joy. To be charmed, is to be delighted with the gospel, and its gracious doctrines, precious promises, and holy precepts. To be charmed, is to surrender themselves up to the music, so as to be ruled by it; then . . .

the name of Christ is sweet,

the work of Christ is precious, and

the example of Christ is captivating. To one that is charmed by the gospel — Christ is all. His blood, his word, his Spirit, his ordinances, and his people — are prized above all things!

See then, God's view of the gospel:

it is a charm;

its sound is a charming sound;

its theme is a charming theme;

its proposals are charming proposals.

See, also, the notice he takes of the reception it meets with; he observes . . .

whether sinners listen — or refuse to hear;

whether they embrace — or neglect it;

whether they yield themselves to its influence — or thrust it from them.

See, too, the source to which its rejection is traced, to man's sinful will, "they will not hearken to the voice of the charmers," they will not come to Jesus, that they might have life.

See, finally, the consequences of its rejection — they remain adders, dangerous, and doomed to destruction. They are under God's curse; to the earth they cleave, and with an everlasting destruction shall they be destroyed. May God give us grace to listen to, believe, and be charmed

by the Gospel — to our own salvation and his glory.

## 47 We See Jesus!

---

We See Jesus!

"We see Jesus!" Hebrews 2:9

Some people are very fond of sight-seeing. Many miles will they travel, and much money will they spend — to see anything new and rare! And yet after all they prove the truth of Solomon's words, "The eye is not satisfied with seeing." Besides which, we soon weary of looking upon any created object — however grand, magnificent, or beautiful.

Well, I am fond of using my eyes too. I love to look upon the wondrous works of God, and the ingenious works of man. I can enjoy a beautiful landscape, or a sight of the starry Heavens, as well as most people. But some years ago, one object . . .

attracted my eye,

fixed my attention,

and feasted my soul; and it has done so ever since.

I have never wearied of it, nor do I believe I ever shall. That object is Jesus.

Jesus — who is the brightness of God's glory;

Jesus — who is the only begotten of the Father;

Jesus — who is the only and all-sufficient Savior;

Jesus — who is full of grace and truth. To see Jesus — is to enjoy the greatest, the best, the most glorious sight in the universe! For he is the visible Jehovah, the express image of his Father, who in his person, work, and word — reveals his Father's mind.

Jesus is the sinner's best, and often, the sinner's only friend. He took our nature, to become our High Priest; and he became our High Priest, that he might offer a sacrifice to God, which would be sufficient to atone for our sin, and save any sinner. Having taken our nature, and in that nature met and satisfied all the claims of divine justice, and paid the penalty of God's Holy law — he has carried that nature to Heaven, and in it he mediates and intercedes for us, being our righteous advocate.

Once he was seen by the eye of the body, for in flesh he tabernacled among us. But now he can only be seen by the eye of the mind, through the medium of a living faith. That faith sees Jesus in all the types and ceremonies of the Levitical law; in all the prophecies and predictions of ancient times; in all the precious promises which grace has given and recorded in the book of God; in all the ordinances of the house of God. But especially in the everlasting gospel which as a mirror reflects him, and places him immediately before our eyes. On his throne of grace — we see him exalted to show mercy; and on his throne of glory — we expect to see him to administer judgment

in uprightness.

He is not to be seen now by the eye of sense, for the Heavens have received him, until the times of the restitution of all things; nor should we expect, or even wish for any fanciful or visionary view of Jesus. He manifests himself to the soul in a spiritual manner, by his Holy Spirit; and when the soul sees him — it is filled with love to him, and with an ardent desire to be like him. It desires a close, intimate, and eternal union to him; and everything else loses its beauty, value, and importance — in comparison with him. To see Jesus, under the revealing influences of the Spirit, is to commit the soul to him, resting the whole weight of its salvation upon him, and to decide to be his, wholly his, only his, and his forever. These effects are always produced by a sight of Christ. Who may expect to be indulged with this sight? All who are weary of looking at themselves, at their own works, and at the law of God, for life and peace. All who having heard of this privilege, ardently desire it, humbly plead for it, and who cannot be satisfied without it. Such, while they feel that they are utterly unworthy of it, nevertheless cry, "Jesus, reveal yourself to me!" and groan from the depths of the heart. "Holy Spirit, manifest Jesus to me!" and sigh, until in the language of David, the soul breaks for the longing that it has, to "see Jesus."

Such often find it long before they are indulged, and doubt — and fear that they shall never enjoy the privilege; and this may be, because they refuse to take God's Word and rest upon it, and act as if something sensible was necessary prior to it. Now it is on the Word that we are to rest — in an unseen Christ we are to believe for life and salvation, and when we do so, then Jesus reveals himself to us, filling us with joy and peace. Thus the only ground of our hope is, what Christ is in himself, and what Christ has done for us; not our sight of Christ, or enjoyment of Christ, nor yet even what we receive from Christ.

Beloved, have you seen Jesus? There are many fine sights in our world, and finer still in Heaven — but all together are not to be compared to a sight of Jesus. And yet, if the mind is spiritual, this glorious sight may be enjoyed every day.

Other sights are expensive — this is free. To see other sights we must travel far — this may be seen from any spot where we are.

Other sights in time become common, and fail to impress us — but this sight is always fresh, always new, always a celestial feast to the soul.

Holy Spirit, show us ourselves — and then give us a sight of Jesus! May we see him as the man, in our nature; as God, in the nature of his Father; as the God-man, possessing both natures in union and perfection. May we see him as the man of sorrows, and as crowned with glory and honor. May we see him every day, and many times in the day. Seeing Jesus, we rise above our fears, above our troubles, above death itself!

## 48 Comfort for Zion's Travelers

---

### Comfort for Zion's Travelers

One likes company sometimes on a journey. For, though a solitary walk is very pleasant when we are in a musing or a praying mood — yet, when we have far to go, our spirits are apt to sink, unless we have someone to converse with. In good company, the distance does not seem half so long, nor the road half so bad. Indeed, if I were allowed to choose, I would like to have four things in every journey I take. I would like . . .

a good road,

beautiful prospects,

excellent company, and

suitable accommodations at the end of it.

Well, the traveler to Mount Zion — whatever may be said by some to the contrary — has all these. Reader, are you going to the Heavenly Jerusalem, to see and inhabit the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God? If so, let us talk together for a few minutes upon these points; it may cheer, or refresh, or stimulate us on our journey. We are but pilgrims and sojourners here, and therefore should daily make progress on our upward journey.

1. We have a GOOD ROAD. It is God's highway, cut and made on purpose for Zion's pilgrims. Here is a beautiful path, called the way of holiness. This way is solid, clean, and pleasant; raising us above the marshes and swamps around us. This way is plainly marked out in God's holy Word. The Lord Jesus in his person, mediation, finished work, and bright example — constitutes this way. He spans the whole distance between earth and Heaven — and safely carries all and every one there who ventures upon him. As the traveler commits himself to his path, that he may arrive at the place he desires, and passes along the same path to the end; just so must we commit ourselves to Christ, walk in Christ, depending alone on Christ, until we enter Heaven. We must rest on nothing but Christ. We must trust to nothing but Christ. Our whole weight must be on him; he alone must be the path between us and our Father's house. Christ in his person — Christ in his mediation — Christ in his perfect work — and Christ in his beautiful example — is the only way . . .

from wrath — to love,

from curse — to blessing,

from guilt — to grace,

from earth — to Heaven. And this is a good road — solid, settled, and level. Once on it, we have never to leave it; for it is the straight, safe, direct, and only available way to Heaven. Let us therefore, admire the road while we travel it, and travel it while we admire it, until we arrive at the end of it. We walk by faith, and the end of our faith is the salvation of the soul.

2. We have BEAUTIFUL PROSPECTS. In the distance, we see the everlasting hills, on which the sun never sets. Occasionally we catch a glimpse of the city of the great king, with its jasper walls, twelve foundations, and gates of pearl. Now and then, the eye rests on the pure river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb, gliding along like a golden stream of molten silver; making glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. In the purest, clearest light, we can at times, read our pardon, written in large letters of crimson — and our title to the mansions in the skies. All along the road we see the waving palm trees, the lofty cedars, green fir-trees, fragrant myrtles, and the many-colored flowers of Paradise. Such views we have at times, as almost ravish us, and make us long to pass over Jordan, and possess the promised land. But of all sights, none are to be compared to that of the king of glory, who at times manifests himself unto us as he does not unto the world. And when this is the case, we are fired with holy longing to see the king in all his beauty, as beheld in the land which is very far off! O the sweet glimpses, the precious foretastes of glory, the bright prospects we sometimes enjoy!

3. We also have EXCELLENT COMPANY. The very best company. We walk with God. We have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are attended with an innumerable company of angels, who are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. Here on this road, we constantly overtake, or are overtaken by the saints, who are the excellent of the earth. Every choice spirit, every holy soul, every heir of glory — travels this road. And what makes our company so excellent, is, that every traveler has the Spirit of Christ, is a son of God, and knows God.

O how pleasant it is as we pass along — to converse of . . .

the person of the king,

the nature of his government,

the glories of his kingdom, and

of what he has done for all those who believe on his name! And how sweet it is at times to talk of the work of the Holy Spirit within us . . .

convincing of sin,

revealing the Savior,

applying the blood,

bringing home the promises,

bearing witness to our adoption, and

sealing our souls unto the day of redemption.

How swiftly and sweetly the time passes away, while thus engaged. At such times we could pity princes on their thrones, and despise all the gold and grandeur of the present world!

4. We shall have SUPERIOR ACCOMMODATION at the end. In our Father's house there are many mansions, and Jesus is gone to prepare a place for us. He knows well what will suit us, what will satisfy us. We shall find everything ready for our reception when we arrive there. Every power will find employment, every faculty enjoyment, and we shall be filled with delight and joy.

If we arrive at home weary — we shall find rest;  
if sick — we shall find health;  
if hungry — we shall find food;  
if thirsty — we shall find drink;  
if sorrowful — we shall obtain joy and gladness.

Soon, oh how soon! shall we forget . . .

all the wants and woes,  
all the cares and crosses,  
all the troubles and trials,  
all the darkness and the gloom,  
all the sadness and the sorrow,  
which we have experienced in the wilderness.

Heaven! Oh, what will Heaven be!

Paradise! Oh, what will it be to be there! The palace of the great King! What will it be to have dwelling places fitted up for us there! No tongue can tell. No heart can guess. Only God, and those who have safely arrived there can say.

Well, fellow-travelers, let us take heart!

We are on a good road. There could not be a better road. It is harder than adamant, and firmer than rock. It is plain and straight. It is free and level. No tolls are exacted, no thieves prowl thereon. Safety, everlasting safety, is found on this road.

We have beautiful prospects. What sights we have seen already — and we shall see greater things than these.

There are clearer and brighter skies than we have ever seen.

There are sweeter, greener fields than we have ever looked upon.

There are lovelier and more fragrant flowers than ever met our eyes.

There are more striking landscapes than we have ever gazed upon. In the land of Beulah, on the banks of the river of life . . .

what sights we shall see,

what sounds we shall hear,

what pleasures we shall taste.

Let us, therefore, press on with vigor and determined courage.

We have also excellent company. True, all are not alike — but all are more or less good. Every pearl is not of the same size, every diamond is not of the same quality, all gold is not alike fine — but all is precious, all is valuable. Just so with the saints, as one star differs from another star in glory, so does one saint differ from another in excellence; and yet all are glorious and excellent. But the end! The glorious end! What shall we meet with — what shall we see — what shall we hear — what shall we taste — what shall we feel — what shall we receive — what shall we possess, at the end? The end crowns the whole.

We shall see God.

We shall be like Jesus.

We shall be surrounded by the saints.

We shall be attended by the angels.

We shall feel ourselves at home in Heaven.

There will be . . .

no more doubts or fears;

no more sins or sorrows;

no more disappointments or vexations — but

all will be safety, perfection, and glorious forever.

Reader, are you traveling to Mount Zion? Have you left the City of Destruction? Have you passed through the strait gate? Are you in the road to glory? Are you in Christ, who himself said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father — but by me." There is no way . . .

from sin to holiness,

from wrath to mercy,

from Hell to Heaven

— but the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is the door, the way, the only Savior.

## 49 Miracles Will Not Convict Men

---

### Miracles Will Not Convict Men

Sin blinds a man's eyes to his own best interests, and hardens his heart, not only against God and his fellows — but against himself. Therefore he despises warnings, neglects admonitions, and refuses to come to Jesus for life. Nothing but the power of the Spirit of God, can save a soul.

Hence, when the rich man in Hell desired that Lazarus might be sent to his brethren, to prevent their ruin and induce them to repent; Abraham informed him that it was of no use, that a greater power was necessary, saying, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:29-31.

Moses and the Prophets Speak to Us. They describe our state as sinners against God, as exposed to his just and terrible wrath. They warn us of our danger, assuring us that the soul that sins — it shall die. They exhort us to repent, saying, "Repent and turn from your evil ways, so iniquity shall not be your ruin." They invite us to the Savior, and cry, "O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusts in him."

They hold up examples before us to caution us:

as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother;

as Ishmael, that wild man, whose hand was against every man; as Esau, that self-indulging man, who for one morsel of food sold his birth-right;

and as Absalom, that vain man, who rebelled against his father, and perished in his sin.

They present examples also, to induce us to imitate them:

as Abel, that faithful man who offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain;

as Joseph, that chaste man, who would rather suffer than sin;

as Samuel, that just man, who would take no bribe, nor defraud any one;

and as David, that devout man who worshiped God himself, and induced and assisted others to do so. The prophets also call for decision, demanding, "How long will you halt between two opinions, if the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, then follow him." But though we read our Bibles, we disregard their description of our state, we slight their warnings, we neglect their exhortations, we refuse their invitations, we pay little attention to the examples set before us, and live on without decision or care. Only omnipotent grace can make us what we ought to be!

Moses and the Prophets Persuade Us. They deal with us as intelligent and accountable men. They persuade us:

to be thoughtful, and consider our latter end;

to shun temptation, lest we all fall into a snare;

to avoid danger, lest we rue our folly too late;

to escape Hell, the place where God's prisoners are bound;

to enter the way to Heaven, and persevere therein until we safely arrive there; and to pursue that course, which will lead us to the highest honor.

These good men as sent of God, as inspired by God — often use loving words, powerful arguments, and striking figures. They appeal to our fear and love. They give us line upon line, and precept upon precept. By the earnestness of their manner, by the simplicity of their language, by the touching nature of their appeals — they seem to say with the apostle, "Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord — we persuade men." They persuade us . . .

concerning Jesus,

to embrace the testimony borne,

believe the promise given,

receive the salvation presented, and

trust in his mercy and merit alone. But alas! how often they persuade in vain, and have still to cry out, "Who has believed our report — and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

If We Disregard Moses and the Prophets — then Miracles Would Not Persuade Us. The mind is changed by conviction, not by emotion; and the Word of God is intended to produce that conviction. We are influenced by motives, not by prodigies; and motives are awakened and directed by truth, not by miracles. There is a suitableness in Scripture to inform, impress, stimulate, and persuade us; but not in the resurrection of a dead man from the grave. The former is God's ordinance, wisely ordained and adapted to the purpose, the latter is man's wish, arising from ignorance and mistake. Let us therefore not wish for miracles or prodigies — but pray that the Holy Spirit may by the Word persuade us of our lost estate and danger, and to receive Christ to be our perfect Savior.

Young friends, read God's Word as written for you. It was in reference to young men, that Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them: for if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Consider then, that the contents of the Bible are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Beware of imagining, that though you remain unaffected under the reading and hearing of God's Word — yet if something uncommon, something miraculous happened — it would persuade you, and you would be converted. The Word of God is perfect, converting the soul. The Spirit of God works by the Word, not by miracles. If you resist the evidence and power of the Word, the sight of a dead man raised to life would not convert you. Many saw Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, and remained in an unconverted state; yes, some of them were so annoyed and enraged by the testimony he bore to Jesus, that we read they sought to put Lazarus also to death.

Especially notice this, if the young men referred to were inexcusable, who only had the Old Testament, how much more are you, who have both the Old and the New. If God would not use other means to convert them — then why should he use other means with you? If they were left to themselves, because they would not be persuaded by God's servants, how much more may you, who will not be persuaded either by his servants or his Son? You stand in a slippery place, you are on dangerous ground, take heed lest you also, by your own fault, go to that place of torment!

## 50 O That I Had the Wings of a Dove!

---

O That I Had the Wings of a Dove!

"Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!" Psalms 55:6 The trials of a believer are often severe. Many a storm has he to endure, many a river to ford, and many a fire to pass through — in his way home to the promised land. Little did the Christian think, when he first stepped into the liberty of the gospel, that there were such rough roads, dark nights, and terrible storms before him — but, more or less, every traveler to Mount Zion, must experience them. It is generally found to be a rough road, which leads to the celestial city. Many a Christian has found his courage fail him, and his heart misgive him, on his way home. The darkness is sometimes so dense,

the cross is at times so heavy,

the disappointment at some seasons is so great —

that the stoutest heart quails, and unites with the timid spirit, in exclaiming, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!"

These trials are necessary, to . . .

try our sincerity,

exercise our graces, and

render the promises sweet and precious. When all goes smooth, and everything is pleasant — we attach but little importance to the promises, have little power in prayer, and are too apt to over-value ourselves. But trying times . . .

endear the throne of grace,

strip us of pride and self-consequence,

and strengthen our trust in Jesus.

Never is Christ so precious — as in times of peculiar trial. Never is the Bible so valued — as in the day of trouble and distress. The wilderness with its barren burning sands, its storms and tempests, its dangers and its difficulties — endear the promised land; and makes the pilgrim occasionally to cry out, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!"

Rest! O how sweet is the thought of rest — to the weary, way-worn, exhausted traveler! Rest! O how sweet is the thought of rest — to the afflicted, tried, and tempted Christian! He most generally thinks of Heaven as a place of rest:

rest from suffering,

rest from sorrow,

rest from toil, and

rest from conflict.

Rest with Jesus.

Rest in the home of God.

Rest, perfect and perpetual.

Peaceful and glorious rest.

We have the foretastes of it occasionally now, which makes us at times long for its fullness and perfection. Like the grapes of Eshcol, which when tasted, stimulates us to hasten across the wilderness, that we may take possession of the promised land; so the inward calm, the secret repose, the rest at times enjoyed in the soul — urges us on, and makes us cry out, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!" But we may be too anxious to be gone. We may be in too great a hurry to depart. We had therefore better pray for . . .

patience to endure,

and strength to bear,

and courage to face our trials —

than wish for wings to fly from them. As an old writer says, "Better pray for the strength of an ox — to bear your troubles; than for the wings of a dove — to fly away from them." Even cowardice, or self-love, may prompt us to use the exclamation. Let us, therefore, while we may have a desire to depart and be with Christ as far better for us; remember, that it may be more for the glory of God, for the benefit of others, and even for our own ultimate good — that we remain here. And if so, it is better calmly and patiently to say, "all the days of my appointed time I will wait — until my change comes," than from a desire for self-indulgence to cry out, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!"

## 51 God's End in His Goodness

---

### God's End in His Goodness

How wonderful is the goodness of God toward poor sinners! How much of his goodness have we received! How much are we receiving now! Well may it be said, that he is abundant in goodness and in truth. But what poor returns we make. How little effect his goodness has upon us. Yet these are the cords of love — by which he seeks to draw us to himself. Hence the apostle says, "The goodness of God leads you to repentance." Romans 2:4. This is the design of it, and this is its natural tendency; and if our hearts were not as hard as flint, yes harder than the adamant, such would be the effect. In all the mercy the Lord shows us, in all the goodness he confers upon us — he has an end to obtain.

What Is That END? "Repentance." As sinners, we need repentance. As a just and holy God, the Most High requires repentance. We must therefore repent — or perish. The repentance required, includes a change of sentiment, a change of feeling, and a change of conduct. God's goodness is to change our views of him, in order to change our feelings toward him, that we may change our conduct before him. Until we think of him as gracious, merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and in truth — or until we think of him as Love — we shall never love him, mourn that we have grieved him, or with a melting heart confess our sins before him.

Right views of God, lead us to feel rightly toward God, and when we feel aright, we shall act aright — but not before.

God wishes us to take right views of our conduct — that we may be sorry for our sins; and he wishes us to be sorry for our sins — that we may confess them, enjoy a sense of the pardon of them, utterly hate them, and so depart from them. Real repentance, the repentance which God requires, embraces . . .

a change of mind,

a change of heart, and

a change of conduct. To produce this change, God employs means.

What Are the MEANS Which God Employs? His goodness, gentleness, and unmerited kindness. His providential goodness — therefore he feeds, clothes, protects, preserves, and confers innumerable blessings upon us. How wondrous the goodness of God in providence to such vile, base, rebellious, and utterly undeserving creatures as we are! His gracious goodness — his goodness in spiritual things he employs for the same purpose. Hence he appointed his ministers to preach to us, sent his Word to be read by us, instituted his ordinances to affect us, and by his gospel, pointedly and personally addressed us. In that gospel, he informs us that he has given his Son to save us, promises his Spirit to teach and comfort us, sets the way of escape before us, and promises everlasting life and glory to every one that believes. He warns, he invites, he exhorts, he beseeches, he assures, he promises, he makes use of every means; and all to lead us to

repentance. He wants us . . .

to think kindly of him,

to feel lovingly toward him,

and to act wisely before him. In order to this, he has made use of the most likely method.

What METHOD Has He Adopted? Goodness, kindness, love — to lead us to repentance. He does not deal with us — as with brutes. He does not drive — but draws. He employs his love to win us, to convert us, to conduct us by kindness. His goodness courts us to lay down the weapons of our rebellion, to give up our opposition, and return to the Lord. He would produce repentance by mercy; and bring water out of the rock, not by striking — but by melting it.

Beloved, let us observe the design of God in the riches of his goodness; he would bring us to our knees, bring us to his throne — in order that he may pardon, sanctify, and bless us. Let us also admire the method of divine mercy, we would not wish to be forced, or driven — therefore our good and gracious God, would lead us to repentance. Let us also improve the favors we receive from God, to their proper end, and let us look upon him whom we have pierced, and look upon him until we mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and are in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

O, Holy Spirit, do attend the goodness of God, both in providence and grace with your blessing, that we may thereby be led to repentance, that we may so sorrow for sin, as to hate it, turn from it, and heartily forsake it.

Reader, what effect has the goodness of God had upon you? You have enjoyed health, you have received food and clothing, you have found shelter and the accommodations of home, you have had the Bible, the ministry of the gospel, and many good things beside. Have you realized that all these were favors? Favors conferred upon you by God? That you did not deserve one of them? That on the score of justice, you could not claim one of them? Have you perceived that they all come from that God, whom you have grieved and dishonored by your sins; and that the design of them is to make you think kindly of him, sorry that you have offended him, and concerned so to live and so to act as to please him?

If God's goodness does not soften you — it will harden you;

if it does not draw you to him — it will drive you from him;

if it does not attract you to Heaven — it will sink you lower into Hell. The greater his goodness to you — the more aggravated, because the more inexcusable, are your sins against him.

O Jesus, Son of God Most High, are you not exalted to give repentance and the remission of sins, let it please you to give deep and abiding repentance both to the writer and reader of these lines! Let us believe in the love of God, be deeply affected by the goodness of God, and be ashamed and confounded that we have so grossly, so frequently, so unfeelingly sinned against him. O for that repentance which is unto life, and that needs not to be repented of!

## 52 The Invitation to the Beloved

---

The Invitation to the Beloved The Lord Jesus is the object of the heart's love of every believer. None can, for one moment, compare with him. He is the chief among ten thousand. He is the altogether lovely one. Everything in Christ is precious, and everything connected with Christ is esteemed. His name is as ointment poured forth, and his presence is felt to be a real Heaven. We could go anywhere with Christ. We could do anything for Christ. We feel an interest in all that belongs to Christ. These thoughts have been awakened by the language of the song, "I am my Beloved's, and his desire is toward me. Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourishes, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give you my love!" Song of Solomon 7:10-12 The Invitation.

"Come, my Beloved." The first word is taken out of Christ's mouth. He always invites first. Invited by him — we come to him; coming to him — we are saved by him; being saved by him — we realize union to him, and communion with him; and realizing union and communion — we long and seek to be always with him — desiring and seeking to be always with him. As we cannot go to him as yet, we invite him to come and dwell with us: "Come, my Beloved." Jesus has won the heart. He has gained the soul. There is, therefore none like him. He is . . . the beloved One, the object of desire, the source of joy, and the center of the affections.

"Let us go forth into the field." The field is the world. It is a field that needs cultivating. There is much work to be done there. The Beloved claims it — but an enemy has seized it. It has run waste. The desire is to recover, reclaim, and make it fit for the Lord. She was willing to work — but wanted her Savior's company and sanction. She would labor — but desires to be a laborer together with God.

"Let us lodge in the villages." The parts adjacent. Let us begin home missionary work first. Let us preach the gospel to the poor. Let us seek to win the illiterate, the neglected, the despised. Let us seek the simple ones. Let us lodge with them for a time, not merely pay a hasty visit, that we may save the more.

"Let us get up early into the vineyards." The little churches. Little separated, cultivated, fruitful spots. The representatives of the one vineyard of red wine, where grow the Lord's pleasant plants, where the great gardener loves to work, and walk.

"Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the field," where there is so much to be done.

"Let us lodge in the villages," among the poor who have been so long neglected.

"Let us get up early into the vineyards," the little spots inclosed by grace, and planted with the plants of the Lord's right hand planting. The Design.

"Let us see if the vines flourish." Let us see if sinners are converted, if believers are added to the church, if the saints grow in grace. God's plants have life. They are planted in a good soil. They

are expected to grow. Not merely to grow — but to flourish, to look healthy, become vigorous and strong; be ornamental and fruitful.

"Let us see if the tender grapes appear." Let us look for the blossoms of hope, the fruits of faith and love. Let us see if there are indications of the fruits of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, and faith. Or the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise and to the glory of God.

"Let us see if the pomegranates bud forth." Let us see if those who have gifts, use them for the good of the church. Let us see if ministers preach Christ, set forth the great atonement, and keep the nourishment of the church before her. Let us see if the church is healthy and orderly, if believers are fruitful and happy, if ministers are holy and useful. Let us see by personal inspection, by active examination. The Inducement.

"There I will give you my love."

There I will afresh . . .

surrender my heart to you,

fix my affections upon you, and

give utterance to my feelings before you.

There will I sing you songs of love, the praises of the heart.

There will I offer up prayers that will please and gratify you.

There will I exercise loving confidence in you.

There will I show loving zeal for your glory and obedience to your will. I will profess my love to you in the field, the world, before those who neglect or hate you.

I will confess my love to you in the villages, among the rustics who listen to the word.

I will prove my love to you in the vineyards, by my attention to, and concern for your pleasant plants. My whole heart and soul shall be set upon you, every gift and grace shall be employed for you, and my entire person shall be devoted to you.

"There I will give you my love." There shall be no more reason to doubt my sincerity, or the whole-heartedness of my affection and attachment; for I will be for you, for you entirely, for you only, for you eternally — and you shall be for me.

Friend, if we are inviting Jesus to our heart, or our home, or to go forth with us to labor in his cause — it is the effect of his having invited us . . .

to his feet, to find rest;

to his cross, to enjoy pardon; and

to his throne to obtain grace. Our religion begins with Christ. It always begins with him. He is always first. "We love him — because he first loved us."

Real religion is never selfish. As soon as we are blessed ourselves, we desire to bless others. If we enjoy the love of Jesus — we want all to enjoy it. We would have the whole field cultivated, or the whole world know and love Jesus. We would have the villages made happy and holy — we would have the churches all prosperous and faithful. Just in proportion as we are sanctified — we become unselfish.

Young Christians always evince much zeal. They are often deficient in knowledge — they must be; but they will be zealous. Nor should we endeavor to check their zeal — but only to regulate it. God approves of their zeal, and therefore they are generally very useful. Jesus approves of their zeal, and accompanies them in their work, and therefore they are very happy.

Jesus deserves our love, and the confession of it. We should love him . . .

for his glorious nature,

for his sublime perfections,

for his perfect character. But if we cannot rise as high as this — then we should love him . . .

for what he has done for us,

for what he has procured for us,

and for what he has promised us.

We should love him — for his love to us. Nor should we fear to confess our love to him. But, before his friends and his foes, we should acknowledge that he is the highest object of our love. What a blessed assurance Paul gives us, "If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead — you shall be saved: for with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." What a precious promise himself makes us, "Whoever, therefore, shall confess me before men — him will I confess before my Father who is in Heaven." But what a fearful threatening follows, "But whoever shall deny me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in Heaven!"

Reader, do you love Jesus? Is he your Beloved? Have you ever had him revealed in you, and so endeared to you? Do you know . . .

the sweetness of his presence,

the power of his grace, and

the glory of his salvation? Do you daily invite him to accompany you into the world — to preserve, protect, and assist you; and into the church — to comfort, crown, and bless you?

## 53 Gracious Dealings

---

Gracious Dealings When Jacob returned from Padanaram at God's bidding, he was first pursued by Laban, and then confronted by Esau; showing that even when we move under God's special direction, we must not expect to escape from trials. The coming of Esau filled him with, alarm — but he presently arranged his household and affairs, and then betook himself to prayer. He then met Esau with true politeness, and proved that prayer, prudence, and politeness prevailed. Esau refused his present, when he accepted his person — but he urged it upon him, and bore this honorable testimony for his God, "God has dealt graciously with me!" And on this, my fifty-seventh birthday, I wish to bear the same testimony, for if Jacob could say that God had dealt graciously with him, I am sure that I can; and if my reader is a believer, he may also do the same. If God had only dealt justly with us — where should we have been? Or, if we had only shared in his general mercy — what would have been our condition? But he has dealt graciously with us.

Let us review the PAST.

Before our birth into this world, God was gracious unto us, and therefore he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. He chose us to be holy. He chose us to salvation. He chose us to share the highest honors, taste the sweetest joys, and to experience the most wonderful transformation that a sinner can experience. He also predestined us to the adoption of children, that we may form a part of his family, and become joint heirs with his only begotten Son. He then redeemed us from death, ransomed us from the grave, and purchased us — by the death of Jesus, to be a peculiar people unto himself. Not only so — but he provides for all our needs, both as sinners and as saints, giving us his word, his ordinances, and his Holy Spirit. And since our birth, both in temporals and spirituals, God has dealt graciously with us. How many evils has he prevented? How many blessings has he conferred? He has . . .

called us by his grace,

taught us by his Spirit,

corrected us with his rod,

comforted us with his word,

sanctified us by his grace,

employed us in his vineyard,

wrought for us by his providence,

and crowned us with usefulness! Yes! let us look whichever way we will — we must confess that God has dealt graciously with us. Goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives.

Let us then look at the PRESENT. In temporals, we may have been tried — but we have been favored. We have a tolerable degree of health, we have bread to eat, clothing to wear, and a home

in which to dwell. We have the use of our reason, and the enjoyment of our senses. How many have become insane, or deaf, or blind, or have lost their limbs — but none of these things have happened to us! In spirituals, we have been kept from gross sins, from falling into dangerous errors, and from apostatizing from the faith. We have been blessed with the peace of God, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit. We have been usefully employed for God's glory, and the good of our fellow-men. We have been kept in connection with the Lord's people, enjoying their sympathy and love. We are now on the Rock of Ages, we have now all the provisions of grace, and we enjoy fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. To us belong . . .

all the promises of the covenant,

all the privileges of the sanctuary,

and all the prospects of glory.

We are . . .

the sons of God,

the brethren of Christ, and

the temples of the Holy Spirit. On earth — we are training for Heaven; and in time — we are being schooled for eternity. With providence for our friend, and the Holy Spirit for our guide, we are going to take possession of the promised land. Truly then, we may well say, "God has dealt graciously with me!"

Now let us direct our attention to the FUTURE. The future is provided for — as well as the present. Yes, all we shall need in the future is provided. The covenant is ordered in all things, and sure. Our supplies are before us, and when we need them — we shall have them. Support is promised us. So that let what will happen, however heavy our cross, however weak we feel, however powerful and daring our foes — we shall be supported, and shall at last be found more than conquerors through him that has loved us. Satisfaction may be anticipated, for with David we may look forward and say, "I shall behold your face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with your likeness!" Yes, when our graces are perfected, when our sanctification is complete, when we arrive at our Father's house — we shall be perfectly and eternally satisfied. So that before we were brought into the world, since we have been in this valley of tears, and in reference to every future step and stage of our journey — we may gratefully say, "God has dealt graciously with me!"

Let us then review the past with gratitude and praise, for God has dealt well with us according to his word. As we remember all the way the Lord our God has led us in the wilderness, we see reasons for thanksgiving and songs of praise.

Let us improve the present with industrious care. How much of life is already spent. How few may the days or months of our future pilgrimage be. But this is our comfort — that he who has dealt so well with us in the past — will deal well with us in the future. He will not fail us nor forsake us, until he has performed his word, and fulfilled in us all the good pleasure of his goodness.

He has dealt graciously with us — and therefore we ought to witness for him, to the praise of the glory of his grace. We should speak of his great goodness to encourage others, especially the

young of the flock; assuring them, not only from his word — but from our own personal experience, that he will deal graciously with them.

We should also from the past, draw reasons for more devotedness to him and his service. O for grace to render again, according to that which the Lord has done for us. And now, O good and gracious God, as you have dealt graciously with your poor servant, accept my humble tribute of thanks, and witness my hearty and entire surrender of myself anew to you, to be your servant, to do and to suffer your will, in order that I may glorify you on earth, and at length through your free and sovereign grace, arrive safe in glory, to live with you, and praise your glorious name forever!

## 54 Betrothing

---

Betrothing We stand in a fourfold relation to God by nature: we are his creatures — and he is our Creator;

we are his servants — and he is our Master;

we are his subjects — and he is our Sovereign;

we are his prisoners — and he is our Judge. But in the exercise of his free and sovereign grace, he has determined to take us into another and better relation, and therefore he has said, "I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in loving-kindness and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord." Hosea 2:19-20. The Relationship. "I will betroth you." To betroth is to engage to marry, and it often took place a considerable time before the marriage. The bridegroom is the Lord Jesus Christ; and the bride is his beloved Church; and every individual believer is interested in the honor, and is entitled to take all the comfort of it to himself. The Lord proposes to take us into the closest union with himself. No union is so close as the marriage union. The husband and the wife become one flesh. The man that loves his wife, loves himself. But as if our union with the Lord Jesus was even closer and stronger, we are said to be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. So close is the union, that whatever afflicts us — affects him. So identified is Christ with his people, that their sins, sufferings, and responsibilities — are represented as his. He atones for our sins, sympathizes with us in our sufferings, and assists for our responsibilities. This marital union is the dearest. It originates in love, pure love. And as a man is required to leave his father and mother, and be joined unto his wife — so Jesus leaves all for his people, and cleaves to his people. His love to them is wonderful. They are most precious in his sight. He would sooner part with his life — than part with them. In all their afflictions — he is afflicted; and in all their joys — he rejoices. His wealth, his honors, and his happiness — he confers on his bride; and thus all things are hers, she is Christ's, and Christ is God's. This marital union is the most honorable union. It reflects the highest honor on the Savior, and it confers the greatest honor on his people. Hence he says, "Since you were precious in my sight, you have been honorable, and I have loved you." And referring to the future he adds, "I will make you an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations." The bride of Jesus, shares in all his honor, dignity, and glory; and therefore he promises, "You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God." This marital union is the most profitable union. The wealth of the husband, passes over to his wife. Just so, the unsearchable riches of Christ become ours! He provides all that we need, and provides in accordance with his own infinite wealth. He confers all that is required, so that we shall become all glorious within, and shine as if clothed with the sun without. We take part in all that he is or has, and he takes part in all that concerns us. As husband and wife, Christ and his people are one. One in affection. One in the eye of the law. One in the eye of the eternal Father.

O wondrous grace, God says, "I am married unto you!" O glorious privilege, the prophet testifies, "Your Maker is your husband!" O wondrous mercy, the apostle declares, "I have espoused you to

one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." The Promise. "I will betroth you." In doing so he employs his servants, and he sends his Spirit. He woos and wins, and then takes us to be his. He loves us, and by manifesting his love, he gains ours. Then he says, "I will betroth you to me forever." There shall be no divorce, no putting away, no forsaking; you shall be mine, and mine forever.

"I will betroth you unto me in righteousness." Out of sincere love, and in accordance with law and justice. Every legal impediment he will remove. Every debt he will discharge. Every obligation he will meet. On the most honorable principles he will marry.

"I will betroth you unto me in justice." That is wisely and prudently. Adapting himself to our nature, disposition, and circumstances; and putting us under a training, that will fit us to stand before his face, and share his joys forever. He abounds toward us, in all wisdom and prudence, so as to prevent evil, and secure all possible good.

"I will betroth you unto me in loving-kindness." Out of pure love. With overcoming kindness. In the gentlest, most generous, and most winning manner.

"I will betroth you unto me in mercies." As an act of grace, and displaying the most touching sympathy. Without looking for any cause in you.

"Yes, I will betroth you unto me in faithfulness." There shall be no change of mind. I will pledge my word, and redeem it. I will enter into covenant with you, and I will keep it. When Jesus espouses us, he puts the wedding ring, which is a piece of pure, plain gold, representing his everlasting love, on the finger of our faith. He then puts a splendid keeper, with these six brilliants, or costly pearls, over it. The first, assures us that we are his forever. The second, that our marriage is right, just, and legal. The third, that we are wisely wedded. The fourth, that we have a most loving husband. The fifth, that he is full of sympathy and mercy. And the sixth, that he will never cease to be what he is, He will be faithful to his engagement. That we shall find him the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

"And you shall know the Lord." Here he engages, that we shall become acquainted, and familiar with him. That we shall know him — so as to love him, and love him above all others. That we shall know him — so as to trust him, and trust in him alone. That we shall know him so as to live with him, and obey him, cheerfully, happily, and forever.

Believer, Jesus has betrothed you to himself, and you are his, wholly his, and his forever. Let your heart firmly trust in him, let your love be ever warm toward him, and never let your feet wander from him. Cleave to him, for he is your life. Rejoice in him, for he is your Lord, and therefore worship you him.

Lost sinner, Jesus is willing to betroth you. He has therefore sent you his likeness in his word. He has sent you a loving message by his servants. He has long waited for your reply. Will you consent to be the bride of Jesus? Will you unreservedly give yourself away to him? Will you agree to leave father, mother, house and home, and seek happiness, wealth, and all in Jesus? He can make you happy, he can make you holy, he can keep you safe, and he can raise you to the highest honor. Consent to be Christ's — and your fortune is made forever! Refuse him — and ruin, eternal ruin, is certain!

## 55 The Great Defect!

---

### The Great Defect!

Some things in religion may be dispensed with, without affecting our eternal salvation. But there is one thing we must experience — we must be born again. There is one blessing we must possess, and that is the Holy Spirit. As well may we expect to be saved without the sacrifice of Christ for us, as expect to be saved without the Spirit of God within us! And yet, in all ages, there have been those, under a profession of religion, who have thought themselves safe without this indispensable qualification. In the days of the Apostles, there were those who turned the grace of God into a license for sin, who separated themselves from the society of the saints, who were "worldly people, having not the Spirit." Jude 1:19. This was the great defect, and this defect was the cause of all the errors they fell into, and the evil course into which they were betrayed. There is reason to fear that in these favored times, and in our privileged land, there are many professing Christ who are in just the same state — they have not the Spirit; and yet, no testimony can be plainer or more decisive than this, "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ — he is none of his." Let us attend to this subject a little.

### What May Such People Have?

They may have a profession of religion, and that profession may have been made in a scriptural way. No one may be able to object to their creed — for it may be sound; nor to their conduct — for it may be moral. All the doctrines of the gospel may be believed, and all the moral requirements of the gospel may be outwardly observed. The intellect may be enlightened,

the memory may be well furnished, and

the life may be generally consistent.

Yet such people may not have the Spirit!

They may fill an office in the church, and be a deacon, an elder, or even a minister. Their gifts may be respectable. Their duties may be regularly performed. Their names may stand high. Their usefulness may appear to be great.

They may be loved by the Lord's people.

They may be honored in the church.

Yet they may be destitute of the Spirit!

They may have a false hope buoying them up, and bearing them onward, so that they may not even doubt the goodness of their state: and this false hope may arise from . . .

impressions they have felt,

pleasures in religious services which they have enjoyed,

and the doctrines of the gospel which they have embraced.

They may have an unfounded confidence, which makes them bold, fearless, and active. A confidence founded, not on Christ, not warranted by the word — but produced by mistaking the gospel, and being ignorant of their own depravity and pollution.

They have tolerably clear light, which is the foolish virgins' lamp.

They have a profession of religion, which is the foolish virgin's robe.

They unite with the Lord's people, which is going forth to meet the bridegroom. But they have no oil in their vessels — they have not the Spirit.

How much a man may have without this! How far a man may go without this! How long a person may remain under a profession of religion without this! With how many, a man may pass for a Christian without this! Let us beware, lest we should at last be found among those of whom it will be said, "having not the Spirit." In What Are Such People Deficient? Not having the Spirit — they lack true saving faith, for faith is of the operation of God, and is a fruit of the indwelling of the Spirit. They may give their assent and consent to all the great truths of the gospel, and to all that is said about Christ. But they have never been brought . . .

as poor sinners — to apply to Christ for salvation;

as really lost — to trust in him for deliverance;

as condemned — to commit themselves to him to be justified by his blood;

as stripped of everything of their own, and of all confidence in the flesh — to place their confidence in Christ alone. Not having the Spirit — they have no genuine repentance. They may be sorry that they have sinned, for fear they should be punished — but they have never had their hearts broken at the cross, by an exhibition of the love of God to them, notwithstanding their sins. Repentance toward God flows from faith in Christ, which faith is produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart. The true penitent thinks not so much of the punishment which his sin deserves — as of the goodness, grace, and holiness of the God against whom he has sinned. Not having the Spirit — they have no spiritual love. The natural affections may be excited, and be drawn forth toward spiritual things; but it is not spirituality which excites them — but some amiable characteristic, some moral excellence, or some natural beauty. Spiritual love flows from a spiritual nature, and is fixed supremely upon God in Christ — and subordinately upon all people, and things, in proportion as they have a resemblance to him. Spiritual love never seeks its own advantage, or honor — but the honor and advantage of the object loved. This love also flows from faith, and is regulated by faith in its exercise and degrees. Not having the Spirit — they have no enlightened zeal. They may be very zealous for a creed, a form of religion, or any of the outworks of Christianity; but for God's glory, for the honor of Christ, and for the good of souls, irrespective of sect or party — they are not, they cannot be. Zeal is the flower of love. True zeal flows from love, enlightened by divine truth, and always aims principally at the Divine glory. Not having the Spirit — they have no right, heart-affecting, soul-transforming views of Christ. They may think highly of him, and they may speak well of him. But to them he is not a personal, present, soul-satisfying Savior. The eye does not affect the heart. Therefore the heart is not set upon Christ, so as to devote itself and all that it has to Christ. Now the Spirit, while he unfolds the work of Christ, testifies to the ability of Christ,

and applies the blood of Christ. He directs the heart, and fixes the affections supremely upon the person of Christ. So that just in proportion as we experience the teaching and work of the Spirit — shall we be taken up with the person and personal glories of Christ. Not having the Spirit — they have no deep and abiding conviction of sin, especially of the sin of unbelief. Now when the Spirit of truth has come, he convinces the world of sin, because it believes not on Christ. The people of whom we are writing, are convinced of outward acts of sin, and also that there are many things within them which are contrary to the law of God. But the hidden evils of the heart are not discovered by them; the great tap root of all sin, UNBELIEF, is not unfolded to their view; and therefore they are not humbled under it, nor led to loathe themselves before God on account of it. Not having the Spirit — they have no hearty, thorough, self-renunciation. Now SELF must be renounced, before Christ can be enthroned in the heart — religious self, sinful self, self in every form! For we must sink into nothingness, into self-abhorrence — before we shall prize or glory in a salvation all of grace. The more we experience of the Spirit's work and power in our hearts, the less we shall think of ourselves, our experiences, our attainments, or our works. Self will be nothing — that Christ may be all in all.

Now where there is not . . .

a living faith in a living Savior;

genuine sorrow for sin, and departure from sin;

spiritual love to God and all that is godlike;

enlightened zeal for God and his glory;

heart affecting, soul-transforming views of Christ;

deep and abiding convictions of sin, specially of the sin of unbelief;

and habitual and thorough self-renunciation

— there is not the Spirit — at least there is not that satisfactory proof of the indwelling of the Spirit which every professor of Christ should seek to possess.

What Are the Consequences of Not Having the Spirit? Not having the Spirit — we have no title to Church privileges. Baptism, without faith, is not pleasing to God. The Lord's supper, unless we discern the Lord's body, is only eating our own condemnation. A place in the church, without Christ in the heart, only makes our conversion more difficult, our salvation more improbable, and leads to a hotter place in Hell. The church is no place for an unconverted sinner. Without union to the head — we can have no communion with the body; and without the Spirit — there is no union to Christ. Not having the Spirit — we have no fitness for the Lord's service. Spiritual services require spiritual people. We cannot preach, or teach, or pray, or do anything acceptable to God — without the Holy Spirit. So that whatever gifts we may possess, whatever station we may fill, whatever calls we may have — we are not qualified to engage in the Lord's service, unless the Spirit of God dwells in us. Not having the Spirit — we can have no spiritual fellowship, either with God, or with the saints. Fellowship springs from sameness, or similarity of nature. Light can have no fellowship with darkness. Christ can have no fellowship with Belial. God can have no fellowship with an unconverted sinner. If we would have fellowship with God, or with God's people — we must be

taught, led, and sanctified by the Spirit of God. We may have fellowship with believers in temporal things, or in religious services; but fellowship with them as saints, in spiritual things — we cannot have without the Holy Spirit. Not having the Spirit — there can be no consecration to the Lord's service and glory. People and things were consecrated under the law, by the application of blood and oil; and consecration is effected in the same way now. The blood of Christ must be applied to the conscience to remove the guilt of sin — and the Spirit must be imparted to set us apart for God. Therefore John wrote to God's consecrated ones of old, "You have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things." That Holy One is the Lord Jesus; the anointing is the Holy Spirit; the things known are the things freely given to us of God. Again he says, "The anointing which you have received of him abides in you." The Spirit once given, abides; as Jesus said, "I will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever." The Holy Spirit . . .

sets us apart for God,

leads us to engage in the service of God,

enables us to perform the will of God,

blesses us to the Church of God, and

first enables, and then honors us, in being witnesses to the world for God.

Without the Spirit, therefore, we have . . .

no title to church privileges;

no fitness for the Lord's service;

no enjoyment of spiritual fellowship;

no consecration to the Lord's glory. The consequences of not having the Spirit, hereafter will be truly dreadful! Make whatever profession we may, pass muster among the saints now as we will — we shall surely be detected then.

The chaff will be separated from the corn,

the tares from the wheat,

the sheep from the goats, and

the foolish virgins from the wise.

We shall be disowned by Jesus himself! He will say, "I never approved of you." In vain shall we plead, "Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, and in your name cast out devils, and in your name done many wonderful works," for then will he say unto us, "I never knew you, depart from me, you who practice iniquity!"

We shall be shut out of the marriage supper of the Lamb. The wise virgins, all who have oil in their vessels, or all who have the Spirit, will be admitted within: but it will be in vain for us to come, stand outside and knock, crying, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" for he will answer, "Truly I say unto you. I know you not!"

We shall be exposed. Our folly will be made manifest unto all. Our portion will be shame and everlasting contempt. We will be treated with contempt by devils, and as the scum of God's creation — after being treated with respect both by saints and sinners here! This will be dreadful — unspeakably dreadful! Everlasting contempt! Oh, how fearful! How humbling! How degrading!

We shall be punished. Eternally punished. We shall know what the wrath of God means. We shall understand what the curse of God is. We shall feel the terrible force of the expressions, "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth!" We shall suffer all that is intended by a consuming fire, everlasting burnings, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest! We shall be where the worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched. Then, then we shall find that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

Reader, reader — have you the Spirit? Do you profess to have the Spirit? If so, see to it that you have it in reality; for if you have not, in a very little time . . .

you will certainly be detected;

you will be publicly exposed;

you will be openly disowned by the Judge of all;

you will be shut out of Heaven;

you will be shut into Hell;

you will be treated with contempt by all God's creation;

you will be punished with everlasting destruction, away from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

It is of little consequence what a man has then — if he has not the Spirit; for all real religion begins, is carried on, and completed by the Spirit. He breathes the first breath of life in us, he feeds and fosters the life he imparts, and he completes the work which he begins in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. As no substitute can be found for the Holy Spirit and his work, we should carefully examine ourselves, whether we have received the Holy Spirit or not. Paul supposes the Lord's people will know it, hence he says, "What? Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body!" 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Lest we should be deceived, let us not be satisfied with less than the fullness of the Spirit. We read of the saints of old, that "they were filled with the Holy Spirit." "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit," "Stephen, full of faith, and of the Holy Spirit." Nor are we to suppose that this was a peculiar privilege, to be confined to the few, for Paul exhorts the members of the Church at Ephesus to be "filled with the Spirit." "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess — but be filled with the Spirit." On this fullness of the Spirit — let us set our hearts;

for this fullness of the Spirit — let us seek;

without this fullness of the Spirit-let us not be satisfied. Our Heavenly Father is kindly disposed to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. Let us, therefore apply, and apply in downright earnest,

pleading for the Spirit, as the Spirit of love, power, and a sound mind — as the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ — as the Spirit of adoption, and the Spirit of Christ — as the Spirit who . . .

teaches,

guides into all truth,

helps our infirmities, and

seals us unto the day of redemption.

Father of mercies, fill us with the Holy Spirit!

Gracious Savior, give us the Comforter in fullness and in power, to abide with us forever!

Holy Spirit, come and make our hearts your home, and let us be filled with your presence, power, and glory — yes, let us be filled with all the fullness of God! Amen.

## 56 A Child in the Well

---

A Child in the Well My brother sometimes sends me a subject for my pen, and a letter just received from him contains the following narrative: "A child in the well! A child in the well!"

It is now more than fifty years since I heard that cry. It was a terrible scream, and it is as fresh in my memory, as when it was first uttered by that affrighted woman. A boy had been sent by his mother to the well to draw water, and had taken his little brother with him, and while he was engaged in drawing it, the child unperceived by him — was looking down into the well, and fell in! The wonder was that he was not killed in the descent, by striking against the large iron bucket. The excitement was great. The neighborhood was aroused, and all were filled with alarm, as the well was unusually deep. But it happened that a young woman came for water at the very moment, and in her fright she dashed her pitcher to pieces, and screamed out, "A child in the well! A CHILD IN THE WELL!" This piercing cry reached the ear, and entered the heart of a laboring man, who was at his dinner nearby. He flew to the rescue, and without staying to consider his danger — descended by the chain, just in time to catch the child, as it was sinking under the water for the third time!

Now all were at work to get the man and the child up in safety, ropes and ladders were procured, and success crowned the efforts of the kind-hearted neighbors. The child was put into the arms of its distracted mother, and the poor man was praised for his kindness and courage. But who shall say how much depended upon that cry — that tearful scream of a woman, "A child in the well?" The child's life hung upon that cry. Another minute — and the child would have certainly drowned! But,

"Not a single shaft can hit,

Until the God of love sees fit" The cry of that affrighted woman aroused the man, the man fled to the rescue, the child was saved from drowning — but the hand of God was not seen or acknowledged, until years rolled on! For more than thirty years, that child has been a preacher of the gospel, and has written many useful works. He has been the instrument in the hand of a wonder-working God, of rescuing many poor ungodly sinners from a far deeper well. Through that child, thousands have heard of the name and fame of Jesus, and those thousands have in some way been useful to others, and thus the effect will be felt to the end of time. How much depended on, and resulted from, that scream, "A child is in the well!"

"God moves in a mysterious way,

His wonders to perform!" This account of my own preservation when but a child, is sent me as a subject for my pen — but what can I add to it? My heart is swelled with thankful emotions, and my eyes have been moistened with tears of gratitude, while I have been copying it, and I have been ready to exclaim with Leah, "Now will I praise the Lord!" and with David, "I will sing of God's mercy!"

I cannot but admire the wonderful working of divine providence — how perfectly everything is arranged and adjusted. How well all is timed. I do not wonder the godly say that "we are immortal until our work is done," for new proofs of this are constantly arising. Where is the Christian, the laborer in God's vineyard, who cannot find an illustration of this fact in his own experience? I can find more than one in mine.

Some may perhaps reflect upon me for publishing my brother's narrative, and think me deficient in modesty; but I am not a young man now, nor am I so much affected by what my fellow-men say, or write of me — as I once was. If God, either as the God of providence, or grace, can be glorified, by anything I write or publish — it is enough! And surely no Christian can read the above with an unprejudiced mind, without glorifying God.

How near was I to death — yet God intended me to live. How imminent was the danger — and how simple and suitable were the means of preservation. How wondrously God wrought — and yet no one present then, appeared to see his hand, or acknowledge his intervention.

How much often depends upon a trifling action. Take away one link — and the chain falls to pieces. Not one of the above circumstances could have been omitted — or my life would surely have been lost! The woman must come at the exact moment; alarmed, she must scream at the top of her voice; the laborer must be eating his meal at home nearby; in his fright, he must do, what if he had waited to reflect, he would have feared to attempt! But the hand of God was in the whole. "He performs the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him."

What effect should the bringing of this circumstance before my mind at this time, have upon me? I trust it has made me feel grateful, and has led me anew to praise my God, for his wonderful works to men. But this is not enough. I would anew in the most solemn manner dedicate myself — my life so wondrously preserved, with all my powers, talents, and opportunities, to the Lord, and to his glory.

Often have I surrendered myself to my God, and consecrated myself to his glory and praise, and I do so with all my heart and soul, again this morning. For the Lord — I desire to live;

to promote his cause — I desire to labor;

to bring sinners to Jesus, and to comfort and to edify his people — I desire to make the one grand object of my life. As the especial care of his providence, as well as the subject of his sovereign and distinguishing grace — I desire to be his, wholly his, only his, and his forever!

Lord, take me anew into your hands, and make me more and more like your beloved Son; not only so — but as you have used me for the good of others, and the glory of your great name — use me yet more extensively, and glorify yourself by me, ten thousand times more than you ever have done yet! My one undying desire of my soul, is that Christ may be magnified in me, and be glorified by me, both in life and in death. Many years ago, this desire was kindled at the cross, by a sense of the infinite love of Jesus, and nothing has ever been able to extinguish it yet, nor do I believe that anything ever will.

Reader, can you look back upon any hairbreadth escape from death? Can you look back upon a deliverance, not from a well of water — but from the pit of destruction? Can you say with David, "Great is your mercy toward me, for you have delivered my soul from the lowest Hell!" What would

deliverance from death be — if we are not delivered from Hell? Of what value would a few years on earth be — if spent in sin, if filled up with worldly pleasure — if the end should be a place in Hell forever?

Blessed be God, he not only saved my life, and delivered me from an early death; but he saved my soul, and condescended to employ me in his vineyard.

Beloved, life without God's favor — life without a saving interest in Christ — life unless it is spent in God's service — is not worthy the name of life. To live, is to have the life of God in the soul! To live, is to have Christ formed in the heart! To live, is to be inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and by his indwelling, to be consecrated to God's glory and praise! O to live as Jesus lived! To keep the same end in view, to walk by the same rule, and to do the works he did! For this, we were redeemed by his blood;

for this, we were called by his grace;

for this, our lives are preserved in the present world, and

for this, his fullness is thrown open to us, and we are invited to make use of his grace.

Holy Spirit, lead us to make more use of Christ, to enjoy closer communion with Christ, and to live, walk, work, and talk, more entirely for the glory of Christ!

Blessed Jesus, accept of us as your own property, fill us with your own sweet Spirit, stamp your lovely image upon us, and use us to exalt your dear name, spread your well deserved fame, and extend your glorious cause!

Father of mercies, God of all grace, receive our praises for your wondrous love, sovereign grace, and special providence! Help us to praise you here on earth, and then take us to praise and bless you eternally in Heaven!

## 57 The Desire

---

### The Desire

Two believers were walking and talking together one evening, and they were talking as believers should, about their own personal experience of divine things. The one was full of doubts, fears, and misgivings — and the other was trying to comfort him. This is lifting up the hands that hang down, and confirming the feeble knees. O that there was more of this! When they came to the end of their walk, the doubter concluded by saying, "I don't want to be anything great — I just want to be a humble Christian." I have no doubt but his feelings were right — but I am not so sure as to his knowledge of what a humble Christian is. I shall take no notice of the negative part of his wish — but only of the positive, for there is a sense in which we should not seek great things for ourselves, though there is another in which we should aspire to be great. But let us look at our friend's wish a little carefully.

"I want to be a humble Christian." To be a Christian is a great thing, for a Christian is the noblest work of God. Every Christian is humble — but all are not alike humble; though all are exhorted to be "clothed with humility," and are reminded that "God resists the proud — but gives grace unto the humble."

"I want to be a humble Christian." Very good, then you want to be converted, and to become as a little child. You want to be stripped of all self-importance, to be emptied of all self-seeking, and to be nothing in your own estimation. This is very hard to nature, and it takes much grace, and much discipline to bring us to this. The humble Christian has many severe conflicts with the pride and other evils of his heart, and has often to carry them to the cross, to confess them before God, and to mourn over them as he lies prostrate before the mercy-seat. The humble Christian believes as a child, who takes his father's word as the ground of his faith. He believes — because his father says it. So the humble Christian, being persuaded that the Bible is God's book, believes all that he finds there, whether he understands it or not. He admits that God is wiser and knows better than he does; and expects that he shall be wise and know better by and bye. He therefore receives doctrinal statements, with implicit faith; admits historical narratives, without gainsaying; places confidence in the promises; and receives all the precepts as just and right. The humble Christian obeys like a child. God commands it, that is enough. He does not ask, "What will man say?" Nor does he look around to see what is the usual custom. True he may at times distrust his own judgment, and will therefore consult others; but he will wait upon God most, and seek divine teaching on the point. When he is fully persuaded that he knows what God intends and requires, he does not ask, "What will it cost?" But says, "My father requires it — and I will obey him!" Or, with David, "I made haste, and delayed not, to keep your precepts!" The humble Christian expects like a child. He does not dwell on his own unworthiness, so much as on the grace, love, and kindness of his Heavenly Father's heart. He naturally expects, that God will give good and great things unto his children; not on account of what they do, though he will not be unmindful of their conduct — but out of his large and loving heart. He may think Heaven and eternal glory are too

good for such a sinner as he is, to receive — but then he will not think it either too good or too great, for the God of all grace to bestow; and as eternal life is the gift of God, he expects it to be freely conferred on him.

Just so, in reference to all that God has promised, he expects it, not because he deserves it, for he knows that he does not — but because God has promised, and takes pleasure in bestowing it. The humble Christian feels like a child, there is even a childishness about his feelings at times, which are in general childlike. He feels . . .

confidence in God as his Father,

reliance on Jesus, as his elder brother, who has become his Savior,

and reverence and affection toward the Holy Spirit as his Comforter.

Toward lost sinners, he feels pity, as his brethren after the flesh; and grief, when he views them as their own enemies, and the enemies of God.

Toward believers he feels love, notwithstanding all their imperfections, and is always ready to forgive an injury when repentance is shown. But I must stay my pen, the humble Christian has sweet joys, hallowed pleasures, and precious foretastes of glory. And along with these, he experiences much self-loathing, self-abhorrence. He wishes to be wholly like Christ, desires to be entirely devoted to Christ. For the humblest Christian aspires to say with Paul, "I live — and yet not I; but Christ lives in me!"

"I desire to be a humble Christian." Do you? Then seek the Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ. Set your heart upon this. Pray incessantly for it, believing that as God has promised it — he will assuredly bestow it. You cannot believe this too firmly. Nor can you seek this blessing with too much fervor or importunity. All true humility flows from the Spirit's work in the heart — who while he humbles us on account of what we are in ourselves, fills us with joy and peace on account of what we are in Christ.

While you thus seek for the gift of the promised Spirit, expressly with the view that he may make you a humble Christian, let your mind dwell much on the greatness, freeness, and sovereignty of God's love. Few things have a greater tendency to humble us and lay us low in the dust, than a sense of God's free, undeserved, and everlasting love to us.

Think also of the sufferings of Jesus — in the garden, before his unjust judges, and on the cross, and think of these habitually. Nor think of him as suffering these things for people in general — but as suffering them particularly for you — for you a sinner — an ungodly sinner — a hard, unfeeling, ungrateful sinner. View him as wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities, and as bearing your sins, and all the guilt of them, in his own body on the tree.

Dwell also on the freeness of divine grace, as free for the vilest, therefore as free for you. Dwell also on the sovereign and distinguishing nature of divine grace, as shown particularly to you, and not to every one in the same way, or in the same degree. And then, think of the greatness of the glory which awaiting you. Glory provided for us by the Father, given to us by the Son, and now made known to us by the Spirit. Glory, so great, so grand, so magnificent, that the sufferings of the present time, however great, or long continued, are not worthy to be compared with it!

Dwell daily dwell on these things, and pray the Holy Spirit to apply them to your mind, and to seal to you your saving interest in them; and if you do not become a humble Christian, I shall be surprised. You will no longer be tortured with doubts, or tormented with fears, or be glued to the world; but . . .

with holy confidence — you will depend on Jesus,

with steady courage — you will overcome your inward foes,

and walking with God — you will live above the world, its smiles and its frowns.

Well, reader, what do you say to my representation of a humble Christian, is it correct? Do you admire it? Do you desire to be one? Such are peculiarly favored, "For this is what the high and lofty One says — He who lives forever, whose name is holy: I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite!" Isaiah 57:15 The humble Christian therefore, will have God for his guest, and as such — he will revive, comfort, and make him holy and happy. God will be the portion of his inheritance and of his cup, and will maintain his lot. His trials may be many — but his supports will be great; his sorrows may be various — but his comforts will be strong. With God for his Father, providence for his friend, the promises as his security, and all things as his property — he will learn in whatever state he is, therewith to be content.

Gratitude will become natural to him, his peace will flow like a river, his joy will be unspeakable and full of glory, his life will be honorable, and his death will be happy.

If all this was understood, I do not wonder at friend above saying, "I only want to be a humble Christian!" I hope he did not mean a little Christian, or only just a Christian, for that is neither wise nor befitting.

Friend, are you a Christian — one with Christ, possessing the Spirit of Christ, and living to the honor of Christ? Are you a humble Christian — having low views of yourself, high views of your fellow-believers, and the most exalted views of Jesus? Do you, while you realize that your desert is Hell, believe that your portion is Heaven — and while you at times wonder, that God should ever cast a merciful look at you — yet rejoice that he loves you with an everlasting love? If so, I doubt not but you are humble, and the more you know and enjoy of these things, the deeper and the more influential will your humility become. May every reader, after reading these lines, be able to lay his hand on his heart and say, "I only want to be a humble Christian!"

## 58 The Effect of Pardon

---

The Effect of Pardon In one of our military towns, a few years ago, a soldier was about to be brought before his commanding officer for some misdemeanor. The officer entering the soldier's name, said, "Here he is again! What can we do with him, he has gone through almost every punishment?" The adjutant apologized for intruding, and said, "There is one thing that has never been done with him yet, sir."

"What is that, adjutant?"

"Well, sir, he has never yet been forgiven."

"Forgiven!" said the colonel, "Here is his case entered."

"Yes — but the soldier is not yet before you, and you can cancel the charge."

After the colonel had reflected for a few minutes, he ordered the man to be brought in. When he asked what he had to say, relative to the charges brought against him. "Nothing, sir," was the reply, "more than I am sorry for what I have done." After making some suitable remarks, the colonel said, "We are resolved to forgive you." The soldier was struck with astonishment, the tears started from his eyes, he wept. The colonel, with the adjutant, and others present, felt deeply, when they saw the man so humbled. The soldier thanked the colonel for his kindness, and retired. The narrator had the soldier under his notice for two years and a half after this — and never during that time was another charge brought against him, or fault found with him. Mercy triumphed! Kindness conquered the soldier! This is just the method God adopts with us in the everlasting gospel. We are guilty. The charges are brought against us. The case is entered. But the Lord delights in mercy. He seeks to melt us by his love. He is ready to forgive. He sends to us saying, "Only acknowledge your iniquities!" And then offers us a pardon — a pardon which cost him the life of his only begotten Son! A pardon, not of one sin — but of all our sins! A pardon that will exempt from punishment, all punishment. A pardon that will bring peace to the conscience on earth, and entitle us to eternal rest in Heaven! The soldier, in the case before us, gladly accepted the pardon, was melted down by the kindness of his colonel, and wept as a child would weep. But lost sinners too often hear of God's forgiving love without emotion, and instead of frankly confessing their sins, and gladly embracing the pardon offered — they astonishingly treat it with neglect, or contempt! What can be the reason of this? The reason is, they do not realize their criminality, or the danger to which they are exposed — they do not believe in an eternal Hell, as the punishment which their sins deserve — and therefore they treat the gospel, as if it were a fable, or a subject of no importance!

Reader, have you felt that you are guilty before God? Guilty of breaking his law, which is holy, just, and good? Guilty, not of breaking the law once — but ten thousand times — not in one form — but in a multitude of ways — so that if God were to punish you according to your desert — he must sentence you to Hell forever? Have you understood the gospel, which tells you that God is reluctant to punish sinners, that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner; to prove which, he

spared not his Son — but delivered him up, to die the just for the unjust; to bear our sins, to atone for our guilt — so that God may be just — and yet pardon and justify every sinner that believes on him? Do you see that God offers to pardon you, invites you to come to his throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy — and has long been, and is now, waiting to be gracious unto you?

What would you have said, if the soldier referred to — had insulted his colonel, when he told him that he had made up his mind to forgive him; and had told him that he did not want his pardon — but that he preferred being punished? What could you say — but that he was a most hardened and ungrateful wretch! Yet, if you refuse, or neglect to humble yourself before God, and ask for the pardon promised in his Word; then you are acting just such a part before God. O the folly, the consummate folly of the man . . .

who trifles with eternal punishment;

who rejects the Savior of sinners;

who refuses to come to God by him —

that he may be pardoned, sanctified, and saved!

Saving grace always produces good works. The pardoned soldier became a changed man. Mercy did what punishment could not — for it thoroughly reformed him. Just so, if we believe the love that God has to us, if we receive the message of his mercy, the promise of his grace, and come to him for pardon and obtain it — we shall find that the grace of God, that brings salvation to us, will teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world.

Nothing softens the heart like kindness, and therefore in the gospel, the kindness of God our Savior is set before us. Nothing inspires the soul with gratitude — like love; nor will anything make us desire so to walk as to please God — like gratitude. And therefore the gospel minister cries, "Herein is love, not that we loved God — but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

If the grace that presents a free, full, and everlasting pardon of all sin — will not melt our hard hearts, and reform our wicked lives — then nothing will. The law, with its rigid requirements and terrible threatenings — only hardens the sinner's heart, and renders him obdurate and sullen. But the gospel with its sweet invitations, gracious provision, and glorious promises — melts, humbles, and remolds every heart that believes and receives it! And as it melts, humbles, and remolds the heart — it consequently reforms, regulates, and consecrates the life to God's glory and praise.

Once more, reader, that gospel speaks to you. Once more, by the gospel, the God of all grace addresses you. After living so long in sin, after hardening yourself against him so often, after treating him with such criminal contempt — he says, "Come now, and let us reason together, though your sins are as scarlet — they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson — they shall be as white as wool." That is, they shall all be blotted out, they shall be all forgiven, and you shall be as white as the driven snow, and as clean as the well-washed wool. And even if my reader be a desperate sinner, one of the foulest transgressors, one of the basest of Adam's race — yes, if you are the vilest that ever breathed God's air, or blasphemed God's holy name, or injured your fellow-men; if you deserve the lowest, hottest Hell — yet to you, to you at this

moment, to you, after all that you have done, God speaks! He speaks, not in a voice of thunder; he speaks, not in wrath — but in mercy; he speaks, as if he were not willing that any should perish — but that all should come to repentance! And what do you think are his words?

Wonder, O Heavens! Be astonished, O earth! God, the infinitely holy God, the inflexibly righteous God says to the vilest sinners outside of Hell, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near! Let the wicked," the desperately wicked, "forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," the man of heinous character, the most depraved; "and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy," yes, he will have mercy, for he delights to do so, "he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Abundantly pardon! Yes, he will pardon like a God!

He will pardon all sin.

He will pardon all sin completely.

He will pardon with his whole heart, and with his whole soul.

He will pardon so as to cover sin, so as to annihilate the charge of sin, so as to free from all the penal consequences of sin, and free from the consequences of sin forever!

He will forgive all — and not only forgive — but forget! Hear his own precious words, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more!" O blessed assurance, that God will not only blot out our sins out of his book — but out of his memory, so that they shall no longer be remembered against us.

Well, sinner, what do you say? Will you confess your sins, plead guilty before God, and apply to him in the name of Jesus for a pardon? If you do, you will find him faithful to his Word, and just to the merits of his Son — to forgive you your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

O the blessedness of a pardoned state! No condemnation, no curse, no Hell, no penal evil, no deserved punishment — and this blessedness may be yours! What do you say? Shall pardon be yours today? O what a change, if you rose this morning dead in your sins — and should now be quickened together with Christ — God having forgiven you all your trespasses!

Pardoned believer — what do you say? Are you not happy? Do you not feel laid under the deepest obligation to your forgiving God? What are a few trials and troubles — if your sins are pardoned? What are a few pains and sorrows on earth — with Heaven and all its glories in near prospect? Be thankful, be thankful! Be joyful, be joyful! Be grateful, be grateful!

And, out of pure gratitude to your kind and forgiving Lord, do what you can to make his mercy known to your fellow-sinners. Tell all around you, as if you had no idea that they had ever heard it before — tell them that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, just such sinners as they are. Tell them that God delights in mercy, is ready to pardon, waits to be gracious, and wishes them to apply to him — that they may be pardoned and made happy now, and be prepared for a Heaven of holiness, happiness, and glory after death! Tell, O tell to all around you, that with the Lord there is mercy — pardoning mercy; and with him is plenteous redemption!

## 59 The Motions of the Spirit

---

### The Motions of the Spirit

What unusual characters God has raised up for the accomplishment of his purposes, and in answer to the prayers of his people. Most plainly has he shown us, that he can never be at a loss for an instrument to do his work, nor be dependent on any creature for the performance of his word.

I have been thinking of Samson — as perhaps God has never raised up a more extraordinary person. But I am not going to write about Samson, in general, only to consider for a few moments, one statement respecting him, "The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times." Judges 13:25. The words present three things to our notice, A Young Man. Samson was at this time a young man, and tenderly beloved of his parents. He was . . .

honorably distinguished from his fellows,

intended for great usefulness,

exposed to many temptations, and

compassed with lamentable infirmities. In looking around me, I can see young men, in these respects, very much like Samson. They are tenderly beloved of their parents, who look upon them as their hope and joy. For them, their prayers ascend, and around them their affections gather. Nothing is denied them, that is considered likely to advance them, or do them good. And in many things they are honorably distinguished, for they are sober, and thoughtful, and moral. They believe the bible, and attend the means of grace. They appear likely to be very useful, for they have respectable gifts, a generous disposition — and if their hearts were right with God, they would be shining and useful characters. But they are exposed to many temptations, for . . .

Satan lies in wait to mislead them,

the flesh is strong within them, and

worldly companions attempt to ensnare them. Nor are they free from infirmities — some of them need more courage, some more integrity, and all of them need decision — I mean decision for God, and devotedness to him. But we are introduced to A Holy Agent. "The Spirit of the Lord." The Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son — and consequently, the true and eternal God. But he has undertaken a distinct work in creation, providence, and grace: In creation — he moved on the face of the waters, or brooded over the abyss, and gave vegetable and animal life. In providence he works for the saints in a secret, certain, and mysterious manner. But his principal work is in grace. He began to move, or prompt, or influence Samson at times, and so he does our young people now. He is the gift of God, and is generally communicated and received, through the preaching of the gospel. He is the author of all spiritual good in the hearts of the Lord's people. He . . .

generates every good desire,

directs to the use of every good word,

and prompts to every good action. His presence, power, and agency, are absolutely necessary for man; as without these there would be no regeneration, conversion, or sanctification. He is possessed by all believers, and works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. To be without the Spirit, is to be without spiritual life, without power, and without true wisdom. The Spirit of God just as necessary to be our Quickener, Teacher, and Sanctifier — as the Son of God is to be our Redeemer! Therefore we have set before us, A Divine Operation. "The Spirit of God began to move him at times." The mind of man is naturally restless, it is always in motion — but of itself, it never moves aright toward God, or divine things. The motions of the Spirit are always in accordance with our human nature, and suitable to our condition and circumstances. He never acts upon men as he would upon lifeless matter, or as he would upon the brute creation; which is only saying, that he acts wisely in his dealings with us. His work is in accordance with the end to be accomplished, hence in some, he acted as a Spirit of prophesy, in some as a Spirit of government, and in Samson principally as a Spirit of strength. In us he acts as a Spirit of grace, or a Spirit of truth, or a Spirit of life. In his work, he not only has regard to our nature — but to our age, circumstances, and distinction. He moves the young often, when they little suspect that it is his divine agency at work with them. There is a thought — it may be of death, of eternity, of sin, of salvation, of God, or of Christ. Or there is a fact, perhaps a very solemn fact, presented to, and fastened upon the mind. Then . . .

a solemn sense of danger and fear is produced;

a desire for salvation, or to escape the wrath to come is felt;

a prayer, simple but fervent is put up;

a hope that mercy will be shown and deliverance be wrought, is excited;

a sense of pleasure in reference to divine things is realized;

and at length the soul's interest in Christ is cleared up. In all this, we trace the moving of the mind, and heart — by the Spirit of God. For we ascribe every good motion, every good desire, all real prayer and every good action — to him. Perhaps the Spirit of God has begun to move the reader of these lines — while under a sermon, while reading a good book, or hearing an address, or through some startling providence. If so, the design is to lead you to God, to bring you with weeping and supplication to his throne, that you may seek and obtain the forgiveness of sins, and a part in the Heavenly inheritance.

See then, from whence your convictions and alarms come — from the Spirit of God; and to whom you are to look for conversion, for conversion work is his work. Beware therefore how you resist, quench, or grieve the Spirit of God — for some resist him in his word, quench his gentle flame in the heart, and grieve him as the Spirit of love. How this can be done, is not for us to say — but that it is done, the Scriptures plainly testify. Let us therefore beware, and yield ourselves unto God, encouraging conviction of sin, impressions of the importance of salvation, and the desires that suddenly or occasionally spring up in our hearts to pray and seek the Lord.

Let us seek converting grace, if we feel we need it; sanctifying grace, if we really desire it; and the filling of the Spirit, if we have any measure of him. Whenever the Spirit of God moves us, it is against sin, and to some good; let us then yield to his promptings, and surrender ourselves to his teaching.

Reader, the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit are solemn truths; and the work and operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart, are absolutely necessary to salvation. If you resist the Holy Spirit, if you neglect salvation, if you reject the Savior — you plunge your own soul into ruin; and will everlastingly condemn your present conduct, in the world of endless torment and despair!

## 60 The Bitterness of Sin!

---

### The Bitterness of Sin!

"Your ways and your deeds have procured these things unto you! This is your wickedness — it is bitter, because it reaches unto your heart!" Jeremiah 4:18

Sin is the most dark subject that can engage our attention — but we have become so familiar with it, that it scarcely affects us at all. Not so the Lord, he calls it 'that abominable thing which he hates.' Yes, God hates nothing but sin — and no one, but for sin. God never hated a sinless being — and he never can. If we could get rid of sin, we would have nothing to fear; therefore we bless God that deliverance from sin is promised. But sin is not only dangerous — it is bitter, and is the prodigious source of all bitterness! Hence the language of the prophet, "It is bitter, because it reaches unto your heart!" Jeremiah 4:18. It is called the root of bitterness. It may appear pleasant at present, and may taste sweet to the depraved palate of the sinner; but as Joab said of war, "It will be bitterness in the latter end!" Let us therefore think of: The Bitterness of Sin. Sin is bitter in its NATURE, as it is . . .

a departure from God, the source of all real happiness;

opposition to God, the giver of all true pleasure;

rebellion against God, the righteous ruler, who is pledged to punish it;

the degradation of man, who was made in the image of the holy and happy God.

Sin is bitter in its EFFECTS.

Look over the world — all its divisions, confusions, wars, diseases, bloodshed, and cruelties — are but the effects of sin.

Look into families — all the anger, envy, jealousy, enmity, and lack of love — are but the effects of sin.

Look at individuals — all the sufferings of the body, and all the tortures of the soul; all the sorrows of time, and all the agonies of eternity — are but the fruits of sin.

Look at the seeking soul — all his cutting convictions, bitter reflections, stinging remorse, gloomy despondency, and slavish fears — are but the effects of sin.

Look at the believer — all his terrible conflicts, deep depression, gloomy foreboding, and soul-distressing fears — are all the effects of sin.

Indeed whatever is dark and dreary, distressing and painful, alarming and terrible — is to be traced up to sin.

Every sigh that ever heaved the bosom,

every groan that ever indicated a breaking heart,  
every exclamation produced by violent pain  
— all, all were the fruits of sin!

Think of the . . .

millions who have suffered, and are suffering;  
fearful nature and extent of their sufferings;  
agonies experienced on earth;  
horrors endured in Hell;

— and say, must not sin, from which all these proceeded, be a bitter thing! But here is, A Season Assigned. "It reaches unto your heart!" Sin is not a wound in the flesh — but a disease in the heart. There it was conceived, there it is nourished, and from thence it flows.

Sin reaches to the heart — and defiles and pollutes it! Indeed, man's heart is one of the most loathsome and polluted things in God's universe! There is nothing so foul, base, or abominable, in earth or in Hell — but its counterpart is to be found in man's heart! There is pollution enough in one human heart, to corrupt to defile the universe!

Sin reaches to the heart — and alienates it from God. It has now . . .

no sympathy with God,  
no desire to please him,  
no fear of offending him!

Man fears punishment — but he does not fear sin!

Sin reaches to the heart — and distracts it. It has no settled peace, no holy calm, no quiet satisfaction. The passions are turbulent. The conscience is defiled. The will is depraved. The understanding is darkened. The memory is a store-house of evil!

Indeed every power and faculty of the soul is injured, perverted, and wrongly influenced, by sin.

Sin reaches to the heart — and damns it! It is condemned already, and if grace does not prevent it — the sentence of condemnation will be executed, and the heart will become the seat of . . .

the most terrible agony,  
the most torturing pain, and  
the most dreadful despair

— and that forever! No lake of fire and brimstone,  
no bottomless pit,  
no horrible tempest —

can convey to the mind any adequate idea, of the horrors of damnation, which are the just desert of sin.

Truly, sin "is bitter, and it reaches unto the heart!"

Reader, see how God speaks of sin, your darling sin, that which you now value so highly, and enjoy so much: "It is bitter!" Your sin is so bitter, that no tongue or pen can describe it. And what makes it so bitter is, that "it reaches to the heart," the seat of life, the source of action, and therefore . . .

defiles the whole person,

misdirects the whole life; and

exposes the whole man to the wrath and curse of God — and to that wrath and curse, forever! From this bitter root, proceeds . . .

all the bitter words,

all the bitter tempers, and

all the bitter actions —

which make men miserable on earth, and

will make the lost eternally miserable in Hell! Our one great business therefore should be, to get rid of sin — this root of bitterness! And by faith in the Lord Jesus, which purifies the heart; and by the work of the Holy Spirit, which cleanses and sanctifies the nature — we may get rid of it. Let us therefore seek first, and before anything else — first, and more than everything else — that we may be washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Holy Spirit, convince us of the bitterness of sin! May it . . .

be bitter to our taste,

lead us to forsake it in practice, and

seek to be delivered from its love and power in our experience!

## 61 The Potter

---

The Potter The doctrine of God's divine sovereignty is generally offensive to the carnal mind — because it strikes a death-blow at the root of man's pride, and lays the sinner low in the dust before God. Man does not like to be represented as lying absolutely helpless at the foot of divine mercy, entirely at the Lord's disposal. But God must be a sovereign, and if ever we are saved, it must be in the exercise of his sovereignty.

God commands Jeremiah to go down to the potter's house, to be taught a lesson there:

"So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the Word of the Lord came to me: 'O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?' declares the Lord. 'Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.'" Jeremiah 18:1-6 These words are as applicable to us, as to them. Observe, Our Position. We are in God's hand! He has full possession of us, and absolute power and authority over us. We cannot fly out of his hand, or escape from under his eye! We are in God's hand — as clay in the hand of the potter. We are powerless in his hand. We are wholly at his disposal — to be molded and changed, as to form, appearance, and value — just as he desires. He does with his creatures, according to his will — both in Heaven, and on earth. His will is our law; his decree is our destiny. This may be seen in nature, in providence, and in grace.

He arranged our birth, our position in society, and our calling by his grace.

Whatever he wills — he works.

Whatever he has purposed — he brings to pass. The potter does not more really preside at his wheel, than the Lord presides over all the affairs of the world.

We are in God's hand, as marred vessels. No beauty, no apparent value — unfit for sale, and unfit for use. If we are to be of use, if we are to glorify his great name — we must be re-made. Therefore every Christian is said to be, "his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," and that according to his foreordination. Whatever we are spiritually — we are by his grace. Notice then,

God's Sovereignty. He is our owner. The potter cannot claim the clay, which he has dug out of his own land — as absolutely as the Lord can claim us!

We are his — for he CREATED us. We were not — until he gave us a being; we never would have been — had he not willed it.

We are his — for he has PRESERVED us. By the constant exercise of his sustaining energy — we have been kept in existence according to his sovereign will. As believers, we are his by REDEMPTION. Every legal impediment has been removed out of the way of his claiming us, and justly re-molding us, and raising us to the highest happiness and glory.

We are God's material for making vessels of mercy, which are to adorn his heavenly temple, and show forth his praise.

He is our absolute owner. No one can justly question his right, or interfere with his disposal of us. He may do as he will, with his own. But as infinitely wise, whatever he does will reflect his wisdom. As impartially just, whatever he does will be in accordance with justice — no part of the creation shall sustain any injury, by anything he sees fit to do. As plenteous in mercy, his mercy will appear in every exercise of his sovereignty.

We are his, absolutely his — but in dealing with us, in disposing of us — he will act wisely, justly, and in accordance with his mercy. Hence, The Inquiry? "Can I not do with you as this potter does — says the Lord." Cannot I break up the old marred form, reduce it to a shapeless mass, and re-form you for my own use and glory? Yes, he can — and he does! Therefore . . .

we are regenerated,

we are renewed in the spirit of our minds,

we are begotten again to a lively hope. But God puts the question to us . . .

to convince us that we are absolutely at his disposal;

to impress us with a sense of our dependence on him;

to instruct and teach us that we are at his sovereign mercy;

to silence all the carnal reasonings and objections of the flesh;

and to humble our proud hearts!

O what a mercy it is, that the vilest can be changed! To change the nature and character of the sinner — is God's work alone! We are in one sense, that is in reference to all that is spiritually good — like passive clay in God's hand; he must work in us to will, and to do. He must form us for himself — if we ever actively show forth his praise. Our God is our divine potter — and who shall effectually resist the working of his mighty power? Who can justly complain, if all that God does as a Sovereign in our world, is done in the exercise of his mercy, and is for our welfare? Who can find fault without folly — in seeing God, the only wise, the all-comprehending, just, and holy God — taking marred vessels, and making them into vessels of honor — glorifying himself in doing so! Who can find fault without folly — seeing God, the only wise, the all-comprehending, just, and holy God — takes the marred vessels, and makes them vessels of honor, and glorifies himself in doing so!

O my soul, lay low before the Lord, and let his own question deeply impress you, "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it: Why did you make me like this?"

O Lord, teach and sanctify me by your Spirit, that I may not only admit the doctrine of your sovereignty; but admire its working, and adore its holiness, justice, and grace!

## 62 Joy Imparted

---

Joy Imparted "You have put gladness into my heart!" Psalms 4:7 I am sad enough at times.

I get looking within — and the corruptions that lurk, and work there, make me sad.

I look into the church — and lack of life, union, and love there, makes me sad.

I look at my family — and there are generally some things there to make me sad.

I look at the world — and like David, who beheld transgressors and was grieved, I see enough there to make any Christian sad! But my sadness often arises . . .

from my wandering from God, who is the fountain of joy;

from my violating God's precepts, in keeping which there is a great reward;

from a view of my unlikeness to God, and unfitness to enjoy God;

and at times from a sinful, slavish, painful fear of God. At other times, I take my eye off the gospel, and get back under the law — and then a sight of its extensive demands, its fearful threatenings, and its awful curses, makes me sad. So also, if I look at God as a just lawgiver, and an angry judge — this makes me sad.

Besides which, my repeated failures, when I have endeavored to be more spiritual and consistent;

my lack of a suitable frame to love and enjoy God;

and my lack of satisfaction with God's providential arrangements

— these things make me sad. But I am not always sad, for if heaviness endures for the night — then joy comes in the morning. And to my gracious God I can say, "You have put gladness into my heart!" This he does sometimes . . .

by showing me the infinite efficacy of the atoning blood;

by applying the blood to the conscience;

by shedding abroad his sweet, powerful, and everlasting love in my heart;

by sending the Holy Spirit to breathe upon my soul, as the Spirit of adoption and liberty;

by revealing to me more clearly than heretofore, that I am accepted in the Beloved, and am pleasant in his sight;

by showing me my interest in, and title to — the many, exceeding great, and precious promises recorded in his Word;

by manifesting his divine approbation, and treating me as his friend;

by also by raising my expectations, and directing my eye upward to the celestial mansions, and forward to the glorious appearing of his beloved Son!

Blessed be God, he has often put gladness in my heart, not only by revealing blessings in his Word — but by presenting them to me by his Spirit. And also by giving me . . .

the oil of joy for mourning;

a sweet subject for meditation;

and a glorious prospect for anticipation.

He has given me to drink at times, of the wine of confusion — but at other times, I have drank deeply of the wine of consolation.

I have tasted the waters of strife, and had bitter draughts of the waters of Marah — but I have oftener, with joy drawn sweet waters out of the wells of salvation.

Blessed be God for a glad heart! A heart made glad by . . .

the light of his countenance,

the whispers of his love, and

the work and witness of the Holy Comforter! This gladness makes one . . .

holy — as well as happy;

useful — as well as peaceful; and

fits us for Heaven — while it makes us ornamental on earth!

Joy is a fruit that will not grow,

In nature's barren soil;

All we can boast, until Christ we know,

Is vanity and toil. But where the Lord has planted grace,

And made his glories known;

There fruits of Heavenly joy and peace

Are found — and there alone. A bleeding Savior seen by faith,

A sense of pardoning love;

A hope that triumphs over death,

Give joys like those above. To take a glimpse within the veil,

To know that God is mine;

Are springs of joy that never fail,

Unspeakable! divine!

These are the joys which satisfy,

And sanctify the mind;

Which make the spirit mount on high,

And leave the world behind!

## 63 God's Mercy to the Gentiles

---

God's Mercy to the Gentiles For ages the Gentile world appeared to be passed over by Divine mercy, and to be given up to the power of the prince of darkness. The people sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death. To them no warnings were given, to them no messages of mercy were sent — but they were allowed to walk in their own ways. At length, a brighter day dawned upon them. The Son of God appeared, and he came to be "a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." He confirmed the promises made to the Jews, and opened a channel of mercy to the Gentiles; so that the language of Moses became strictly applicable, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people." So also the language of the Psalmist, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; and laud him all you people." For the prediction of Isaiah was fulfilled, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles — in him shall the Gentiles trust." Romans 15:12.

Jesus is to be the object of our trust. No longer dumb idols, in which our fathers trusted. No more in vain pilgrimages, or penances, or works, or sacrifices, as our fathers did. But Jesus the incarnate God, Jesus the root of Jesse, Jesus the offspring of David — Jesus the Son of God. As he is divine, he is the root of Jesse; and as he is human, he is David's offspring. He is the Savior, the only, the all-sufficient, the ever-willing Savior — and he alone is to be the object of our trust.

He is qualified to be so, for he has the righteousness we need to make us perfectly and eternally righteous before God. He has the grace we require . . .

to fit us for duty,

to prepare us for conflict,

to qualify us for the enjoyment of our privileges,

and to make us fit for Heaven.

He has the glory we thirst for, and will confer it upon all who confide in his name. He is made known to us in his Word . . .

as inviting our trust,

as promising the richest blessings to all who trust,

and as pledged to save every trusting soul.

Trusting in Jesus is a soul-saving exercise. Not that or faith merits anything — but according to the divine arrangements, faith entitles us to all that Jesus is, and all that he has done as a Savior.

"In his name shall the Gentiles trust." They shall renounce self, and idolatry, and every false way. They shall receive God's truth . . .

in reference to the law — in its spirituality, extent, and righteous demands;

in reference to man's state as totally lost, ruined, and undone;  
and in reference to the glorious gospel — which proclaims . . .  
a free pardon,  
a glorious righteousness,  
and a perfect Savior.

They shall confide in Jesus, trusting alone . . .  
in his sacrifice for sin,  
in his obedience to the law,  
in his promise to save, and  
in his intercession at God's right hand.

Trusting in Jesus, they will . . .  
enjoy peace,  
realize sweet liberty,  
walk in holy fellowship with God, and  
anticipate Heaven — as they endure the trials of earth.

O for grace to glorify God for his mercy to us poor Gentiles! O to be enabled . . .  
to trust in Jesus at all times,  
to trust him for all we need, and  
to trust him with all we value!

Reader, we ourselves are Gentiles, our fathers were led away after dumb idols, and worshiped wood and stone. But we live in happier times, for the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. Jesus is revealed, proclaimed, and presented to us, to be the object of our trust. We must trust in him — or be lost forever. He alone can save. He saves all who trust in him. But he saves none beside.

We need such a Savior — and as we need him, as God in mercy has provided him, as he is graciously presented to us — let us not slight him.

We must trust in him — or miserably perish;  
we may trust in him — for God invites and warrants us.

We must trust in him — or be suicides or self-destroyers. Which shall it be? Shall we make up our minds to perish miserably, to perish eternally, to perish by our own fault. O think what is comprehended in that word "perish!" — in the idea of a soul perishing forever — perishing forever by its own fault. As the case stands thus, the knowledge of Christ ought to be sent to all the

Gentiles, and we ought to labor to the uttermost of our power in assisting to send it.

## 64 Sympathy with Sufferers

---

### Sympathy with Sufferers

We can never form a correct opinion as to who are the Lord's people, by the dispensations of Divine providence — as the same events happen to all. The difference between them and the world, lies rather in the comforts and supports they receive, than in any outward difference. Indeed, the saints often have the worst of it, as far as temporal things are concerned — for the present is to them a state of discipline and trial. But of this, a good use may be made, for the sufferings of believers should awaken our sympathies, and call forth our aid and our prayers. As Asaph prayed of old, when the Lord's people were sorely tried, so should we, "let not the oppressed return ashamed; let the poor and needy praise your name." Psalms 74:21.

Look at the SUFFERERS:

They are OPPRESSED. Sometimes human laws are often oppressive, and have filled prisons with believers, and burnt the best of men at the stake! The landlord will oppress the tenant, the employer the mechanic, the tradesman his customers, the rich the poor, the parent the child, the husband the wife, and the mistress her servant. Petty oppression is very common, even in the present day. But many believers are oppressed . . .

by a load of cares — which they should turn into prayers;

or by fears — which they ought not to encourage;

or by lowness of spirits from physical debility — which perhaps they cannot remove;

or from the temptations of the prince of darkness.

Any one, or more, of these causes — will often sink the spirits, burden the mind, and bring an oppressive weight on the soul.

They are POOR, perhaps in temporals, for many of God's people are; if not they are spiritually poor, for this is the case with all. They are stripped of all their supposed excellency, everything like goodness is removed from them, so that they have not a rag to hide their shame, nor a penny to procure their release. Christ must clothe them — or they are naked; and Christ must supply them — or they are destitute and undone. Nor are they only stripped — but having lost all, they are so weak, that they cannot work for more. They have no strength left — Jesus therefore must be their strength, as well as their righteousness, or they perish. They feel themselves also unworthy of God's notice, and of the least of his mercies. Empty of good, weak and unable to procure any, they feel that they lie at the feet of God's mercy, and that if ever they are saved — he must do it for them, work all within them, and confer all upon them.

They are NEEDY. Indeed they appear sometimes to need everything, and to possess nothing that is really good. They are all needs, and forget where to look for their supplies.

They feel that they need the patience of God to bear with them — they are so perverse, obstinate, and depraved!

They need the mercy of God to pardon them — their sins are so numerous, aggravated and horrible.

They need the strength of God to sustain them —

they are so weak,

their burdens are so heavy,

the road is so difficult, and

their enemies are so numerous and strong.

They need the grace of God to save them — for if they are not saved by grace, entirely of grace, they know that they cannot be saved at all.

They need the love of God to satisfy them — for their capabilities are so vast, their cravings are so strong, and their desires are so painful, that nothing less can make them happy.

They feel that they need a whole Christ, and all that is in Christ — and blessed be his holy name, Christ is theirs, and God in Christ is theirs too.

Look at the SYMPATHY expressed in the prayer: "Let not the oppressed return ashamed." Satan tempts them to believe they shall be ashamed. If they go to the Word for comfort, to the throne for grace, or to the sanctuary for help, the temptation follows them — that there is neither comfort, nor grace, nor help for them. If they exercise a little hope in God, or confidence in Jesus, they are still pursued with the thought — that it is unwarranted, and they will be ashamed of it in the end. But if ever they open their mouth for God, or in seasons of enjoyment make their boast in the Lord — then especially are they harassed with this tormenting suggestion. But they shall not be ashamed who hope in God, confide in Jesus, and make their boast in the Lord.

"Let the poor and needy praise your name." Give them cause to do so by appearing for them, manifesting yourself unto them, and bestowing choice blessings upon them. Give them occasion or opportunity to do so, by shining upon them when in company with your people, or when in the house of prayer. Give them grace to do so, for it often requires courage, and confidence, and boldness to do so. Let the poor, being enriched by your grace — let the needy, being supplied by your providence and Spirit, praise your name.

Let us beware of judging rashly, or according to appearances — the poor, the oppressed, the despised may be the Lord's. Let us pray for those who suffer, so did Asaph, so did David, and so did Jesus. God lives to hear us intercede for others. Yes, so does he love intercession, that he has constituted his beloved Son, the great Intercessor, and the leader of all who intercede at his throne. Let the poor hope in God, let the needy look to Jesus, and let the oppressed look to the Most High.

Many prayers are gone up for them, and many are going up now. Deliverance is at hand. Supplies are provided. Support will be given. They are God's people, poor, needy, and oppressed as they

are, and they shall never be ashamed. But with the ransomed of the Lord, they shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

O Savior, help me when I feel my poverty, realize my need, or groan under oppression — to look to you, and may I have faith to believe that you are interceding for me!

Dangers of every shape and name

Attend the followers of the Lamb!

Who leave the world's deceitful shore,

And leave it to return no more.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,

And guide and guard me through the storm;

Defend me from each threatening ill —

Control the waves, say, "Peace! be still."

Amidst the roaring of the sea,

My soul still hangs her hopes on thee;

Your constant love, your faithful care,

Is all that saves me from despair!

## 65 God's Special Treasure!

---

### God's Special Treasure!

"For you are a holy people, who belong to the Lord your God. Of all the people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure!" Deuteronomy 7:6 By nature all people are alike. Descended from one parent, partaking of one and the same nature, and involved in the same guilt and condemnation: "there is no difference — for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Nature in Abraham was no better than in Pharaoh; nor were the Israelites to be preferred to the Egyptians. But when man has no right — God sees fit to exercise grace. And for the glory of his great name, to manifest his divine nature, and to accomplish his deep and holy purposes — he did put a difference between Israel and the Egyptians. Hence Moses told them, "The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure!" Deuteronomy 7:6.

Therefore the people were to dwell alone, and not to be reckoned among the nations. But Israel after the flesh is but a type of the true or spiritual Israel; the people whom God has chosen in his Son, to enjoy salvation, and partake of everlasting glory. The words are, if possible, more applicable to them — than to those of whom they were originally spoken!

Observe, the design. God intended them to be his own, particularly — a special people unto himself. As he said by the prophet, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." He highly prizes them. Yes, it is impossible to say how highly he prizes them. Those are wondrous words, "For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel for his own special treasure." Did the shepherd prize his flock? God calls his people, "his flock, his beautiful flock." Does the miser prize his wealth? God says of his people, "You shall be a special treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine." Does the prince prize his jewels? God says of his people, "They shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels!" Does the bridegroom prize his beloved and dearly purchased bride? It is written, "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you!" Does the reigning monarch prize his crown? God has said, "You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God."

What wondrous love, such expressions as these represent! How precious must the Lord's people be to him! Truly they are his special treasure!

God **CHOSE** them to be special unto himself. He chose out from among others. He chose in preference to others. He chose them to bring them near to himself, that they may know him! And by the most wondrous ways — he brings them to the knowledge of himself, as he is revealed in Jesus.

He chose them, that they might need him; and so need him as not to be able to do without him. Therefore they are brought to feel their need of his grace, wisdom, strength, and presence. Nor can they be supplied from any other source, or be happy — but only as they realize his presence and his love. This shows that he chose them that they might enjoy his presence, and be forever with him. His tabernacle was pitched in the midst of the typical people, and the symbol of his

presence was always with him. His spiritual presence is ever with his spiritual people — and he will soon collect them all into his glorious presence — and have them near to himself forever!

He chose them out from others on purpose that they may be a special people unto himself — and in so doing, he acted FREELY. It was not on account of anything he saw in them, or on account of anything he expected from them; but in the exercise of his most free and holy sovereignty — he chose them to participate in the glory of his Son. In choosing them, he acted also DELIBERATELY. It was no hasty choice. His thoughts had been eternally filled with them. His heart had been eternally set upon them. Therefore he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world; before his works of old. In choosing them he acted WISELY — as he really desired to have them. For each one of them is ready to confess that if God had not chosen them, they would never have chosen him! The nature regulates the choice; and as our nature is carnal and impure — we would never have chosen God, who is spiritual and holy. His choice was just an early expression of His LOVE. The love that chose them — would do anything for them, and give anything to them! Therefore God spared not His own Son — but delivered Him up for them all; and in so doing gave them the assurance that also He will freely give them all things in Christ.

O the wonders couched in electing love! This act of choosing such creatures as we are to be a special people unto himself — displays such grace, such condescension, such infinite wisdom and love! It seems to say, "The Lord has need of you." And, indeed, if he is to display all the glorious perfections of his nature, if he is to communicate of his infinite fullness to creatures, if he is to appear as God, in the most wondrous and astonishing manner — he does need us! As the mother needs the child to empty the full breast;

as the Father needs the Son to share and enjoy his possessions with him;

as the bridegroom needs the bride to satisfy the deep love that is hid in his heart towards her;

so God, our covenant God, may be said to need us.

God's election says, "The Lord loves you!" Loves us! Yes, and with a love that is eternal, immutable, sovereign, infinite, and free! All the love of God is lavished upon us as His special people in Christ. Oh, those wondrous words of Jesus, "You have loved them — AS You have loved Me!"

Beloved, if God has chosen us to be a special people unto himself — then let it be the ruling object of our lives, to be specially for God! And as God desires to have us near to himself — let it be a daily effort to get near, and keep near to him. But few among the worldly wise,

But few of nobler race,

Obtain the favor of your eyes,

Almighty King of grace!

He takes the men of lowest name

— For sons and heirs of God!

And thus he pours abundant shame,

On honorable blood.  
He calls the fool, and makes him know  
The mysteries of his grace,  
To bring aspiring wisdom low,  
And all its pride abase!  
Nature has all its glories lost,  
When brought before his throne;  
No flesh shall in his presence boast,  
But in the Lord alone!

## 66 Time for God to Work!

---

### Time for God to Work!

We may not dictate to the Lord — but we may plead with him, and bring before him our needs, wishes, and desires. We may lay before him the state of our souls, our families, our churches, our country, and the world. "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, should he made for all men." But there are special times of special prayer — and we have instances of this in Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. So also David, when he saw men become unusually profane and lawless, cried out, with intense fervor, "It is time for you, Lord, to work!" Psalms 119:126.

### God Has Special Times of Working.

He has a time to favor his people — a set time.

Judgment is the Lord's strange work, and he often withholds his hand, in patience to his foes, for he is slow to anger.

There is a time also, to chastise his friends, whom he chastens with the rod of men. Mercy is his delight. He works in his people to will and to do; and he works by his people, accomplishing all the good pleasure of his will.

He sometimes ceases to work, or appears to do so — and then we feel no power working within us, or working with us. We seem to labor in vain, and spend our strength for nothing. This is to . . .

try our grace,

call forth our prayers, and

exercise our energies.

God loves to be pleaded with, and he will give us cause and occasion to plead with him. The Present Time Calls For God's Intervention.

Infidelity has put on a bold front, and has been stalking abroad in the open day.

Superstition has gathered strength and misled thousands of souls.

Crime is rampant, and criminals are numerous. The cause of God in many places is low, for there have been few conversions.

Professors of religion are becoming worldly, and cold, and are at ease in Zion. In some places error appears to make more impression than truth, and the multitude of the people are going astray.

It is time for God to work! For man has tried and failed! Things will get worse and worse without God intervening — and believers will become dispirited. Yes, we need that God should work, for

many of our sons and daughters, many of our wives and husbands, many of our brothers and sisters — are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity. We desire God to work — for we long for . . .

the conversion of immortal souls,

the restoration of backsliders, and

the establishment of believers in faith and love.

We hear of God working elsewhere, for in several places he has made bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all the nations. We must have God work — or we shall . . .

decline,

dishonor God, and

sink into a carnal state!

If it is time for God to work — then it is time for us to pray, and entreat him to do so. He has promised to do so — but the promises are made to prayer. We should therefore plead with him in private prayer. We should meet together, and in union of heart and soul — entreat him to work. We should be earnest and fervent, as seeking the greatest blessing, as if we were pleading for our life!

If it is time for God to work — then it is time for us to work. Every one in his own sphere. Each in his own connection. Every Christian should be at work for God, at work to win souls, at work with a view to help forward God's good cause. All believers, as individuals, or as a band of men whose hearts God has touched — should be employed in the Lord's vineyard. Each, and all, should put forth their energies, and work to the utmost of their power.

If it is time for God to work — then it is time for lost sinners to bethink themselves, repent, and turn to God. He may work in wrath. He may whet his glittering sword, and his hands may take hold on judgment! The appeal of the Lord's people, may be taken as an application to a just judge, to execute his righteous sentence upon criminals, and cut them down in his wrath, and punish them in his sore displeasure. And if he should — how dreadful would the result be!

Reader, are you in an unreconciled state? Is your heart estranged from God? If so, how fearful it would be, if God was to stretch out his hand against you — and cut you down! Repent, therefore, and pray to God, that your enmity against him, and opposition to him — may be forgiven. But we would rather view the appeal as made to a gracious Father, respecting his wayward and erring children — that he would work to reclaim, recover, and bring them back. O Lord, look on your church — it is in a low place, and needs your special intervention! Will you not arise and have mercy upon your people, for the time to favor them, yes, the set time has come!

It is time for the Lord to work, for lost sinners are getting hardened under the gospel!

It is time for the Lord to work, for . . .

your professing people are getting colder and colder;

the world is loved;  
wealth is idolized;  
ordinances are neglected;  
congregations are thin;  
souls by millions are perishing! Is it not then, is it not time for you to work?  
Spirit of the living God . . .  
come down in power and great glory upon us,  
rouse up our fellow countrymen,  
crowd our houses of prayer,  
revive all your churches, and  
convert thousands, and tens of thousands to yourself!  
Thus display your power,  
thus fulfill your promises,  
thus confound Satan,  
thus gratify the desires of your people,  
and thus glorify your wondrous grace!

## 67 The Spirit of Revelation

---

The Spirit of Revelation "The Spirit will take from what is Mine — and make it known to you." John 16:15

There is very much about Christ that we do not know. We can know nothing experimentally about Christ — without divine teaching. And yet our holiness, our happiness, our usefulness, very much depends on our knowledge of Christ. This attainment therefore is of the greatest importance. Paul deeply felt this, and therefore exclaimed, "That I may know Him." And when expressing his desires for the Ephesians, in prayer to God, though they knew much of Christ already, he prayed, "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation — so that you may know Him better!" Ephesians 1:17. He here prays that the glorious Father would send the revealing Spirit, to teach them to know Christ more fully. This is just what we need — may the Lord confer on us the same blessing.

It is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ. He has revealed Him already in the Word — and He stills reveals Him to the understanding and hearts of the Lord's people. To see Christ in the Word — is like looking upon a well-drawn portrait; but to see Christ by the revealing of the Holy Spirit — is like being introduced into the company of the living person!

There is a reality, a vividness, in our knowledge of Christ — when it comes from the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which cannot otherwise be realized. When the Spirit teaches us to know Christ, our former knowledge appears to be like mere hearsay, or like ideas we have obtained in a dream. O for more personal, experimental knowledge of Christ! The Spirit reveals the glorious PERSON of Christ, and then, apart from all human reasonings — we know him to be fully human, and we are sure he is fully divine. We see that while he is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh — that in him dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily. We perceive that he is not more one with us — than he is one with God; that he has not more really our nature — than he has the Father's nature. The Spirit unveils to us, the exact ADAPTATION of Christ: that he is just what we need — and all that we need. For he has whatever we need, and all that he has — he is ready to impart to us. He is all we need as sinners — to save us; and all we need as saints — to satisfy us. His glory is great in our salvation, and his grace shines conspicuously in all that we enjoy. Precious Savior! you are all our salvation, and all our desire. The Spirit shows us our SAVING INTEREST in Christ, and under his holy teaching, we discover that we are personally, and eternally interested in the person, property, and work of Christ. Then we see, that the wife is not more entitled to the wealth and dignity — which comes to her by her marriage-union with her rich and honorable husband; than we are to the riches of grace and glory — which comes to us by our union with Christ. Yes, we see that the heir is not more entitled to his inheritance — which comes to him legally by heirship; than we are to the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away — in consequence of our being constituted joint heirs with Christ.

We perceive, that in the eye of the law, Christ and our souls are one — he the head, and we members of his body. O glorious union! Christ and the believer one. He took all our blame, and

bore all our shame — that we may be entitled to his merit, and share in all his glory. The Spirit makes known to us our title to the PROMISES; all the great and precious promises which God has made, which the death of Christ confirmed, and which he lives to make good. All the blessings promised — are in him. All the promises are now signed with his name. Every promise, when pleaded, shall be made good to us. The promises are perfectly adapted to our circumstances . . .

for they comprise all that we can need for body or soul,

for ourselves or those connected with us,

for time and eternity. In the promises — God speaks to our circumstances, and pledges himself to supply all our needs, and to answer all our prayers, if for our good and his glory. By the Spirit he speaks the same promises to our hearts — and then we believe them, appropriate them, plead them, and expect their fulfillment. Precious promises, they contain all our salvation, and all our desire; may the Spirit of wisdom and revelation unfold them, apply them, enable us to plead them, and then wait for their fulfillment with faith and patience! The Spirit unfolds the glorious DOCTRINES of Christ to us, and then we see that as all the doctrines are in Christ, so Christ is in all the doctrines. Every doctrine of the gospel leads directly to Christ; and when the doctrines are unfolded by the Spirit's teaching, then Christ and our souls are brought together in sweet and hallowed fellowship.

If we learn Scripture doctrines from the teachings of men — they will be dry and lifeless; but if we are taught them by the Spirit of God — we shall find them to be full of unction and savor, and they will prove sanctifying as well as comforting to our souls! The Spirit will endear Christ to us by every doctrine, and will endear every doctrine to us, by showing us its connection with Christ, and its direct tendency to exalt Christ. Blessed Spirit, teach me doctrine! Let me have all the doctrines of the gospel unfolded to my mind by you, that I may have fellowship with Christ in them, and communion with God through them. As the Spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Christ, this divine teacher will show us . . .

Christ in nature — as the creator of all things;

Christ in providence — as the director of all things;

Christ in grace — as the author of salvation;

and Christ in glory — as its source and center.

He will . . .

show us our need of Christ,

prompt us to expect good and great things from Christ,

and teach us to ascribe all glory to Christ.

Christ is the text from which the Holy Spirit preaches.

Christ is the subject the Holy Spirit unfolds.

Christ is the object to which the Holy Spirit points.

Christ is the end to which the Holy Spirit leads. To reveal Christ,

to exalt Christ,

to lead souls to Christ,

is at once the work and the delight of the ever blessed Spirit. And if we had more of the Holy Spirit's presence and influence — we would . . .

think more of Christ,

speak more of Christ,

do more for Christ, and

enjoy more of Christ,

have more personal dealings with Christ.

Low thoughts of Christ,

living at a distance from Christ,

seldom speaking of Christ, and

having little enjoyment of Christ

— proves that we have but little of the Spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Christ.

Blessed, blessed Spirit, as the Spirit of wisdom — make me truly wise; and as the Spirit of revelation — give me a deep, thorough, abiding, practical knowledge of Christ.

O you who are the glorious Father of Christ, and the giver of the Holy Spirit, I beseech you to give to me and all your people, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ — that we may better know him, love him, trust him, publish him, and glorify his dear and precious name!

Gracious Savior, give, O give us grace — that we may give you glory, honor, and praise, henceforth and forever. Amen.

## 68 Hearken and Hear

---

Hearken and Hear The present is intended to impact upon the future. Time is given, to prepare for eternity. We should therefore send our thoughts forward, and act now as we shall wish we had acted, when our last hour comes. The Lord speaks to us now, and requires us to "hearken and hear for the time to come." Isaiah 42:23. Much of God's Word refers to the future, and what does not exactly refer to the future, if properly used, will impact upon the future. Let us then pay attention to: The Communication Made.

God speaks to us of SIN:

that it is detected — there is no sinning in secret;

that it is hated — and never seen but with abhorrence;

that it must be punished — law and justice forbid that it should be passed over.

God speaks to us of WRATH:

his just and holy wrath against sin;

wrath provoked by sin;

wrath treasured up against the day of wrath, to be poured on sinners;

wrath which will last forever;

wrath which kindles Hell, generates despair, and produces unspeakable terrors!

God speaks to us of REPENTANCE — commanding us to repent and turn to him, so that iniquity may not be our ruin. When God commands every man, everywhere to repent — he requires us . . .

to seriously consider,

to be sorry for our sins,

to confess them before him,

to seek the pardon of them,

and also to forsake them.

God speaks to us of MERCY:

covenant mercy,

mercy in Jesus,

mercy for the vilest.

Mercy that will . . .

forgive sin,  
prevent wrath,  
save the sinner, and  
glorify God in doing so!

Reader, God has detected sin in you,  
your sin deserves his wrath,  
he commands you to repent, and  
repenting, he promises you mercy.

Let us then attend to, The Duty Required.

"Hearken," give attention as one deeply interested in what is said — in order to be greatly impressed by the communication — that you may remember and turn to account — with a view to reduce to practice what is said.

"Hear," and hear . . .

with the seriousness which the subject demands;  
with fervent prayer that God may make it a blessing;  
as one who must give an account, and  
believing that whoever is the instrument — it is God who speaks.

"Hearken and hear for the time to come." Trying times are coming, for which we should be prepared:

Times of affliction are coming, and we shall need the promises to comfort us then.

Times of judgment are coming, and we shall need assurances of safety to sustain us then. The solemn hour of death is coming, and we shall need the gospel in all its fullness and grace, to qualify us to meet it.

Eternity is coming, and we had need be prepared for it — but we can only be so by . . .

hearing what God speaks,  
believing what God says,  
accepting what God offers,  
doing what God commands, and  
avoiding what God prohibits.

Let us then hearken and hear — that we may escape condemnation. This can only be done by believing in Jesus, and seeking union with Jesus. There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus — but to the sinner there is condemnation everywhere else. No matter what we have — if we have not

living faith in Christ;

no matter what we do — if we do not betake ourselves to Christ;

no matter where we are — if we are not in Christ —

we shall surely be condemned, and must endure the wrath of God forever!

Let us hearken and hear — that we may ensure Heaven. Heaven is a free gift. It is presented to us in Christ, and Christ is presented to us in the gospel. If we receive Christ — we receive a title to Heaven; if we reject Christ — we pass sentence on ourselves as unworthy of everlasting life. The divine testimony is, "This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son, has life; and he who has not the Son of God, has not life." The wrath of God abides on him. If therefore we would make sure of Heaven . . .

we must read God's record — and believe it;

we must attend to God's invitation — and accept it;

we must see Christ as God's gift — and receive him to be our Savior.

Let us hearken and hear — that we may be prepared for all events. We know not what a day may bring forth — but . . .

if we are in Christ,

if we possess Christ,

if we embrace and believe the promises,

if we observe and walk by the precepts —

we shall be prepared, let what will come.

Especially let us seek to possess the Spirit of Christ, the holy and ever blessed Comforter; that being . . .

quickened by his power,

taught by his word,

sanctified by his grace,

sealed by his love, and

assured of eternal life by his indwelling and witness

— we may . . .

rejoice in hope,

be patient in tribulation,

be diligent in duty, and

be more than victorious in death.

Lord, give both writer and reader grace that we may "Hearken and hear for the time to come!"

## 69 A Pleasant Sight

---

### A Pleasant Sight

Though God can work without instruments, and accomplish his purposes without using man — yet he is pleased to employ us, and at times our position is such that it appears as if the work could not be done without us. In this way, the Lord . . .

puts an honor upon us,

lays us under obligation, and

increases our responsibility. When Israel came up out of the Babylonian captivity, how much depended on Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. Without these men, humanly speaking, the work would never have been done — and yet they could not do the work alone. The citizens, mechanics, and laborers were all equally necessary. Each one had his part to perform, his work to do, and his place to keep; and in doing so, the city was raised, and the temple was built. They were distressed, discouraged, and dispersed by their foes — but as soon as there was safety and quiet, they returned "each one unto his own work." Nehemiah 4:15.

They had an important work in hand, they were rebuilding the city of the Lord, and the temple for the Lord. This was a work which required industry, self-denial, liberality, and perseverance.

Just so, we are called to a similar work — only ours is spiritual, and theirs was temporal. The holy city, and the spiritual temple are now in progress. The Lord Jesus is the great master-builder, and all his people are under him, and used by him. We are required to be industrious in winning souls, and in bringing them into union with the building. There is much to be done, and we have no time to spare, therefore we should be up and at it — all at it, and always at it.

Self-denial too should be practiced in our work. We should not study our ease, or the gratification of our lusts and passions; but should work as for God, as for eternity. Nor should we spare our property — but should liberally employ it in the Lord's cause, and use it for the Lord's glory; no one can invest his money better, or lay it up more safely — than by laying it out in the work of God.

Having begun, we should persevere, for our Master has said, "He who puts his hand to the plough, and looks back — is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Beloved, let us all engage in God's work, and let us . . .

manifest industry,

practice self-denial,

give liberally, and

persevere, until called home to enjoy everlasting rest. The temple building is to be large and glorious, or as David said of old, "exceedingly magnificent." But the Jews had to defend what they

built; they wrought with the sword on the thigh, and the trowel in the hand, for their enemies were vigilant and determined. Just so, we have to fight against Satan, prejudice, and corruption, which would otherwise creep in, and mar and spoil the work.

O for grace to work, watch, and fight in God's glorious cause! The beauty of the sight, in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple — was to see every one at his work; and this would be a pleasant sight now. Every believer should be at work, for each one has some talent, and that talent was given by Jesus to be employed in his service, and for his honor. Every one should be at his proper work, for there is something for each one to do, and every one can do his own work best. Every Christian should feel a deep and growing interest in the conversion of sinners and the enlargement of the Church. Each should be concerned to do something for that purpose, and to do all he can. Of old — some hewed the stones, some built, some served, some watched, some gave, all took a part — just as it should be now. Let us then, examine ourselves: Am I at work? Am I at my proper work; that for which my talents qualify me? Am I doing all I can, and doing all as to the Lord, as for Jesus, who has done so much for me?

All idlers should be reprov'd, let us reprove them by our conduct, and at every fitting opportunity put the question, "Why have you been standing here all day doing nothing? Nor should we fail to exhort and encourage one another, for there is so much to be done, and there are so many discouragements in the way. Brethren, be constant in your places and at your employment, for in working for Jesus you are safe — but the loiterer and idler are in danger! In the work of Jesus, there is pleasure, the sweetest pleasure; we may therefore work and sing. In the work of Jesus there is profit. Now we receive a hundred-fold, and in the world to come, we shall receive life everlasting. Let us expect interruptions and hindrances in our work — but let us always return to it again; and let us so work as those who look for the coming of the Master, and wish that at his coming he may find every one at his work!

## 70 I Need Two Things; Or, Repentance and Faith

---

### I Need Two Things; Or, Repentance and Faith

It is no uncommon thing, for many people to look too much to their feelings — and to judge of their spiritual state thereby. Such people never enjoy settled peace. Such people very often set up a standard for God to work by, and except texts of Scripture are applied to the mind, producing sudden joys — they cannot conclude that they are the children of God.

Now however profitable these things may be, they are never set forth in God's Word, as necessary to salvation, or even as the evidences of it. Men are to be known, like trees — by their fruits; and salvation is to be known by its effects. Without faith in Christ, repentance toward God, and love to the brethren — there cannot be salvation; but there may be all these — without the impressions, manifestations, and sensations, which some people talk of, and require as essential to salvation. A minister, some short time ago, was in company with one of his hearers, who had fallen into this mistake. He had experienced a great change in himself, he prayed privately and publicly, his moral conduct was good, and he had regularly sat under the gospel for twenty years. But because he had no singular manifestations, no striking texts suddenly applied to his soul, which he had been looking for in vain for years — he had no joy in God, no peace in believing, no assurance of salvation. His one great complaint is, "I do not feel, what I want to feel — even in prayer, I do not feel what I say, as I want to feel it. I am afraid after all that I shall be lost. I know," said he, "that I need two things, that is repentance and faith."

It is a great mercy to be convinced of our need of spiritual things, for when the Lord shows us our need, and gives us the desire to possess them — in his own time, he intends to confer them. Then the promise is ours, and will be fulfilled to us, where it is said, "He will fulfill the desire of those who fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them." But we often imagine we need, what we have already gotten, and I have no doubt the friend referred to, has both repentance and faith already; for if he had not, he would neither feel, desire, act, or talk, as he does. But does he understand what repentance and faith are? Or, has he mistaken the nature of things, which he says he needs, and which are indeed necessary to salvation? I apprehend this is the case with many, let us therefore look at these two points a little.

REPENTANCE, is a change of mind. It supposes that we have thought wrongly — and have therefore felt, and acted wrongly. When therefore it is said, "Repent and believe the gospel," the meaning is, "Change your minds in reference to God's kingdom, the Messiah, etc, and believe the good news I bring you." So when it is said, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It supposes that they had wrong views, and therefore false expectations, in reference to the kingdom of God; and they are required to change their views, and expect the kingdom of God at once. So when Peter says, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you," etc. He means change your minds in reference to Jesus of Nazareth, and by baptism profess faith in his name.

Repentance towards God — is changing the mind in reference to God's nature, purposes, and designs towards us; so that instead of looking upon him as wrathful, purposing to punish us, and intending to sacrifice us to his justice — we believe him to be love, that his purposes are gracious, and that he intends to do us good and bless us. Then we look upon God in Jesus, as gracious, merciful, and long suffering; we believe that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner — but would rather he should turn from his wickedness and live, even though it cost him the life of his own dear Son to save him. And we see that he is so desirous of being on good terms with us — that he beseeches us to be reconciled unto him, promising that he will not impute our trespasses unto us, or place one of our sins to our account. This is God's own representation of himself, and it is totally different from man's conceptions of him, he therefore commands us to repent, to give up all our false ideas of him, and receive his own representations of himself. This will be sure to change our feelings toward him, and instead of hating him, dreading him, or wishing to flee from him — we shall begin to love him, draw near to him, and mourn and grieve that we have ever sinned against him, or in any way grieved or offended him. This is godly sorrow for sin, which is the effect of a change of mind in reference to God; and this godly sorrow flows forth most freely, and is felt most deeply, when we perceive the depth of God's love to us, as it is seen in the gift of his Son, and in the agony and bloody sweat, the crucifixion and death of that Son for us, and for our salvation.

Godly sorrow for sin, always leads us to hate the sin we are sorry for, and to forsake the sin in our lives. By repentance therefore we generally mean the whole three:

a change of mind,

a change of feeling, and

a change of conduct. In proportion to our former wrong views of God, our misconduct toward God, and our change of mind respecting him — will be the depth of sorrow for thinking wrongly of him, and acting wrongly toward him; so also will be the marked difference in our outward conduct and conversation. A man therefore may have true repentance, who has had no very dreadful feelings in reference to sin, or intense and overwhelming sorrow. It may have been given him to receive into his mind right views of God, and by these — right feelings may have been produced, and from both a consistent course of conduct may flow. The man loves God, as he views him in Jesus. He is sorry that he ever sinned against him, especially that he sins against him now; and desires and aims so to walk, so to speak, and so to live — as to please him. Such an one is a true penitent, and has experienced, yes, does daily experience the repentance that is unto life; which repentance is the gift of Jesus, who is exalted to give it, with the remission of sins.

FAITH, what is faith?

Faith in GOD, is believing that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. It is believing, and receiving into the mind, all that he has said of himself in his own holy Word; which leads us to exercise confidence in him, and expect good things from him.

Faith in CHRIST, is believing him to be the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world; and that he has done and suffered all that the law and justice of God required, in order to the salvation of all those who trust in him.

Faith in his blood, is believing that his blood made a full atonement for all sin, and that it cleanses from all sin — all who depend upon it. In a word, faith in Christ, is renouncing all and everything, as a ground, or cause of our acceptance with God, and depending on him alone, to save us fully, freely, and forever. It is not believing that I am savingly interested in Christ, or even that Christ died for me in particular, though this will grow out of our faith; but it is simply trusting Christ to be, and to do, as he has said in his Word.

If therefore, I renounce all dependence on my own works, if I refuse to place any confidence in my feelings — and trust alone in what Christ is, what Christ has done, what Christ is doing — then I have faith, saving faith in Christ. And this faith will produce good works, for while I depend on Christ alone to save me, and expect salvation by his grace alone — how can I do otherwise than feel grateful to him? And if I feel grateful to him, surely I shall seek to please him. And how can I please him — but by keeping his commandments? And what is keeping his commandments — but performing good works?

REPENTANCE toward God, then, implies, that we have wronged God in our thoughts of him, and in our feelings and conduct towards him; but that now, we have changed our minds, and think of him as he wishes us to do — in consequence of which we are sorry, heartily sorry that we have ever grieved, or dishonored him, either in our hearts or lives, and therefore we seek to do only those things which please him.

FAITH in Christ, is depending upon Christ alone for life and salvation — or trusting in Christ to save us — as he has promised to do in his holy word. Out of which faith, springs a desire to honor Christ and serve him, on account of his great love to us, and wondrous work for us.

Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, are essential to salvation; but as to many of the feelings, manifestations, and singular experiences which some men talk of, however desirable some may think them, or however much some may be depressed because they are strangers to them — they are not necessary to salvation.

Then, as to our FEELINGS, they will be very much regulated by our faith; though they will be a good deal influenced by . . .

the books we read,

the company we keep,

the ministry we sit under, and

our own natural temperament.

Some are naturally gloomy, others cheerful; some are nervous and fearful, others stout and courageous; we must not therefore set up any standard to which all alike must come, or draw any rule according to which the Holy Spirit must work — for he will exercise his sovereignty, while he displays his power. Whatever therefore may be your feelings, whatever your defects; complain as you will, or fear as you may, the Holy Spirit, by the apostle affirms,

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is

with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:1-21 Reader, have you repented?

You once thought highly of sin — and therefore you preferred it to holiness;

you thought highly of the world — and preferred it to the Savior;

you thought highly of self — and preferred it to God. Have you changed your mind? Do you now look upon SIN as that abominable thing which God hates? Do you hate it? Do you forsake it? Do you look upon the WORLD as God's enemy, see that the works of it are evil, and that it lies in the wicked One; as the consequence have you come out of it, separating yourself from it, refusing to touch the unclean thing? Do you look upon SELF with loathing, and abhor yourself, repenting in dust and ashes? Do you hate sin, cleave to the Savior, and love God? Have you faith in Christ? Have you committed yourself to Jesus, to be saved by him? Do you look to him alone for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? He is able to save you — he is willing to save you — he waits to save you, if you are not saved. To you his word at this moment is, "Look unto me — and be saved! For I am God, and there is none else." And for your instruction and encouragement, he has said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whoever believes on him should not perish — but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish — but have everlasting life."

Believe and live. Look to Jesus — and eternal life is yours. Not by works of righteousness — but according to his mercy he saves us. By grace we are saved, through faith.

Let us not then torment ourselves, because our experience is not just like the experience of some of whom we have heard or read. Neither let us doubt or despond, because we do not feel just as we wish, or think we ought to do. Neither let us listen to the lies, and misrepresentations of Satan; but let us cast ourselves on God's mercy, commit our souls to Jesus, trust him with them, and give him credit for being faithful and true to his word — and so we shall be saved!

## 71 Ah! That's Hard Work!

---

Ah! That's Hard Work!

What appears to be very easy in theory — is often found to be very difficult in practice! Talk about faith, or believing, or trusting, and how easy it appears — but endeavor to exercise faith in Christ, to believe the precious promises of God with application to yourself, or to trust in the faithfulness of God in seasons of trial and trouble — and without the special aid of the Holy Spirit, you will find it hard work!

These thoughts have been suggested by the following circumstance. A minister of Christ, the other day, met with a young person, one of his congregation, and entering into conversation with her, found her very earnest in reference to spiritual things — but tossed about and tormented with many fears. As he spoke with her about the state of her soul, she said, "I am very uncomfortable." He said, "You should believe in Jesus." Looking at him with a very grave countenance, she replied, "Ah! That's hard work!" He could not deny that, for he had often found it hard work too. So had John Newton, who wrote,

"O could I but believe,

Then all would easy be;

I would — but cannot!

Lord, make known

The power of faith in me!"

Some may question this, and others may deny it — but every experienced Christian will assent to it. And let those who deny it, only try it — when sin stares them in the face, and the corruptions of the heart boil up within them, and the terrors of God appear to be set in array against them. It is easy to talk about believing, and to seem to believe — when there is . . .

no deep conviction of sin,

no sense of the wrath of God,

no vivid fears of Hell;

but a soul quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit, filled with a sense of the wrath of God, and dwelling on the number and nature of its transgressions — finds it hard work indeed.

True, when the Spirit reveals Christ in . . .

the riches of his grace,

the merit of his blood, and

the glory of his forgiving love,  
and sweetly draws out the heart to him — it is easy to believe, nothing is easier! We can then . . .  
venture on him,  
commit our souls to him, and  
trust him to save us without the least hesitation.

It seems natural to do so, and without the least effort we do it. But under other circumstances, we find it very difficult. But what makes it so DIFFICULT to believe in Christ? There are many reasons — but we can only name a few.

1. Sometimes we mistake the nature of faith — which is a persuasion of the truth of what is revealed concerning Christ, and the exercising of confidence in Christ to make good his Word. As for instance, I read that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners — that he is able to save to the uttermost — that he will cast out none who come unto him — and he invites all who are burdened, and are thirsting, to come unto him, and obtain rest, and satisfaction, or be saved. Well, I feel fully persuaded that all this is true. But being persuaded of the truth of this, and being myself in need of salvation, I come to Jesus, and taking him at his word, appeal to him to be saved by him. This is faith, and appears to be easy enough — but when we come to try to do so — we find that without the gracious agency and power of the Holy Spirit — we cannot do it! At least, I could not. Could not! At times, I cannot now!

2. Another thing that makes believing difficult is, that we have in our natural hearts, a prejudice against God, and when this is removed, there is still a suspicion lurking there. We do not heartily receive the testimony that God is love, that Jesus is the expression of that love, and that out of pure love, God will save anyone, and everyone — who is willing and desirous to be saved by Christ.

Search your heart, reader, and see if you do not find something of this kind there — to my shame I say it, I do still, after all the proofs of his love which I have had. Yes. I find it hard work at times — to believe that God is so good, so gracious, so loving, as his Word declares him to be.

3. Also, Satan is the great enemy of faith, and does all he can . . .

to misrepresent God,  
to slander the Lord Jesus,  
to pervert the gospel, and  
to foster unbelief in us.

He is always active, endeavoring . . .

to divert the eyes from the cross,  
to suggest that we are 'peculiar' sinners,  
that our case is singular,

that we have no right, no warrant to believe in Jesus.

Indeed he will try a thousand means to prevent our receiving God's testimony in simplicity, and resting upon it without questioning. To believe therefore in the teeth of the most determined opposition of Satan, who knows the human heart so well, and has been accustomed to exercise such power over it — is hard work indeed!

4. Also, we are much more easily affected by the visible — than by the invisible; by the sensible — than by the spiritual. The invisibility of Jesus therefore, and the spiritual nature of faith — make it a difficult thing at times to believe.

However, let anyone have a deep sense and clear perception . . .

of the infinite value of the soul,

of the true nature of sin,

of the terrible character of the wrath of God,

of the solemn importance of eternal things,

of the numerous sins of the life,

of the deep depravity of the heart, and

of the utter unworthiness of the person

— and then let it be known that the soul, in these circumstances, is required to apply to Christ, and to trust only in Christ, and to expect to be saved by Christ alone — without one good work, good word, or good feeling — and it will be found to be hard work to do so! But I forbear, for there appears no reason to go further into this part of the subject, for every quickened soul indeed feels it, and the dead in sin will not be convinced by any words I can write.

What then, is a soul in such a state to do?

First, beware of excusing unbelief, for it is a sin, and is one of the effects of the depravity of our hearts.

Beware also of indulging doubts and fears, and of dwelling upon your sin, depravity, and unworthiness. Instead we should be reading, receiving, and endeavoring to believe God's testimony in the gospel. As much as possible fix the mind . . .

on what Christ IS — the Savior;

on what Christ has DONE — put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;

for WHOM Christ died — for the ungodly, and sinners;

on the INVITATION Christ has given — to come to him;

and the PROMISE Christ has made — "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away!"

Think of these facts:

Christ has saved the vilest sinners — and yet has not gone to the utmost of what he can do.

Christ never refused to save anyone who sought salvation at his feet; nor can he, consistently with his Word, refuse to save you.

Christ cannot break his Word — he cannot.

Christ cannot deny himself — he will not. His glory will be advanced, his Word will be confirmed, his grace will be magnified,

his justice, holiness, and majesty, will be honored

— by your salvation!

Endeavor to believe, as if it was in your own power to do so, because God commands you; and yet realizing your weakness, entreat the Holy Spirit to work faith in your heart, and to enable you to believe to the saving of your soul.

Though you may find it hard to believe — it is not impossible. Thousands have felt just as you feel now — and yet have afterwards been enabled to rejoice in a personal assurance of . . .

a saving interest in Christ,

union to Christ, and

salvation by Christ.

Anxiety about faith, a desire to believe, and a realizing of the difficulty of doing so — are indications that the Spirit of God is now at work in your soul. The good work is begun — and he who has begun it, will carry it on, and complete it in the day of Christ.

But, until there is a distinct recognition that salvation is all of grace, pure grace; and a renunciation of everything done by us; until we perceive that we may as well depend upon our grossest sins — as our best deeds, or most comfortable feelings to recommend us to God, or ensure our salvation — and so trust in Christ alone, to be saved by his blood and righteousness — we shall never enjoy peace, or be happy in God.

Salvation is by Christ — by Christ alone!

Salvation is of grace — of grace alone!

Salvation is by believing — by believing alone!

God saves us by his grace — and therefore saves us freely.

Christ saves us by his blood and obedience — and therefore without any works or merit of our own.

We are saved by faith — or by . . .

venturing on Christ,

trusting in Christ, and

committing ourselves unreservedly to Christ.

Reader, how do you feel on this subject? Do you believe? Do you know anything of the difficulty of believing? Could you at all sympathize with the poor girl who said in reference to it, "Ah! that's hard work!"

You must believe, or you cannot be saved; "for he who believes not — shall be damned!" When you come to exercise faith in Christ, you will find it more or less difficult; and will thus learn out the necessity there is for the work of the Holy Spirit of God in the heart. You read of "obtaining like precious faith," of faith "being the gift of God," of "the faith of the operation of God," and of its being "given," to some, "on the behalf of Christ, to believe on his name." All which shows, that the God who works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure — must work faith in our hearts, and give us to believe on his Son, Jesus Christ. May the Lord fulfill in us, both writer, and reader — all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power — that the name of Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 72 As Happy as a Prince

---

As Happy as a Prince A young man in Kent had been living . . .

according to the course of the world,

ignorant of God,

careless about eternity, and

indifferent as to the state of his soul. His conscience slept securely,

his sins increased, and

his life glided away. At length the Lord laid his hand upon him. Health fled. Sickness brought him down within sight of death's door. His friends were alarmed for him. A minister of Christ was sent for, who found him very dark and ignorant. He dealt faithfully with him, pointing out . . .

his real state before God,

the danger of his soul, and

the necessity there was for a radical change.

He set Christ before him as the only and all-sufficient Savior, and insisted on faith in his blood in order to obtain pardon and peace.

Days rolled away. The Holy Spirit applied the testimony. Slowly the mind opened to receive the truth. At length . . .

faith fastened on the Savior,

a sense of pardon was enjoyed, and

the assurance of salvation was felt.

During his few remaining days, his soul was taken up with Christ. He . . .

rested on the finished work of Jesus,

drank in the sweet words of Jesus, and

lived in the exercises of faith, prayer, and praise to Jesus.

He was in peace. He was happy. There he lay — a wonder to himself, and a wonder to all about him. He was saved by grace — by grace alone — and to grace he gave all the glory. At length the day arrived on which he was to die. Once more he wished to see the face of the servant of God, who had been used to pluck him as a brand from the burning. His parents sent for him, and when he arrived, the lad turned his poor dying head, and his bright eyes sparkled with joy. Taking him by the hand, the minister of Christ said, "Are you happy, Thomas?" Mark his reply, with evident

pleasure, he said, "Happy as a prince!" And as though that was not enough to represent the joy he felt, he added, "A thousand times happier than a prince!"

He then spoke freely of the Lord's dealings with him, and especially of the goodness of God to him that night. He then preached Christ to his father and mother, and obtained a promise from them, that they would attend the ministry of the man who had been made such a blessing to him. He then, as a last request, begged the minister to preach a sermon from the text which had been such a comfort to his mind, which was John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

He then fell asleep in Jesus, to the praise of the glory of his grace!

Reader, are you saved? Have you received the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of your sins? Have you peace with God? Did you ever experience that deep and overpowering joy which made this poor, dying young man, weak and full of pain as he was, say, "I am as happy as a prince, and a thousand, times happier!" Real religion always makes its possessors happy, and the degree of their happiness is in proportion to its depth and power.

Jesus, who saved Thomas — can save you. Not only can he save you — but he is willing to save you; and as willing to save you as he was to save Thomas. If therefore you feel your need of a Savior, and if you are willing to be saved by the Lord Jesus, and to be saved now — then go to Jesus, call on his name, plead his own word, trust in the merit of his blood — and you are saved.

Yes, the moment you . . .

renounce self,

turn from all other refuges,

betake yourself to Christ alone,

and place confidence in him —

you are saved! His blood is your full discharge from all guilt, condemnation, and punishment. His righteousness justifies you before God, and entitles you to eternal life. His Word is your everlasting security, for he has said, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me — has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life!" John 5:24. Can words be plainer? Can any assurance be stronger? Every believer has everlasting life. Every one who hears the words of Jesus, and believes on his Heavenly Father — has everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation.

Ought not this assurance to make the believer happy?

Happy in the midst of trials!

Happy in sickness and poverty!

Happy in the hour of death! Are you thus happy, my friend? If you are not — then why not? Are you not a sinner? As a sinner, do you not believe in Jesus?

If you believe in Jesus — does he not assure you that everlasting life is yours? Is not his Word true? Will he not be faithful? Can he deny himself?

Why then are you not happy? The cause must be either ignorance, or unbelief. Either you do not understand the gospel, which assures you that every believer is saved the moment he believes, let his life and conduct have been what they may. Or you do not believe the testimony which God has given, the record which God bears.

Perhaps you are looking at your sinful life, or at your more sinful heart — and concluding that because your life has been so bad, and your heart so much worse — therefore you cannot claim eternal life. But do you not see that the blessing is not promised to people whose character is good, or whose hearts are not very foul, or very bad, or very cold — but to every one who simply and sincerely believes, let his character have been what it will, or let his heart be as it may.

Believe in Christ, and whatever you may have been; believe in Christ, and whatever state your heart may be in — and you are saved — eternal life is yours. To believe in Christ is nothing more than renouncing all other ground of hope, and trusting in Christ alone. Yes, faith is simply trusting in Jesus. Trusting in Jesus . . .

to save me,

to save me wholly,

to save me entirely,

to save me for evermore. And the moment you renounce all beside Christ, and place your simple and entire confidence in Christ — that moment you are entitled to believe that he . . .

shed his blood to make your peace,

died for your sins,

rose again for your justification, and

ever lives to make intercession for you! Nor only so — but as soon as ever you cease to place any confidence in your own works, or your own feelings, and rely on Christ alone — the Holy Spirit will apply to you the blood of Christ, and you will have peace; and he will unfold to you the Word of Christ, and you will be filled with joy. It was so with the poor youth who died in Kent; and it has been so with all in every age, and in every place — who have ventured on Christ alone, and trusted the salvation of the soul entirely to him.

Trust, therefore, in Christ, and in Christ alone.

Renounce your good works and your bad works alike;

look away from your comfortable feelings, and from your uncomfortable ones alike;

and look directly to Jesus! And as sure as the serpent-bitten Israelite was healed by looking to the brazen serpent on the pole in the midst of the camp — so surely shall you be saved too. And as the Israelite felt in himself that he was healed — so will you; for God fills us with all joy and peace in believing, and enables us to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Sinner, shall the Savior who saved Thomas — save you? Will you go to him? Will you cry to him? Will you be in earnest in seeking the salvation of your soul at his hands? If you are not saved, it will not be because Jesus could not save you, or because he refused to save you — but because you would not come unto him that you might have life! Today he calls you to him. By these lines he invites you to come unto him. Once more he assures you that if you will come — he will not refuse you; for his words are still true, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away!"

Come then, O come to Jesus!

He will receive you graciously,

he will pardon you fully,

he will save you freely, and

he will bless you eternally!

Once more, therefore, with all the earnestness of love, we cry to you: Come To Jesus! Come To Jesus! Come To Jesus!

## 73 Deborah's Benevolent Desire

---

### Deborah's Benevolent Desire

Israel's sin, brought punishment — but God's sovereign mercy, raised up deliverers and brought relief. These deliverers were generally men — but here we find a woman promoted to the leadership. She appears to have had a large heart, a strong understanding, and to be altogether a very remarkable woman. She stirred up Barak, and led him to conflict and victory; and having done so, composes a song of praise to Jehovah, in which she ascribes the victory to him, reviews the conduct of the tribes, and closes with a devout and holy wish, "So may all your enemies perish, O Lord! But may those who love You be like the sun when it rises in its strength!" Judges 5:31.

"Those who love You." Jehovah in Jesus, is the object of our love; and in him, everything that is calculated to draw forth, and fix our love is to be found. The bright and the beautiful,

the magnificent and the glorious,

the mild and the majestic,

the just and the gracious,

the holy and the benevolent —

combine, harmonize, and shine forth in him! And the Holy Spirit having . . .

convinced us of sin,

led us to Jesus,

sealed home on the conscience our pardon, and

given us to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ

— draws forth and fixes our affections supremely on him.

We love him — and therefore prefer him to all other objects in earth or Heaven.

We love him — and therefore walk with him in peace and holiness.

We love him — and therefore obey him with all the heart and soul.

We love him — and therefore we love his people and unite with them.

We love him — and therefore . . .

engage in his cause,

strive for his glory, and

fight in defense of his truth,

We love him — and therefore are zealous in his ways, and for his honor. Love is the fire in the heart, and zeal is the flame in the life.

Let those who love him, "be like the sun when it rises in its strength!" That is, let them be . . .

exalted above all their foes;

uninterrupted in their course;

and glorious above all other objects.

Let them be, not as the mid-winter sun, or as the sun at midnight — but let them be as the sun at midsummer, at mid-day, when it goes forth in its might!

Then it attracts universal attention;

then it disperses all darkness and gloom;

then it scatters all that would impede its progress, or conceal its glories;

then it prevents innumerable evils;

then it imparts innumerable blessings — by its light, heat, and fructifying power;

then it goes on increasing in beauty and splendor, passing uninjured through all the constellations — the lion, the bull, the scorpion, and the bear;

then it sets in mild glory, and sheds a beauty on all surrounding objects.

Let those who love God, be . . .

as beautiful,

as useful,

as constant,

as persevering, and

as successful —

as "the sun when it rises in its strength!"

"May those who love you — be like the sun when it rises in its strength!" The love of saints is mutual, it fixes on the image of God wherever it is, and breaks through every barrier, exclaiming, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Love desires the best things for others. Nothing is too great or too good — to desire for those who love God. The most striking imagery is employed, the most glorious objects in nature are selected, to set forth the benevolent desires of the loving heart.

Love leads to energetic prayer, it was love in the heart of Deborah, which led her so energetically to appeal to the heart of God, and say, "May those who love you — be like the sun when it rises in its strength!" Love longs to see others increasingly useful, honorable, and glorious. There is nothing selfish in love: she does not seek her own honor — but to advance the honor of Jesus,

and the best interests of those who love him.

Reader, do you love Him? Do you love God in Christ? Do you love him from the heart — supremely? If so, do you go forth as the sun, day by day in a course of holiness and usefulness? Is your path like that of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day? Seek. . .

to abound in love,

to excel in grace, and

to grow in usefulness.

Remember, believe, and plead that precious promise, "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he who has clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger!" So shall you be "like the sun when it rises in its strength!"

## 74 The Lost Soul's Request!

---

### The Lost Soul's Request!

We know comparatively little of the unseen world. We do know that there is a Heaven of joy and peace for the saved sinner — and there is a place of sorrow and suffering for the lost sinner. Our Lord in one of his parables, sets before us . . .

the suffering life, happy death, and glorious state in Heaven — of a poor believer;

and the mirthful life, death, and awful state of suffering in Hell — of a wealthy sinner.

"In Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment!" He sought a little alleviation of his sufferings — but was denied the least. Being directed to remember how he had lived on earth — he thought of his former honor, and the state of those whom he had left behind him, he answered: "Then I beg you, father Abraham — send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment!" Luke 16:27-28. Observe, The Object of the Rich Man's Solicitude. His "five brothers." They were perhaps younger than himself, though it is probable that he was comparatively young.

They were still in the land of hope — and he was in the black region of despair.

They were still under the reign of mercy — and he was under the iron rod of justice.

He feared for them — for he knew in what state he had left them! He feared for them — lest they should persevere in sin, and at length come to the same place of torment! He most ardently desired their salvation, and that they might escape the sure wrath that is coming. He despaired of their salvation by ordinary means, and therefore he petitioned that Lazarus may be sent, that he might testify to them.

Ah, if we realized what Hell is, and sympathized with sinners as we ought to do — we would be prepared to make use of any means, and of all means, in order, if possible — to prevent souls going there! It is very strange, that professing to believe the Bible representations of Hell, the certainty of every unconverted sinner going there, and that conversion is effected by the use of means which are in our power — that we use them so little, or so feebly.

Look at this lost soul in Hell — he remembers his brethren, and, appealing to Abraham, gives expression to: His Ardent Desire. "Send Lazarus to my brothers! Lazarus is no longer a poor, ulcerated beggar — he will make a fit and suitable preacher! They know he is dead. They will be greatly affected by his appearance among them, and by the change that has taken place in him. O, send Lazarus, and let him bear testimony to the reality of this place of torment — to the certainty of all impenitent sinners coming here, however rich or distinguished they were on earth. Let Lazarus testify as to the nature of this place of torment, and tell them that their poor brother is in flames, tormenting flames, inextinguishable flames! Tell them that I am denied one solitary drop of water, or anything which will in any way alleviate my dreadful sufferings! Let him assure them . .

that Hell is eternal,

that the sufferers are immortal,

that annihilation is a fiction, and

that deliverance from this fearful agony is impossible!

Let, O let him tell them, that once here, they are here forever! Forever! Forever!

And, O let him warn them of the folly, the madness, of neglecting the soul and its salvation. Let him testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment! It is possible. It is probable. It is certain — if they live and die in sin as I did!" That poor wretch dreaded their coming there, for if anything could add to his torments — it would be to see his own brothers under the same condemnation, in the same horrid place of punishment! He also dreaded it, as most probably by his own example, and by his influence — he had hardened them in sin, and encouraged them in their ungodly course. It would therefore be an aggravation of his woe, and cause the flame that tormented him to blaze more fiercely — to see their eternal sufferings as own his fault!

It must be dreadful — to be the cause or the occasion of another's soul being lost forever, and to have the sufferings of that soul constantly before our eyes! Is it not a striking thought — that lost sinners, while suffering the torments of Hell — sympathize with living relations, which they have left behind them on earth?

O what a terrible thing, the exercise of a strong memory in Hell must be!

Those who now suffer the torments of the damned, are represented as desiring the salvation of their relatives on earth, and that they may be saved at any expense — saved, cost what it may. Does not this concern of the damned — condemn the conduct of many careless, indifferent, idle, and worldly-minded professors? Does it not say, that in this particular, the conduct of professors is worse than that of the damned in Hell? What a terrible thought it is, that any of us should be more unfeeling about the spiritual state, and eternal destiny of our relatives, friends, or neighbors — than lost souls are. Is it, can it be, that we have harder hearts, or more thoughtless souls — than lost spirits have?

Brethren, brethren, how active, how eager, how untiring we should be, in testifying to sinners — in praying for sinners — in pleading with sinners — and in endeavoring in every possible way to prevent them from going to that place of torment!

Reader! How is it with you? Inquire, inquire diligently, I beseech you! Is there any, even the most remote probability of your being sent into that place of torment? Think . . .

of being tormented in flames of fire,

of being tormented without the least alleviation,

and of being so tormented forever and ever!

Think of going direct from the bright land of hope — to the dismal regions of despair!

Think of going from a land of light, of Bibles, of the means of grace — to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire! Is not the thought dreadful!

If Hell was to be the doom of your greatest enemy — would you not try to prevent it? What if it should be the doom of your brothers, your sisters, your husband, your wife, your father, your mother! Can you admit the possibility, without being determined to leave no means unused, which would be likely to prevent so fearful a calamity? But what if Hell should be the destiny of your own soul? What if it should! It will be your certain doom — if you die unconverted. Perhaps there are some now in Hell, once related to you — who are now concerned for you. Are you as much concerned for yourself?

Christian! Have you not some dear ones on the road to Hell — for whom you should be especially concerned? If so, act the Christian on their behalf, and act so at once, persevering until they are saved!

## 75 This Your Day!

---

This Your Day! When the work of Christ on earth was nearly finished, as he was riding toward Jerusalem, just as he was descending the mount of Olives — the whole city burst on his view. He foresaw all the sufferings of its hardened inhabitants — and he wept bitterly. As the tears were flowing down his cheeks — he gave vent to the deep feelings of his heart, and exclaimed, "If you, even you, had only known on this your day, what would bring you peace — but now it is hidden from your eyes!" Luke 19:42. Jerusalem had its day of mercy — and so has every sinner. Each one of us have our day, which is either improved to our salvation, or neglected to our eternal ruin. Let us dwell on this point a little.

"Your Day," that is now, the present time. It is called a day, not a year. It is a limited period, and it may be a very short one. If it extends to the whole of life — how short life sometimes is! Nor can we tell — but that ours may be a very short day. Our day is a period of light. It is the short time in which we may avoid the danger, to which we are exposed by sin; and secure the blessings presented to us by sovereign grace. While we have the light, we should walk in the light, that we may be the children of light. We should so believe the record that God has given of his Son, that we may escape eternal death, and obtain everlasting life. Our day is an important period. Indeed no period in our whole history, will be so important as the present — for the eternal future depends upon it. Eternity depends — on time. Heaven is either won or lost — on earth. Now we may secure glory, honor, immortality — even eternal life. And if we do not, we shall be punished with everlasting destruction, as neglectors of salvation, as rejectors of the grace of God. Our day is a period that is passing away. It flies from us. It glides by us. It hurries us on toward eternity. Every step taken, before salvation is secured — is a step lost. Every moment that is gone, if we have not fled to the hope set before us in the gospel — will bear witness against us, rising up in the judgment to condemn us. This is our day, and if we lose it, we not only lose time — but eternity too. O how rapidly times flies! What is our life? But a vapor, that vanishes away. O for grace to improve it, and turn it to good account! The DESIGN with which our day is given us, is that we may secure salvation. Salvation, which makes life on earth, happy; and life in Heaven, glorious beyond description. Salvation, which shuts out all evil from us; and shuts in all good with us. Salvation, in which embraces body and soul, and clothes both with glory and splendor, and fills both with health, peace, and joy! Our day is given us, to form a character — a character which we shall wear forever. We form the character in time — which we shall wear in eternity. Eternity renders permanent, what is changeable now. We should therefore seek grace to conform us to the image of Jesus, and beg the Holy Spirit to mold us into his likeness. If holiness characterizes us now — it will characterize us forever; but if sin characterizes us in time — it will characterize us in eternity. As the tree falls — so it will lie forever. It is given us to benefit others. No one should live unto himself, or for himself — but having secured his own salvation, should seek to be the means of saving others. To make others happy, and to make others holy — should be the grand object of the Christian's life. Happy is the man, who is a blessing to all around him, and whom multitudes will have reason to bless. Our day is given us to conquer our foes:

the sin that does so easily beset us,  
Satan, who lies in wait to deceive us, and  
the world that would tyrannize over us!

These enemies will overcome us — if we do not overcome them.

They will destroy us — if we do not conquer them.

Earth is our battle field.

Life is our time of warfare.

Eternity will be for triumph and rest. Our day is given us to obtain a glorious crown. For this, like Paul, we should fight. For this, as he exhorts us, we should run. A crown, a kingdom, are presented to us — to be won now, and to be possessed and enjoyed forever. In this our day:

we may secure salvation;

we may form an excellent character;

we may benefit our fellow men;

we may conquer all our foes;

we may obtain a glorious crown.

Lord, make us wise, courageous, and constant, that we may wisely improve our day!

It is our only day. The day which God, in his mercy has given us. The only opportunity that will be afforded us, to make our calling and election sure. The only period allotted us between two eternities. Eternity past, in which we have no particular interest — and eternity to come, which will be to us most glorious, or most terrible. The only day in which our choice must be made, for we choose now, what must be our portion forever. God sets before us life and death, blessing and cursing — and exhorts us to choose the former, and avoid the latter. Some choose death, in the error of their way; and some, like Mary, choose the good part, which shall not be taken away from them. On the present period — our eternal state depends. This is our day of grace — in which we may secure pardon, peace, and everlasting life. This is the day which thousands neglect, and will forever rue their folly. Who can tell the value of this day? No one, except he who has entered into all the joys of Heaven — or felt all the horrors of Hell. No one could grasp the extent of eternity, except he who experienced the honor of the saints — or witnessed the disgrace of the lost! As this is impossible, no one can even guess the value of this brief period of time, called our day.

Let us endeavor, as much as we may, to realize the value, brevity, and design, of this our day. Let us seek to improve it for our own benefit, the good of others, and the glory of God. Let those who now live unto the Lord — look to its close for rest, for our reward, and for endless enjoyment! But if we trifle with it, waste it, and neglect the great salvation; let us not forget, that it will end in torment, and everlasting contempt! O the folly, the consummate folly, of those who waste time, and lose such an opportunity as the present! Our day given to make our calling and election sure. Our day given by an infinitely gracious God, that we may have time to seek reconciliation with him, the

pardon of all sin, and a fitness to dwell with him, in the most glorious part of his vast universe. May that gracious God, who has given us our day — give us grace to take advantage of it, to improve it, and so use it, that we may bless and praise him for it, through all eternity.

Gracious and Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see its value, inspire our hearts that we may secure all its blessings, and may we so spend it now, that we may look back upon it with pleasure, from a death bed, and the judgment-seat of Christ!

Jerusalem neglected her day, and the Romans laid her low, and she has remained a trophy of God's just wrath for many generations! Thousands since then, have followed her example, and are tormented in the flames of Hell! Multitudes now, are despising the day of their visitation, and it is to be feared will rue their folly too late!

Reader! How is it with you? This is your day — and perhaps your day is far spent! Are you safe? Are you housed from the storm? Are you sheltered from the tempest? Are you safe in Christ? Is it so?

## 76 Past and Present

---

Past and Present The Scriptures often direct us, to look back to the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were dug. This is to . . . produce humility, awaken gratitude, inspire us with confidence, and call forth sympathy for others, who are still in the same condition.

We were hewn out of the natural rock — by omnipotent grace; and we were dug out of the pit of corruption — by sovereign mercy. Nor can there well be a greater contrast, than between what we are naturally — and what we are made by distinguishing grace. Paul dwells upon this at considerable length, in his letter to the Ephesians, to one brief portion of which I desire to call attention. He says, "You, who once were far off, are made near by the blood of Christ." Ephesians 2:13. Let us look at: Our Former Condition. We were afar off. Like the prodigal, we had wandered into a far country; or like the emigrant, we were landed on a foreign shore.

Here we found ourselves afar off from GOD, not as to his essence — but as to our knowledge and enjoyment of him as a Father. We knew not God. We loved not God. We held no converse with God. We neither feared to offend him, or sought to please him. To us, it was as if there was no God. We were without any knowledge of the covenant of promise. We knew not that God had covenanted to give eternal life to every believer, and had provided for his people all that was necessary to life and godliness.

We were afar off from his CHURCH, having no love to it, acquaintance or communion with it; for though we attended religious ordinances, we did not discern the spiritual nature, or lofty privileges of the church of Christ, as it stands in union with Christ, and blessed with all spiritual blessings.

We were far from HOLINESS, which is the health of the soul, being sick, mortally sick — and yet we felt it not, found it not, nor sought a remedy for it.

We were far from PEACE, nor did we know anything of that holy calm, that sweet tranquility of soul, which springs from a sense of justification and reconciliation to God.

We were without HOPE. That is, we had no settled, solid, well-founded expectation of eternal life as the gift of God, which is what Scripture calls a good hope.

We were afar off from SALVATION. Our state was a lost one. Our condition was a fearful one. There was but a step between us and everlasting burnings!

We were afar off from all that is good, and holy, and beautiful — and were depraved, polluted, and condemned!

O fearful state! O alarming condition!

We now turn to Our Present Blessedness.

We were afar off — but now we are made near. Yes, the prodigal has returned to his home, and the emigrant to his father's house.

We are now near to GOD, who is our father. He is with us always. He dwells in us. He is at peace with us. He pours down his choicest blessings upon us. Yes, we can say with David, with Jesus, "I have set the Lord always before me; he is at my right hand, therefore I shall be not moved."

We are near to JESUS, who is our Savior. He dwells in us — and we dwell in him. Faith brought us to his feet — and love keeps us there. We are within the sound of the softest whisper, and Jesus is within hearing of the softest call. He is our companion, as well as our Savior. Our constant friend, and very present help in trouble. O blessed, blessed privilege, to be near, so near to Jesus!

We are made near to the HOLY SPIRIT, who is our Comforter. Yes, he . . .

comforts us in all our tribulations,

helps all our infirmities,

teaches us the truth of God, and

leads us in the way everlasting.

We are near to the SAINTS, who are our brethren, our beloved associates, and fellow heirs of the grace of life. With them our names are enrolled in the family register. With them we share in the infinite love of our Heavenly Father's heart. With them we inherit all things.

We are made near to the ANGELS, who are all ministering spirits, sent forth to guard, benefit, and render service, to the whole household of faith.

We are near to HEAVEN too. There is but a thin partition between us and it! One step, and we pass from earth to Heaven.

O what a change, once enemies — but now the friends of God;

once condemned criminals — but now beloved children;

once afar off — but now made near by the blood of Christ!

Consider then, The MEANS by Which the Change Was Effected. "Made near by the blood of Christ" — the precious blood, "of Christ." Not circumcision, not ceremonies — but the blood of Jesus.

It was the blood of Jesus as SHED, which meritoriously effected the change, and paved the way for our honorable return to God.

It was the blood of Jesus as PREACHED, which brought us the pleasing news, pointed out the way of return to God, and drew us into it!

It was the blood of Jesus as APPLIED, which reconciled us, spoke peace to us, and impelled us to draw near unto God.

It was the blood of Jesus as TRUSTED — which gave us boldness and access to him with confidence. But for the blood of Jesus. . .

there would have been no way for us to return to God;

there would have been no good news to cheer our hearts;

there would have been no balm for our wounded consciences;

there would have been no foundation for our faith and hope.

Precious blood of Jesus — on you I rely, and through you I have boldness to draw near unto God!

Let us then review the past: What were we? Where were we? We were loathsome, criminal, and condemned. We were without God, and without hope in the world.

Let us be grateful for the present, for though once afar off, we are now made near by the blood of Christ. We are in Christ, we are near to God, we are dear to God, and therefore we are safe, honorable, wealthy, and happy.

Let us look forward with confidence and hope, for being made near to God now, we shall be near to God forever. Having reconciled us to himself by the blood of his Son — he will receive us to himself, to be with him forever.

Reader, are you afar off from God, or are you made near? If afar off — you may draw near. The blood of Jesus has cleared the road, the invitation of the gospel bids you come, and all things are ready for your acceptance, pardon, peace, and everlasting life! O come, come to God, by Jesus Christ! Come without delay! Come, before you close this book!

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
  - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**