

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS!

by James Smith

Smith's work structured around significant questions from Scripture such as 'Where are you?' and 'What shall I do to be saved?', each chapter addressing a pivotal question designed to prompt spiritual reflection and decision.

33 Chapters

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00 Important Questions!

Important Questions! by James Smith, 1858

01 Where Are You?

Where Are You?

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him: Where are you?" Genesis 3:9 This is the first question that God ever put to man. Adam had yielded to temptation. He had broken God's law. He was ashamed to look God in the face. When he heard his Maker approaching--he fled. He vainly endeavored to hide himself from God's omniscient eye. He foolishly thought to escape from God's terrible justice. He fled! But where? He tried to hide himself! But what would conceal him? Nothing! He is summoned--he must appear. He is questioned--he must reply. But what can he say? He has sinned, sinned foolishly, sinned wickedly. He cannot with any show of reason or justice, excuse himself. This is just the case of every one of Adam's descendants. We have all sinned--sinned without any necessity or reason for doing so. We have broken a law which is holy, just, and good. In addition to this, we have rejected a gospel which is gracious, merciful, and full of compassion. We have refused to accept a pardon--a pardon procured at the expense of the sacrifice of God's only-begotten Son--a pardon freely offered, and urged upon us by everything kind and winning. We have refused to be reconciled to God, though he has sent his servants as his ambassadors to us, beseeching us to be so. We turned to him our back--and not our face. We have wandered far from him; and now he comes near to us, and asks, "Where are you?"

Where, Lord! Among your enemies, afar from you by wicked works, and fearing to see your face. Where, Lord! In sin, under condemnation, and doomed to endless woe!

"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." 2 Corinthians 5:10

02 Can Anyone Hide Himself?

Can Anyone Hide Himself?

"Can anyone hide in secret places--so that I cannot see him?" declares the Lord. "Do not I fill Heaven and earth?" declares the Lord." Jeremiah 23:24

Guilt always dreads the eye of justice. The criminal always seeks concealment. From man we may hide--but who can hide himself from God! The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Adam tried to hide--but he could not. Achan tried to conceal his sin--but he could not. Multitudes of great men, and rich men, and mighty men, and men of all classes--will beg of the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of the Lamb--but all in vain! There is no darkness, nor shadow of death--where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

Reader! there is no place in God's universe, where can hide you from the face of God. You must meet him. You must stand naked before him. You must account for every sin--of thought, word, and deed, unto him. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. O think of that day, when God shall single you out from among millions, to stand alone before him, to be judged by him! O think of that day, when the history of your life shall be unrolled, and you shall be required to answer for every day, every hour, every minute of your life! What would you give for a hiding-place then? How will you feel? What will be your reflections? God's eye will pierce you through and through; and conscience, which perhaps slumbers now--will be wide awake then, and will take God's part against you on every charge. Then he will set your iniquities before his face, your secret sins in the light of his countenance. Then you will have no advocate, no friend, no way of escape--but will be speechless before his glorious throne!

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the Heavens--you are there; if I make my bed in the depths--you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea--even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you!" Psalms 139:7-12

03 What Have You Done?

What Have You Done?

"And the Lord said: What have you done?" Genesis 4:10 This question was proposed to Cain. He was offended with God, he quarreled with his brother, he gave way to passion--and then he murdered his innocent brother! God now calls him to account. He must answer for his conduct, he must give account of himself to God. Just so, must we. We may not have sinned just as Cain did--but we have sinned from the same principle, we have sinned against the same God, we have sinned with as little cause as Cain did. The Lord now asks us,

"What have you done?" Lost sinner--prepare your reply! Number up your sins. Examine into the nature of your transgressions. Look at the aggravation of your iniquities. You have sinned, not as Cain did--but in clearer light, against greater manifestations of love--even after you had read his doom, been warned of the consequences of transgressing, and were entreated to forbear. You have done the very worst thing you could do; for you have made God's justice your enemy, shut God's Heaven against you, and, astonishing to say--made it God's duty to punish you!

"What have you done?" Forfeited all title to Heaven, rendered yourself totally unfit for Heaven, and incapacitated yourself to do anything to deserve or merit Heaven. Done! you have done as many evil things as you could. Done! you could do nothing worse, for you have broken God's whole law, deserved God's infinite wrath, and exposed yourself to everlasting punishment! The crown is fallen from your head--woe be unto you, for you have sinned. Sinned! yes, and not once or twice, not in one form only--but in a thousand. Sinned! yes, and your sins are like scarlet, double dyed like crimson; and they cry aloud to God for the execution of his threatenings!

"These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face. Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue!" Psalms 50:21-22

04 What is Man?

What is Man?

"O Lord, what is man, that you take knowledge of him? Man is like a breath; his days are like a fleeting shadow." Psalms 144:3-4

"What is man?" Man as a creature is one of the finest productions of God's power, one of the most marvelous displays of God's creative wisdom. He is only a little lower than the angels. God made man in his own image. But man is not now--what he once was.

He stood erect once--he lies prostrate now.

He was holy and upright once--he is polluted and unrighteous now.

He was all God could wish him to be--he is now altogether polluted and depraved. In his state--he is a criminal.

In his nature--he is corrupt.

In his conduct--he is become altogether abominable.

His heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

His understanding is darkened.

"All have turned away,

they have together become worthless;

there is no one who does good, not even one.

Their throats are open graves;

their tongues practice deceit.

The poison of vipers is on their lips.

Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood;

ruin and misery mark their ways, and

the way of peace they do not know.

There is no fear of God before their eyes." Romans 3:12-18. This is God's own representation of man--of man left to himself--of man as he appears before the eye of the heart-searching and thought-trying God!

"What is man?" He is the lowest and most loathsome of God's intelligent creation--and yet God thinks of him, pities him, speaks to him, and has, at an infinite cost, opened a way of escape for him, from all his sins and miseries, to perfect holiness and endless joy.

"What is man?" He is the most degraded, ungrateful, and base of all creatures. He has not his equal for sin, and therefore he is most criminal in the sight of God. And yet for all this, God loves him, and has devised means that he should not be finally expelled from him.

"Even the Heavens are not pure in his eyes--how much less man, who is vile and corrupt, who drinks up evil like water!" Job 15:15-16

05 Will You Be Made Whole?

Will You Be Made Whole?

"Jesus said unto him: Will you be made whole?" John 5:6 A poor man, suffering under a painful bodily affliction, had long lain at the pool of Bethesda, hoping for a cure--but in vain. At length Jesus came where he was, and, without reference to the means to which the man had been looking, asked the question, "Will you be made whole?" He consented, and was immediately restored to health. Jesus could heal. Jesus was willing to heal. Jesus did heal--and did it instantly, gratuitously, and perfectly.

Just so, many sinners have been long attending the means of grace, and have been expecting salvation at some time or other, after long waiting; but Jesus puts the question to every one of us, "Will you be made whole?" He can save. He can save perfectly, instantly, and forever. He does not wish us to lie at the pool of ordinances and wait; but he directs us to look to him and be saved at once. He will pardon all our sins. He will justify our persons. He will purify our natures. He will give us a title to Heaven, make us fit for Heaven, and guide us by his counsel until he introduces us to Heaven.

There is no need to wait one moment. If we are willing to be made whole--Jesus is willing to make us whole, and he says, "Look unto me, and be saved." I do not require you to do anything, or suffer anything--but only "Look and live!" "He who believes shall be saved." "He who believes on me has everlasting life."

Reader! are you willing to be made whole by Jesus--to be made whole at once, without any delay? If so, Jesus is willing to make you whole; and if you believe his word, confide in his promise, and commit your soul into his hands--he will save you at once, and forever.

"How long will you be unclean?" Jeremiah 13:27

06 What Shall I Do to Be Saved?

What Shall I Do to Be Saved?

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." Acts 16:30-31.

Few questions can be more important than this. It implies . . .

that man is lost,

that he cannot save himself,

that he desires to be saved,

and that he is willing to be saved in God's way. This being the case, salvation is possible — more, salvation is certain. For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He came in our nature, to labor, suffer, and die in our stead. On this earth he did all, and he suffered all, that is necessary in order to save sinners. Justice has received all it requires, the law has obtained the whole of its demands; and now all that a sinner has to do, is to credit God's testimony, renounce all dependence on self, and rely alone on the person and finished work of Jesus.

Faith, is trusting Jesus to do all and provide all--and so save us freely, or by his grace. When we trust in Christ alone, his honor becomes engaged for us; he has undertaken our cause, and becomes responsible for our salvation. We commit our souls to him, to be . . .

cleansed in his blood,

clothed in his righteousness,

purified by his Spirit,

adorned with his graces, and

admitted into Heaven for his sake.

He becomes our Savior. He undertakes for us. His word is pledged to us, for he has said, "Every one that believes on the Son shall have everlasting life, and I will raise him up again at the last day." He cannot break his word, or fail in any one case. Every believer is safe:

for him--God's justice is satisfied;

for him--God's law has been magnified;

for him--Satan has been rendered powerless;

for him--death is abolished;

and to him--the gates of glory are set wide open!

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead--you shall be saved." Romans 10:9

07 Do You Believe on the Son of God?

Do You Believe on the Son of God?

"Jesus said unto him: Do you believe on the Son of God?" John 9:35 This question was proposed to the blind man whom the Savior restored to sight; and he was enabled to say, "Lord, I believe! And he worshiped him." Jesus is the Son of God, of the same nature with his Father, and possessed of all the divine attributes and perfections. He became man for us, and for our salvation. To believe on him, is to receive into the mind--the great facts of his incarnation, obedience to the law, suffering and death, resurrection from the grave, and ascension into Heaven, on purpose to save sinners; and, receiving these facts into the mind, to exercise confidence in him, rely alone upon him for acceptance with God, and consecrate the person and life wholly to him, for his praise and glory. Faith gives Jesus the heart, identifies the person with Christ and his interests; and so Christ and the believer become one, united together as the head and the member.

"Do you," reader, "believe on the Son of God?" Have you felt yourself entirely lost without him? Have you seen him as exactly adapted to your circumstances, and suited to meet all your needs? Have you entrusted your soul to him, and left yourself entirely in his hands? Can you say that he is all your salvation and all your desire? A faith that does not look to Christ for all, entrust Christ with all, and desire to exalt Christ in all--is not the faith of God's elect, the faith that saves the soul.

Reader! demand of your conscience a reply to this question, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" nor rest satisfied for one moment, until you can say, "Lord, I believe!" And then worship Jesus. Simple dependence on Christ insures your salvation by Christ, and your glorification with Christ.

"I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who would come into the world!" John 11:27

08 With What Shall I Come Before the Lord?

With What Shall I Come Before the Lord?

"With what shall I come before the Lord?" Micah 6:6

You wish to come before God with acceptance — to come and find a welcome. You ask, "What shall I bring?" What shall I do? Bring! — bring nothing--but come just as you are! With all your sins upon you, with all your guilt within you--come. Come in the name of Jesus. Come, and plead the blood and obedience of Jesus. Come, and confess your sins, acknowledge your desert, tell out all your fears, express all your desires — keep nothing back. Tell the Lord the worst of your case. Make no excuses. And, having honestly told the Lord the worst of your case and condition--plead for mercy. Beseech the Lord to have mercy on you for the sake of Jesus. Pray that he would honor Jesus by pardoning your sins for his sake, and by sanctifying you in his name. He has met all the claims of the law, he has satisfied all the demands of divine justice, he has removed every impediment out of the way of your acceptance; and now, God can be just, and yet justify the greatest sinner that believes in Jesus.

Come in no name, but the name of Jesus. Plead nothing before God but what Jesus has done and suffered. Expect nothing from God but through the merits of his Son. Cast yourself entirely on his mercy in Jesus. Promise nothing. Attempt nothing. Think of nothing, but of Jesus and his perfect work. In this way--acceptance is certain, pardon is sure, salvation shall be yours. Come through Jesus, and through Jesus only; for he is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes unto the Father, with acceptance--but through him. Nor can anyone, however sinful, come by him, and be rejected.

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12

09 How Can Man Be Just with God?

How Can Man Be Just with God?

"How can a man be just with God?" Job 9:2

Every man is cited to appear before God's bar. He is charged with numerous crimes. The charges are clearly proved. He cannot, he dare not deny one of them. The law says, "The soul that sins--it shall die." Justice is there to pronounce the sentence of God's law. The case is clear. The sinner's doom appears to be certain. How can he escape? How is it possible for him to be acquitted, to be justified? The Son of God appears; he takes the sinner's nature, assumes the sinner's place, and undertakes to obtain the sinner's freedom. He does what the sinner ought to have done--he suffers what the sinner deserves to suffer. His divine nature imparts an infinite merit to, and stamps an infinite dignity upon, all he does. The Father agrees to the substitution, accepts his vicarious obedience and sacrifice, and engages to place it to the account of all--and each one who believes on his name.

Jesus now, turning to the sinner, says, "I have done what you neglected to do. I have suffered what you deserved to suffer. I make over my obedience to you; I transfer my merits to your account. Believe this and be happy; trust me, and you are safe." The sinner receives the word, believes the testimony, pleads the life and death of Jesus before God--and he is justified. Christ is to him the end of the law. The blood of Jesus is an atonement for all his sins. The resurrection of Jesus is a receipt given by the great Creditor--a proof that sin is put away, that justice is satisfied, that peace with God is made, and that death is conquered. Simple faith in Jesus entitles us to the whole work of Jesus, and so man becomes just with God. Thus, we are justified by faith in Jesus, and not by the deeds of the law; and being justified by faith--we have peace with God, and we joy in God.

"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24

10 What Shall I Do?

What Shall I Do?

"Lord, what will you have me to do?" Acts 9:6 The answer to this question entirely depends on what you are.

If you are a lost sinner seeking salvation--then the less you do the better. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ--and you shall be saved."

If you have just been brought to believe on his name--then profess him in baptism, unite yourself with his people, commemorate his love at his own table, and walk blamelessly in all the commandments of the Lord.

If you are a baptized believer in union with his church, then he would have you consecrate yourself to his service.

Visit his sick ones,

relieve his poor,

circulate his truth,

teach his babes,

comfort his sorrowful ones,

strengthen his weak ones,

bear testimony for him whenever an opportunity offers,

be much with him in private,

read and meditate on his word,

aim to honor him in everything, always and everywhere,

carry your religion with you wherever you go,

carry your religion into everything,

be thorough and wholehearted for Jesus.

"Whether, therefore, you eat or drink, or whatever you do--do all to the glory of God."

Make Christ and his glory the great object and end of your life, so that you may be able to say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain!"

Let every purpose you form, every work in which you engage, and every pleasure you enjoy, say, "I am the Lord's!"

Live for the Lord,
work for the Lord,
suffer for the Lord.

Make . . .

his precepts your rule,
his honor your aim, and
to please him the end of every action of your life.

"If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord!" Romans 14:8

11 Who Is on the Lord's Side?

Who Is on the Lord's Side?

"Who is on the Lord's side?" Exodus 32:26

Either for Christ, or against him--we must be. Many try to be neutral--but they cannot be. Many profess to be on the Lord's side--who are not.

How can we decide? By what means can we ascertain? Who has our heart? With whom are our sweetest and warmest thoughts? Who has our best energies? Who can command our time, our property, our talents?

If we are on the Lord's side--then we have given him our hearts, and we often present them to him afresh.

If we are on the Lord's side--then our thoughts are with him, and our sweetest thoughts are of him.

If we are on the Lord's side--then we have consecrated ourselves and all we have to his service, praise, honor, and glory.

If we are on the Lord's side--we are against all sin.

If we are on the Lord's side--we have no friendship with the world.

If we are on the Lord's side--we are opposed to all Christ-dishonoring errors.

If we are on the Lord's side--we desire to . . .

bear his image,

breathe his spirit,

do his will and

please him well in all things.

Brethren, let us be DECIDED--so decided that there may be no possibility of people being mistaken about us--but that every one who is acquainted with us may see at once, that we are on the Lord's side. We cannot honor God, we cannot conquer Satan, we cannot crucify the flesh, we cannot make a good impression on the world--without decision. Let us therefore wear the Lord's livery--let us wait on our Master continually--let us throw our whole hearts into his cause. Let us take his friends for our friends, his foes for our foes, his cause for our cause, and make his honor and glory the chief end of our lives.

He has told us that no man can serve two opposite masters, nor can we serve both God and Mammon. Let us then be on the Lord's side always, everywhere, and in all things. So shall we be happy, so shall we be holy, and so shall we be honorable.

"He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters." Matthew 12:30

12 How long will you waver between two opinions?

How long will you waver between two opinions?

"How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God--follow him; but if Baal is God--follow him." 1 Kings 18:21

Some people seem never decided. They are always wavering. They have no determination about them. They have had convictions, they have felt impressions, they have made vows, they have at times come up almost to the deciding point; but they recede again, and sink back into their old state. They linger, like Lot, on the plain of Sodom. They look backwards, forwards, before, behind. They seem about to determine--but they eventually waver.

Such people are in great danger. Such a state is very perilous. The conscience is hardening. The Holy Spirit is being grieved. They are nearing the spot where God says, "Let him alone!" They are approaching the state in which Israel was, when God said, "So I gave them up!" Gave them up! What, God give sinners up! Yes, after they have long trifled with him, resisted the Holy Spirit, and endeavored to effect a compromise between sin and holiness, between Christ and the world--God gives them up! And when God gives a man up, all is over with him. His doom is sealed--his fate is fixed forever.

Reader! are you decided? or are you wavering? Waver no longer--but decide at once. Throw yourself into the arms of Christ — devote your energies to the work of Christ--consecrate all that you have and are to the glory of Christ; OR give yourself up without reserve to the world, to sin, and to Satan. If you cannot, if you dare not do the latter, then do the former, and do it at once. Go to the cross, and there, renouncing self, the world, and every idol--take Jesus to be your Savior and your Sovereign, your all and in all. Say, "I am yours, Jesus! I will be for you, for you alone, and for you forever. I am the Lord's!"

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!"
Revelation 3:15

13 What Do You Think of Christ?

What Do You Think of Christ?

"What do you think of Christ?" Matthew 13:42

Most people have some thoughts of Christ. They have heard him spoken of, they have read about him, and occasionally they have had their thoughts exercised about him.

Reader, no doubt you have thought of Christ. Your attention has often been directed to him--have you come to any conclusion about him? Is he necessary for you? Is he suited to you? Is he desirable in your estimation? Can you believe his word? Can you trust in his merits? Can you confide your soul to his care?

What do you think of his PERSON--is he divine as well as human--God as well as man--God and man in one Christ?

What do you think of his WORK--did he magnify the law and make it honorable--did he make a full and all-sufficient atonement for sin?

What do you think of his OFFICES--is he the only mediator between God and men--is he the prophet, God raised up, like unto Moses; is he the priest, that God appointed, after the order of Melchizedek; is he the king, that God has set on his holy hill of Zion?

What do you think of his LOVE, especially as displayed in undertaking the cause of his people--becoming poor for their sakes, dying in their stead, and ever living at God's right hand to make intercession for them?

What do you think of CHRIST? Is he worthy of your confidence and love? Is he worthy of your worship and obedience? Is he worthy to possess your heart, and wear your praises as his crown? Our thoughts of Christ betray the state of our hearts towards Christ; and our thoughts of Christ will influence our conduct towards Christ. We must think highly or meanly of him; if the former--we shall give ourselves to him; if the latter--we shall withhold ourselves from him. "What do you think of Christ?"

"We believe and are sure that you are that Christ, the Son of the living God!" John 6:69

14 Do You Truly Love Me?

Do You Truly Love Me?

"Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" John 21:16

Many things arise which throw a doubt upon our love--and our Lord may well therefore put the question, "Do you truly love me?" We cannot love Jesus--except we know him. We do not know Jesus--except we believe in him. We do not believe in Jesus, except we surrender ourselves and all we have to him. Just in proportion to our faith in Christ--will be our love to Christ: "Unto you therefore who believe--he is precious." Do you love to read of Christ, to hear of Christ, to think of Christ, to speak of Christ, to work for Christ, to commune with Christ--and do you desire if the will of God is so, cheerfully to suffer for Christ? Does Jesus appear to you as the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely one?

If Christ could only be obtained by purchase--what would you give for him?

If he could only be acquired by labor--what would you do for him?

If he could only be procured by suffering--what would them suffer for him? Do you truly love him? Is so, then . . .

you desire to please him,

you fear to offend him,

you are willing to deny yourself for him,

you will seek his interests before your own.

Love is often better proved by what we DO--than by what we SAY, or even than by what we FEEL. After the first flash of excitement is over, love settles down into a habit, and instead of inflaming us with violent emotions, inspires us with gratitude and leads us to self-denying obedience. "He who has my commandments, and keeps them--he is the one who loves me." We must judge by what a man does, rather than by what a man says--whether he loves Christ or not.

Some doubt their love to him--when no one else can; and some feel sure they love him--when others stand in doubt of them.

"For this is the love of God--that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." ? John 5:3

15 Why Did You Doubt?

Why Did You Doubt?

"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" Matthew 14:31

Simple faith takes God at his word, and expects him to do as he has said. It always gives God credit for sincerity and truthfulness. So that the simple believer is not so much troubled with doubts and fears as many others. But to many, very many, may this question be put, "Why did you doubt?"

Lost sinner! Why do you doubt the Savior's power? He has saved millions of as great sinners as you are! Why do you doubt the Savior's willingness? He never did refuse to save one who came to him, and he never will! You have his own most precious word for your encouragement, "I will never cast out."

Christian! why do you doubt your Savior's care or kindness? Can there be any justifiable cause? Not any! He cares for you . . .

as the object of his eternal love,

as the purchase of his precious blood,

as the gift of his beloved Father,

as a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. No monarch was ever so careful of the costly jewels of his crown--as Jesus is of you. No husband was ever so careful over his tenderly beloved bride--as Jesus is of you. His kindness to you is loving-kindness; as if his kindness were steeped in love, or love were clothed with kindness. No single word would express the tender love of God to you, and therefore he uses a compound word to do it.

Why do you doubt? Did your Savior ever give you any reason--has his conduct any time furnished you with an occasion? Never! Then trust him, confide in him, look to him, and always expect from him. He is faithful, who has promised. Encourage confidence in him, commit your all to him, leave your all with him--and so you will honor him. Trust in him at all times, and fear not.

"Jesus said unto them: Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Matthew 8:26

16 Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

"Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Genesis 18:14

Difficulties are for men--there can be none with God. His omnipotent power, and infinite wisdom, can never be confounded. If God has promised--he will perform. Whatever he has predicted--he will bring to pass. We may therefore pray with faith--and expect with confidence. We may trust, and not be afraid.

What is it you need? Can God do it, or give it? Has he promised it in his word? Are you sure that it will be for your good? Can God glorify himself by granting? If so, ask with confidence, and expect with courage. Look not at your weakness, at your circumstances, or at any difficulties that may present themselves; and if unbelief rises to discourage you, silence it with this--"Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Ask not: How can I conquer these subtle foes? How can I perform this difficult duty? How can I make this severe sacrifice? How can I overcome this great difficulty? Has not the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness?" Does he not work in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure? Have you not reason to believe that he will work in you all his good pleasure with power?

Fear not then--but meet every trial, face every foe, endure every privation, and enter upon every engagement, asking, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Men may be conquered, reason may be baffled, faith may be sorely tried--but "if God is for us--then who can be against us?" If God takes our part--we shall be more than a match for every foe; and if God is our helper--we shall overcome every difficulty. But God does take our part, and therefore we may be confident. The Lord answered Moses, "Is the Lord's arm too short? You will now see whether or not what I say will come true for you." Numbers 11:23

17 Should it Be According to Your Mind?

Should it Be According to Your Mind?

"Should it be according to your mind?" Job 34:33

We are prone to be fretful, to complain of the dispensations of Divine Providence, and to reflect harshly upon the Lord's dealings with us.

We want our own way.

We wish to carve for ourselves.

We would be treated as God's favorites.

We want our ease, and prosperity, and pleasure, consulted in all things. And if this does not appear to be done--if our wills are crossed, if our schemes are frustrated, if our purposes are broken off--then we stumble, think ourselves ill-used, and look for everybody to sympathize with us.

Under these circumstances, God comes to us--as we sit among our broken cisterns, surrounded by our dethroned idols--and puts this question to us: "Should it be according to your mind?" Are you wiser than God? Are you kinder than God? Are you holier than God? Are you more just than God? Are you better informed than God? May not your mind be dark, or selfish, or foolish? Should it then be according to your mind? Should you reign--or God?

Remember that God acts in the highest wisdom; His motives are grace and justice; and all His purposes are worthy of Himself. The least the Christian can do, is to submit--and to prefer God's wisdom, way, and work--to his own. Seeing God has so arranged all events, that all things must work together for the good of His people--they, at least, should daily say, "Father, may Your will be done!"

O my soul, seek grace from God, not only to submit and be resigned to the dispensations of Divine Providence--but to acquiesce in them, and be pleased with the whole of them! Your good is consulted--your best interests are secured; and soon, very soon, it will be seen that infinite wisdom and mercy, grace and goodness, have marked out every step of your road!

"Jesus replied: You do not understand what I am now doing--but someday you will." John 13:7

18 On Whom Do You Trust?

On Whom Do You Trust?

"On whom do you trust?" Isaiah 36:5

Israel's king was apparently in great danger: outside his city was a great army, led by a victorious general; within the city, were few supplies and a faint-hearted people. Yet he was hopeful. He possessed his soul in patience; he relied on his God. The poor heathen could not understand this; and therefore he tauntingly put the question, "On whom do you trust?"

Just so the believer: very often when surrounded by foes, when burdened with troubles, when in the midst of trials--he enjoys inward peace, and looks forward with a lively hope, so that those around him are ready to ask, "On whom do you trust?" Trust! his trust is in the Lord who made Heaven and earth--the Lord who has dealt so graciously with him in times past, and who has spoken to him so kindly in reference to all time to come. He trusts in the Lord, whose power is omnipotent, whose word is sure, whose wisdom cannot be frustrated, who never failed one who trusted in him. "I trust," says he, "in One whose victories are greater, whose interest in me is deep."

Sinner! on whom do you trust?

Eve trusted Satan, and fell.

Jacob trusted his sons, and suffered.

Sennacherib trusted in his army, and was conquered.

Gehazi trusted in his master's staff, and failed.

Asa trusted in his physicians, and died.

Hezekiah trusted in the God of Israel, and was victorious.

Sufferer! on whom do you trust? Is the object of your trust able to deliver you? Is he truthful--may his word be taken? Is he trustworthy, so that failure is impossible? O my soul, trust you in the Lord--trust him at all times, trust him with all your affairs, and trust him for all you need! "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding."

"O Israel, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield." Psalms 115:9

19 Who Can Be Against Us?

Who Can Be Against Us?

"If God is for us--who can be against us?" Romans 8:31 The Christian has many enemies:

sin within him,

the world around him,

death before him, and

Satan, who as a roaring lion goes about seeking whom he may devour--all are opposed to him. But sin is pardoned,

the world is overcome by Jesus,

death is stripped of its power,

and Satan is held in chains. The Christian, therefore, may ask, "If God is at peace with me, if God loves me, if God has promised never to leave me, if God has promised that as my day, so shall my strength be--then who can be against me, or, being against me, who can injure me?" as Peter asks the question, "Who is he who will harm you, if you are followers of that which is good?" With God for us--what if the universe were against us? What can creatures do to injure him who is defended by the Creator?

"Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation; there shall no evil befall you." If the Lord fights for us--our enemies must flee. If the Lord undertakes to protect us--we must be safe. Let worlds assemble to oppose us, and still we may say, "There are more with us, than with them. With them is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to fight for us. Who can be against us?" If the Lord is with us--and he is with us--he will be for us. "Through our God we shall do valiantly; for he it is that shall tread down our enemies!"

Gracious God, give me faith in your promise--in your presence; help me to believe always, and everywhere, that you are with me, that you are for me--then shall I honor you by my courage, confidence, and constancy.

"No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper" Isaiah 54:17.

20 Who Then Will Condemn Us?

Who Then Will Condemn Us?

"Who then will condemn us?" Romans 8:34 The believer, as one with Jesus, as interested in the perfect work of Jesus, as stamped with the image of Jesus, stands before God acquitted from all charge, free from all blame, and forever exempt from condemnation. His debts are all paid; his obligations are all met. He has a perfect righteousness; he is complete in Christ.

Who, then, will condemn him? Will God the FATHER? No! For he has laid all his sins on Jesus, punished all his sins in Jesus, and exacted full payment for all his sins at the hands of Jesus. He liberated the Surety from the prison, and sent forth the Substitute from the tomb, to show that he was well pleased for his righteousness' sake. Will JESUS condemn him? Never! He preferred dying for him--to condemning him. Condemn him! why, he is the purchase of his blood, the object of his highest love, and a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Will the HOLY SPIRIT condemn him? No! for he witnessed the obedience and death of Jesus as his substitute, he sprinkled the peace-speaking blood on his conscience, and testified to his acquittal at the bar of God. Will SATAN condemn him? Yes, gladly would Satan do so--but he is not admitted into court; as a proved liar, his testimony will not be received; and as cast out by the Lord of life and glory.

"Who then will condemn us? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."

O the mystery of grace! though we condemn ourselves, and see enough in our hearts and in our conduct to condemn a thousand worlds--yet we are not, cannot be condemned! Condemned? No! we are justified-- justified from all things, justified forever!

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh--but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1

21 Who Shall Separate?

Who Shall Separate?

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Romans 8:35 The love of Jesus is everlasting love. It is stronger than death. "Having loved his own which were in the world--he loves them unto the end." The love of Jesus was fixed on his people in eternity. It remains fixed all through the changes of time. It will continue fixed forever. The love of Jesus is like himself--without variableness or the shadow of a change. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever; and as Jesus is, so is his love. As vast as his eternity, and as changeless as his immutability--it can know no change. We may be reduced to poverty, we may be laid on the bed of sickness, or be cast into the gloomy dungeon, or be exposed to the cruelty of ruthless foes, or die by a shameful and painful death--but these will not separate us from the love of Christ!

Neither corruption within us, nor Satan without us, nor powerful foes around us--shall be able to separate us from his quenchless, his undying love. Once in Christ--we are in Christ forever. Once loved by Jesus--we shall be loved by him forever. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Precious Lord Jesus! you will never allow anything to separate you from your people, nor your people from you; once yours, they are yours forever! Your power will keep them, your presence will protect them, and your grace will enable them to persevere. The purchase of your blood, the temples of your Spirit, the objects of your ceaseless care--shall never perish. Thank God for safety in Christ!

"I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish! Neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28

22 What Is Truth?

What Is Truth?

"What is truth?" Pilate asked. John 18:38

Pilate asked the question--but did not wait for an answer. Our Lord had given the answer before, in the presence of his disciples, when, in his most sublime prayer, he pleaded, "Sanctify them through your truth--your word is truth." The whole truth of God is contained in the Scriptures; and all that is contained in the Scriptures is the truth of God.

If we reply to the question for the purposes of general usefulness, we would say, this is truth:

that man in his natural state is a sinner, a willful, determined, inexcusable sinner;

that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Savior, and that he is an able, willing, and certain Savior;

that salvation is alone by faith in Christ--faith which believes God's word, comes to Jesus for life, and rests on Christ alone;

that faith always produces repentance, or hearty sorrow for sin, determined opposition to sin, and carefulness in departing from sin;

that repentance leads to reformation of life, so that sin is hated, duty chosen, and a new course of life is commenced;

that good works prove a good state;

that self is dethroned;

that the law of Christ embraced, and so God and man are loved;

that salvation from first to last is of grace--God begins, carries on, and completes it;

that damnation is altogether of man, and is the fruit of sin, and the settlement of the present life's account. This is the truth--will you receive it? Knowing it, will you do it? Professing the truth--are you sanctified by it? It is folly to ask "What is truth?" unless we are prepared to receive it, believe it, and regulate our lives by it. No one need be at any loss on this subject; for all essential truth is plain, so that he who runs may read, and every one who reads should run.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father--but by me." John 14:6

23 Can Two Talk Together, Except They Be Agreed?

Can Two Talk Together, Except They Be Agreed?

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3

True religion is walking with God. In order to our walking with God--we must be reconciled to him, and so experience a change of mind. We must be converted, and change our course. We must be influenced by a holy principle, take his word as our rule, and aim at his glory as our end.

Lost sinners and God go in opposite directions. The sinner loves what God loathes, chooses what God prohibits, and prefers what God despises. If two walk together--they must be agreed; therefore God cannot walk with a Pharisee, nor with a licentious person, nor with an unbeliever.

We must come to an agreement with God on all important subjects:

as to the method of obtaining pardon;

as to the terms of acceptance with him;

as to the nature of true happiness;

as to the importance of practical holiness; and

as to what constitutes true honor.

God and sinners are not agreed; and therefore they cannot enjoy each other's company, or minister to each other's joy.

God is all right--being holy, just, and good. The sinner is all wrong--being impure, unjust, and depraved.

God therefore cannot come to agree with the sinner in his sins--but the sinner must be brought to an agreement with God. This is what the gospel aims at; to this the whole economy of redemption is directed; on this God's heart is set; therefore we meet with these wonderful words: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God."

"What concord has Christ with Belial?" 2 Corinthians 6:15

24 What Shall I Do unto You?

What Shall I Do unto You?

"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto you?" Hosea 6:4

God speaks as one in perplexity, as if he were at a loss what to do. He condescends to consult man as to his own case. He had wrought great deliverances for them, he had conferred the greatest favors upon them, he had sought to win them to himself--but all in vain, and now he asks, "What shall I do?"

Lost sinner! God has given you his word, his ordinances, his day. He has presented to you his Son, and offered you his Spirit. He has warned you solemnly, he has exhorted you earnestly, he has invited you lovingly. He has set life and death, Heaven and Hell before you--and has advised you to choose the former and escape the latter. He has spoken to you by his providences, he has alarmed your conscience, and he has supplied you with the most powerful motives to turn unto him and live. And yet you remain as you were--afar from God, averse to God, refusing to submit to God!

Now, then, hear him ask you, "What shall I do unto you?" Shall I break your proud spirit by a succession of terrible visitations? Shall I force you to Heaven against your will? Shall I do violence to your judgment, your affections, or your will? Or, shall I give you up, and henceforth leave you entirely to yourself? God speaks to you in kindness, in love, in earnest love--what would you have him do? Must he punish you? Will you lay him under the necessity--is the just God, is the insulted moral Governor--to punish you? If so, hear him clear himself: "As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; turn, turn from your evil ways--for why will you die?" If you perish now, your destruction will be entirely of yourself! You will die a spiritual suicide! You will be the author of your own damnation!

"What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isaiah 54:1-17

25 When Will You Be Wise?

When Will You Be Wise?

"You fools--when will you be wise?" Psalms 94:8 The Scripture stigmatizes the lost sinner as a fool. He may be rich, he may be learned, he may fill an honorable station in the world--but so long as he neglects the one thing needful--he is called a fool.

Wisdom consists in fixing upon a worthy end--and pursuing it in the most prudent and judicious way. A wise man . . .

thinks of his immortal soul--and seeks above everything else, its salvation,

thinks of the wrath of God--and endeavors by all means to escape it,

thinks of a crown of glory--and sets his heart upon obtaining it,

sees that glorifying God is his highest honor, and secures his greatest happiness--and therefore he makes that the grand end of his life. But the multitude, alas! the multitude overlook, or despise, or treat these things with contempt! They live . . .

as if self-gratification were the end of their creation,

as if earth were their eternal dwelling-place, and

as if glorifying God were no business of theirs!

Looking at men in general, one would be ready to conclude, if we were to judge by their conduct . . .

that they had no souls to be saved or lost,

that there was no Hell to escape,

that there was no Heaven to obtain,

that there was no crown of glory to be won,

that there was no crown of shame to be avoided.

Surely the Scriptures are right in designating such men fools--for fools, the greatest fools, they must be! Should the eye of a worldly man or woman light upon this page--God asks you the question, "When will you be wise?" When will you begin to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness? When will you come to Jesus, and be saved from wrath by Him? When will you begin to lay up for yourself treasure in Heaven? When will you prepare for death, judgment, and eternity?

"If only they were wise and would understand this, and discern what their end will be!"
Deuteronomy 32:29

26 How Long Will You Love Vanity?

How Long Will You Love Vanity?

"How long will you love vanity?" Psalms 4:2

Vanity represents the light, changeable, carnal, and fading things of time. Upon these things, the natural heart is set; around them, the unsanctified affections gather. What a vanity it is to prefer . . .

human friendship--to divine friendship,
earthly riches--to Heavenly riches,
carnal honors--to spiritual honors, and
the pleasures of a day--to the joys of eternity!

Vanity appears in the intoxicating cup, the mirthful and costly attire, and trifling with God. Surely every man walks in a vain show, like an actor on the stage, and displays the most consummate folly.

Reader! are you in love with vanity? Do you love that which leads from God, keeps him out of the thoughts, and binds you down to earth? This is vanity! How long will you love it? You have been doing so for years, though warned, convinced, and having promised to reform. You are doing so now, though . . .

mortality is at work within you,
death is very near you,
Hell is open before you, and
eternity is within a step of you!

You love vanity, when you may . . .

obtain divine mercy,
enjoy peace with God,
receive sanctifying grace, and
walk in the way to Heaven.

"How long will you love vanity?" Until . . .

some sudden stroke takes you away;
or some affliction puts you beyond the reach of mercy;
or God's Spirit ceases to strive with you;

or Satan fills your heart as he did the heart of Judas;

or God laughs at your calamity?

How long? God your Creator would ask you. "Why will you die?" Will you carefully consider this question, and give the Lord an answer? Will you tell him why you prefer . . .

eternal death--to eternal life,

sin--to holiness, and

Satan--to Himself?

"They who observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy!" Jonah 2:8

27 What Is Your Life?

What Is Your Life?

"For what is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes!" James 4:14
Life is but a vapor--which is soon gone!

It is but a tale--which is soon told!

It is like the swift ship--it soon sails by! And yet, how much depends on life, on one life! Life is the bud of being--the commencement of an endless existence--the introduction to eternity. In life we sow--after death we reap. In life we plant--after death we gather the fruits.

Now, in this life--we must be born again.

Now, in this life--our sins must be pardoned.

Now, in this life--our natures must be sanctified and made fit for Heaven.

During life, mercy reigns. During life, the gospel invites us to come to Jesus and be saved. During life, God waits to be gracious, and is willing to show mercy unto us. But, as life is so brief and so uncertain, and as eternity is so solemn, and may be so near--it behooves us to seize the present moment, and at once make our calling and election sure.

If on any point we should seek certainty, and be determined never to rest satisfied without it--it should be on this: the salvation of the soul. We ought not to eat with pleasure, or sleep with comfort--unless we first know that we are saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation.

If the thread of life should suddenly break, if the lamp of life should be unexpectedly extinguished, and if our souls are not saved--how fearful would be the consequences! Let us then make sure work for eternity, and give all diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. Certainty may be obtained. Pardon may be enjoyed. The witness of the Spirit may be acquired. You may be sealed unto the day of redemption. So trifle not, delay not--but at once seek, and seek until you obtain, the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

"How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble! We blossom like a flower and then wither. Like a passing shadow, we quickly disappear!" Job 14:1-2

28 What Shall it Profit?

What Shall it Profit?

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36

Every man possesses an immortal soul;

that soul is of more worth than a world;

that soul is in danger of being lost;

once lost, it is lost forever.

Therefore man's first and principal business should be to secure the salvation of his own soul. Yet, men set their minds on business, or speculations, or something or other, by which they hope to get wealth--and treat the salvation of the soul as if it were a secondary, yes, a very unimportant matter! To such, our Lord puts this most important question: Suppose you could gain the world, and call every inch of land and all the treasures of the ocean your own--but your soul is lost, and you are doomed to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire! What good would the world do for you--when banished from God, when shut out of Heaven, when shut up in Hell, among devils and damned souls?

You could not purchase one moment's ease,

you could not obtain one drop of water,

you could not buy one ray of hope.

You lost Heaven--while gaining earth.

You earned Hell--while toiling to purchase the world.

What profit have you now?

Profit!--the word is a mockery. What a loss have you sustained! What an incomparable loss! You have lost . . .

the approbation of God,

the joys of Heaven,

the songs of angels,

the company of the saints,

the presence of Jesus,

and an eternity of joy!

O what folly! what dreadful folly!

Reader! Are you guilty of it? Is your soul safe? Is it in Christ? Is it holy? Are your sins pardoned? Rest not! Rest not until your soul is safe, and safe forever! Behold, now is the accepted time! Now you may secure a saving interest in Christ, the favor of God, and a place among the Lord's holy and happy people. O delay not!

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!"
Romans 6:23

29 Who Is Able to Stand?

Who Is Able to Stand?

"Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" 1 Samuel 6:20 God is essentially, infinitely, and eternally holy; and his holiness influences him, and appears in all that he does. His holy eye observes the least violation of his law;

his holy heart loathes all impurity;

his holy law condemns every transgression;

his holy arm will punish every obstinate offender; and

his holy covenant saves myriads of immortal beings from their sins. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. His holiness makes him a consuming fire to sinners, and produces the question, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" Not the formal professor,

not the presumptuous pretender,

not the proud legalist,

not the unsanctified church member

--these will not be able to stand. But only those who now . . .

fall at his feet in penitence,

flee to Jesus as the refuge for the guilty,

trust in his glorious atonement for peace,

rely on his precious promises for support,

plead at his throne of grace for daily supplies,

are clothed in his righteousness,

are united to his person, and

who lovingly look for his appearing.

Lost sinner! you must appear before this holy Lord God--how will you be able to stand?

Reader! whoever you are, examine into your state; be wise in time, nor rest without good ground to conclude that you will be able to stand before this holy God.

Believer! see to it, that your evidences are bright, that your preparation is complete, and that you have no just cause for fear. Set the foot on the Rock of Ages, obtain grace to sanctify your soul, and trust in Jesus alone--so shall you be able to stand.

O my soul, see to it, that in that great and terrible day, the day of wrath, you will be safe. Ponder the question, "The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

"You alone are to be feared. Who can stand before you when you are angry?"Psalms 66:7

30 How Shall We Escape?

How Shall We Escape?

"How shall we escape--if we neglect such a great salvation?" Hebrews 2:3

God has provided a great and glorious salvation--a salvation for sinners who are lost, ruined, and undone. This salvation is revealed in the everlasting gospel, and is to be received and enjoyed by simple faith. It is a salvation from sin--in its guilt, power, and consequences. It is a salvation from Hell--with all its horrors. It is a salvation which is perfected in Heaven amidst the glories of the beatified. It was devised by infinite wisdom in the covenant of peace; it was procured by the life, labors, and death of Jesus; and it is now offered to sinners without money and without price. Whoever will, may come and receive this glorious salvation. But many neglect it. They trifle with God's mercy, let the most glorious opportunity slip--and then in intense agony have to exclaim, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended--and we are not saved!" To prevent this, the apostle proposes the question, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" If we neglect to secure a saving interest in it now--how shall we escape the terrible storm of wrath which shall fall on the ungodly? How shall we endure the punishment due to our transgressions? A slighted Savior, a neglected salvation, a lost Heaven--will embitter the pains of Hell, beyond the powers of calculation! That we might have been saved, and would not; that we were offered salvation, and refused it--will fill us with the bitterest regrets and most tremendous agony. O my soul, if found among those who neglect Jesus, slight the gospel invitation, and treat God with contempt--what will you do? Are you safe? Safe now, and safe forever? Remember you can only perish by your own act and deed. Hell is but the just wages of sin.

"Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong--in the days that I shall deal with you!"
Ezekiel 22:14

31 Where Is Your Brother?

Where Is Your Brother?

"Where is Abel your brother?" Genesis 4:9

God has made of one blood, all the nations which dwell on the face of the earth. The human race is but one large family; therefore we ought to feel an interest in each other. Nature requires this, and the Scriptures inculcate it. The question once put to Cain may now be put to us: "Where is Abel your brother?"

We all have . . .

one Creator, God;

one nature, which is depraved;

one residence, the world;

one source of supply, providence;

one business, to glorify God;

one law to rule us,

one grand blessing to secure, salvation.

One great principle ought to influence us, even love; for each one of us should love his neighbor as himself. "Where is your brother?" Is he in Christ--or Satan? Is he in the world--or the Church? Is he in danger--or safety? Is he in trouble--or prosperity? Is he traveling to Heaven--or Hell? Have you acted a brother's part towards him? Have you kept a concerned eye on him? Have you sympathized with him? Have you sent the gospel to him? Have you tried to prevent his ruin?

"Where is your brother?" God inquires respecting our brother, whether he is near or afar off. He expects us to seek our brother's welfare. He will put the question again, perhaps, when we least expect it. We ought to put it to ourselves, and be prepared to answer it. Let us then look on all mankind as our brethren; let us, as we have opportunity, do good to all men; and let us become all things to all men, that we may by all means save some. Let us seek the present and everlasting welfare of all about us. Let us set our hearts upon saving souls. Let us keep this constantly before our eye, always and everywhere. Let us look upon every man, however poor or depraved--as our brother, and seek to save his soul.

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Php 2:4

32 Will You Also Go Away?

Will You Also Go Away?

"Then said Jesus unto the twelve: Will you also go away?" John 6:67

Many left Jesus in the days of his flesh. They misunderstood his doctrine; consequently their expectations were disappointed, and they left him and went their way. Many leave Christ now; some for business, some for gold, and some for carnal pleasure. How many dead branches fall off! How many depart to walk no more with him! To us, also, Jesus puts the question, "Will you also go away?"

Go from Jesus! To whom should we go? or where should we go? He alone has what we need. He alone can do what we need. What can give us peace, but his blood? What can inspire us with hope, but the word of his grace? What can sustain us, but his strength? And what can give us the victory, but his love? O Jesus! we are absolutely dependent on you. Everything we need is in you. No one can satisfy the cravings of our immortal minds, but yourself.

Go from you! leave you! Heaven forbid it! Did you not lay down your life for us? Did you not call us by your grace? Have you not led us and fed us all our lives long? Is not all our salvation in you? Do not all our supplies come from you? Are we not expecting glory, honor, and immortality, even eternal life, through you?

Go from you! That would be certain death, black despair, everlasting ruin!

Go from you! perish the thought, preserve us from the temptation--keep, O keep us from this sin. O keep us as the apple of the eye; keep us by your mighty power through faith unto salvation.

Go from Jesus! rather let us get nearer to him and cleave to him with full purpose of heart. Let us . . .

walk with him in love,

labor for him with energy,

suffer for him with patience, and

look forward to an everlasting residence with him with joy!

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life!" John 6:68

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