

# THE PLEADING SAVIOR

by James Smith

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*Smith's exposition of Jesus' intercessory prayer exploring His love, care, and intercession for believers, presenting Jesus opening His heart to the Father with divine love and human tenderness as He pleads for His people.*

28 Chapters

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## **00 The Pleading Savior; or,**

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The Pleading Savior; or,

The Wondrous Love of Christ as Displayed in His Intercessory Prayer James Smith, 1861

## 00p PREFACE

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### PREFACE

The words of Jesus are precious words, whether he speaks to his people of his Father — or speaks to his Father for them. In his Word . . .

he unfolds his will,

he reveals his love, and

he displays his sympathy. But in his prayer for them, as their Intercessor, just before he offered up himself as their sacrifice — he appears to open his whole heart to them. About this prayer, there appears a peculiar sanctity. Its tenderness is most touching. Its depths are profound. Its pathos is exquisite.

It breathes of heaven.

It is full of love — infinite, eternal, fraternal love. It is the love of one who is God — and therefore loves with all the strength of the divine nature; it is the love of one who is human — and therefore loves with all the tenderness of pure and holy humanity. O Jesus, your love is astonishing — it passes knowledge! To lead the mind of the devout believer into a knowledge of the mind of Jesus, and into the enjoyment of his love — is the DESIGN of this work. It is an attempt to enter a little into the meaning of Jesus, in the prayer he offered to his Father before he suffered, in order that we may have fellowship with him. In these pages, there is no attempt to be profound, or to pry into the secrets of God — but a simple endeavor to comprehend something of the Savior's meaning, in order that we may understand and enjoy more of his love. The subject has been studied prayerfully, and in order to profit — it must be read prayerfully.

Long discourses are condensed into short portions, that those who have little time, may have no just cause to complain of their length, or lay aside the work because time is scarce. The simplest style has been adopted, that the exhausted mind may not be taxed, or the poor of the Lord's family be unable to understand. May the Lord bless these pages to . . .

the Savior's honor,

the believer's comfort,

the seeker's encouragement,

and the lost sinner's conversion. And now, O most gracious God — to you do I dedicate this feeble work. Give your sanction to it; send your Holy Spirit to accompany the reading of it; and use, O use it . . .

to exalt your beloved Son,

to spread abroad the savor of his knowledge,

and to save souls from death,  
for your mercy's sake. Amen.

James Smith

## 01 The Hour Come

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The Hour Come Our great and glorious Redeemer having, as the man of sorrows, the servant of the Father, and the representative of his people — finished his work of teaching, and his active labors for his people; and being about to endure the curse, sustain the punishment of their sins, and make an infinite atonement for them — presented himself before them as the great Intercessor. In his address to his Father in their hearing, he . . .

opened his loving heart,

disclosed the depth of his sympathy, and

gave utterance to his unbounded desires for their welfare.

How sublime is his language!

How exquisitely tender is his pathos!

How profound are his thoughts! May the Lord, the Holy Spirit, lead us to meditate on his wondrous prayer to our own profit, and his glory: "These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you." (John 17:1). Observe —

What Jesus DID."He lifted up his eyes to heaven." This was expressive of desire, confidence, expectation, and reverence. Of desire — for as when we speak to anyone, and desire a reply, we naturally turn to that one, and look him in the face; so Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven — the place of his Father's throne, the home of his Father's glory, where he had lain in his Father's bosom from all eternity. The deep and intense desire of his soul, directed his eye upwards. Of expectation — for he expected a reply; and we, when we expect a reply, look toward the party we address. Hence David says, "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto you — and will look up." When we desire anything of God, which he has promised in his Word, and which we believe will be for our good and his glory — we should look up, and expect to receive it! Of confidence — he had the strongest confidence in his Father, and therefore he lifted up his eyes, and looked for sympathy and a reply. So should we have confidence in God. He loves to be trusted. He has given us many exceedingly great and precious promises, to which he has added innumerable proofs of his faithfulness, to induce us to exercise confidence in him. Let us, therefore, ask in faith — and believe that our God will give us the desires of our hearts. Of reverence — Jesus is the model worshiper. In him we see strong desire, earnest expectation, unquestioning confidence, and profound reverence. He was all solemnity — yet there was no dread, no terror, no slavish fear. How different to the unhallowed freedom of some professors! How different to our own approaches to God at times! He lifts up his eyes to Heaven, and with a soul burning with zeal for his Father's glory, he poured out his whole soul — for himself, for his disciples then present with him, and for his people down to the very end of time. Let us notice —

What Jesus SAID. He said, "Father," or My Father. He came to God as a son — as a son conscious of his father's love — as a son who had been doing, and was now about to suffer, his father's will. He realized his relation to God, which was peculiar — for he was the Son of God as none other ever was, or ever will be. Angels are the sons of God by creation, and we are the sons of God by adoption and regeneration; but he was the only-begotten of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

How the Son was begotten of the Father — I know not — and do not ask to know. What precise idea is to be attached to the word begotten, when applied to the co-equal and co-eternal Son of God, I know not — do not expect to know. That it implies sameness of nature, is clear. That it does not interfere with the independence of the Son, I believe. Each of the divine persons possesses the whole Godhead — each is equally, eternally, and essentially God; therefore equally the object of trust, reverence, and religious worship. The Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Father; and yet the Son is as really, truly, and eternally God, as the Father.

Thus he stands before his Father clothed in flesh, one with his people, acting for his people. And though clothed in flesh — he is the Son of God — one with God, and acting for God. But I would rather stand and adore — than try to understand or set forth so great a mystery; for the mystery of godliness is confessedly great: "God was manifest in the flesh." His relation to the Father, while it is peculiar — is also perpetual. He will always be the Son, the Son of God. To him the Father said, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever! A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom." The Son of God is both divine and human; and as such, "he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, Father, the hour is come!" — that is,

the hour fixed upon in the councils of eternity, and decreed before time began;

the hour predicted by the inspired prophets;

the hour anticipated and expected by patriarchs, and holy men;

the hour on which so much depended, as to Heaven and earth.

It was the hour when Jesus was to . . .

drink the cup of woe,

conquer the foes of his Church,

meet the claims of divine justice, and

glorify God in the highest possible degree!

"Father, the hour is come — glorify your Son." This included . . .

sustaining him under all he had to suffer,

delivering him out of the hands of all his foes,

raising him from the dead by his glorious power,

and enthroning him at his own right hand!

All this the Father did. "Glorify your Son — that your Son also may glorify you." Upon this, his heart was set. For this, he came into the world; and for this, he was prepared to suffer and to die!

He wished to glorify his Father in his government — reconciling all the claims of that government in the salvation of his people.

He would glorify his Father's character — harmonizing all his perfections; so that he might appear the just God, while he was the Savior.

He would also glorify his Father in his purposes — by removing every obstacle out of the way of their accomplishment, and securing their complete and glorious fulfillment.

Precious Savior! The glory of your Father lay near your heart; may your glory ever lie near to mine! Oh, for grace — that I may glorify Jesus, in body, soul, and spirit!

Here we see the Mediator standing between the two parties — his Father and his people — pleading with the one, and preaching to the other. Blessed be his name, he stands between them still; for we have one God, and one Mediator between God and man — the man Christ Jesus!

He acts in character as a Son. Of old the Lord proposed the question to Israel, "If I am a Father — where is my honor?" But there is no room to ask the question here; for the perfect Son seeks above all things to honor his beloved Father — even when he was about to hide his face from him. He looks up, his eyes beaming with love, and his heart filled with reverence — just when he heard his Father saying, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, says the Lord Almighty! Smite the Shepherd!" — just when "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief."

Oh, what filial submission!

More, what resignation!

More, what acquiescence in the Father's will!

More still, what preferring the Father's will to his own, though it cost him an agony and bloody sweat — a cruel, shameful, and lingering death!

He looks beyond his sufferings — to glory, and for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame.

He observes ORDER:

first he preaches to his disciples,

then he pleads with his Father for them,

and then he suffers in their stead.

He teaches us to meet the hour of affliction, or suffering, or death — with patience, and with hope. His hour — that tremendous hour of suffering, is past; our hour is yet to come. Oh, may we meet it with fortitude and courage! Oh, may we be enabled, by the gracious teaching and enabling of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus did — to lift up our eyes to Heaven, full of ardent desire, well-founded expectation, scriptural confidence, and holy reverence, and say, "Father, the hour is come; honor

your child by sustaining and delivering him — that he may honor you, by testifying for you, and preferring your will in all things to his own!"

Jesus was sustained, by keeping one object only in view — and that was his Father's glory; which glory, he knew, was bound up with the salvation of his people. On that one object — may our minds be set; and to promote that — may all our desires, prayers, efforts, and sufferings tend. Oh, to glorify God all through life's weary pilgrimage!

## 02 The Acknowledgment

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The Acknowledgment Our great Intercessor, with a full consciousness of his acceptance, founded on the perfection of his work, and his near and dear relation to his Father — stands before him to plead with him. What a sight for angels and glorified saints! See the Son of God, just about to suffer for sinners — pleading to be sustained, delivered, raised from the dead, and placed at the Father's right hand in glory! "He lifted up his eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you: as you have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him" (John 17:1-2).

God is glorified in the gift of eternal life.

WHAT is eternal life? It is:

Life suited to man's highest nature and desires. A spiritual, glorious, and divine life.

Life in God's favor.

Life in God's presence.

Life in God's image.

Life as much like the life of God as it is possible for a creature to live. A life answerable to God's greatness and grace — having the stamp of both upon it. The gift of God's great love. The expression of God's infinite delight. The manifestation of God's greatest, richest grace.

It is life in the highest sense of it — which includes . . .

regeneration, in which we receive a spiritual, a divine nature;

justification, by which we are declared guiltless, and are put in possession of a most magnificent righteousness;

sanctification, by which we are conformed to Jesus;

preservation, by which we are kept from all real evils, and in the midst of all dangers; and

glorification, so that we shall stand without fault before the throne of God, and be filled with joy unspeakable in his presence forever!

HOW is this life conferred? It was given to Christ — to Christ for us. Hence it is called "grace given unto us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." It is given by Christ — by Christ to us. So that it is the Father's gift, coming to us through the hands of his beloved Son.

It is a GIFT, freely bestowed on the vile and unworthy. It is given cheerfully by our Father and his beloved Son; and it is bestowed upon us consistently with the claims of justice, and the righteous government of God.

Jesus has received universal authority — in order to confer eternal life. He has power over all flesh; more, he has now all power in Heaven and in earth:

all power to legislate, or make laws, so that he gives laws to all creation;

all power to govern according to his laws, so that he rules all worlds;

all power to judge every one by his laws, as will appear at the last day;

all power to execute his laws, rewarding obedience and punishing sin. This power is given to him in the character of Mediator, by his Father; so that as Mediator he is sovereign — and can do according to his will and good pleasure in all worlds, and with all creatures. But when the Father gave this power to his Son, it was with a special design, with a special reference to his people — that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. Therefore —

Eternal life is to be conferred on a special people. How he dwells upon the gift of his people to him in this prayer! Again and again he repeats the fact, the pleasing fact — that his Father gave him his people!

They were given unto him as a CHARGE to keep — and he undertook to keep them safely, and forever.

They were given to him as a REWARD for his work — and he prizes them as the jewels of his crown.

They were given to him — to be his BRIDE and special companion, to possess and enjoy forever. As a charge — they are his care;

as a reward — they are his honor;

and as a bride — they are his delight! As they were given him before the world began . . .

they must have been known — and they were, and therefore chosen in him;

they must have been valued — and they were, as the objects of God's highest love;

they must have been appointed to eternal life — and they were predestined to the adoption of sons;

they must have been received — and they were, for Jesus received them at his Father's hands, and their names were all written in the Lamb's book of life, before the foundation of the world. As they were given him to receive eternal life . . .

he will search and seek them all out;

he will quicken them from a death in sin — to a life of righteousness;

and he will preserve all and each of them unto his eternal kingdom and glory!

See how Jesus keeps covenant transactions in view. He knew all that had taken place in the eternal counsels — all that had been arranged and settled in the covenant of grace, in reference to his beloved people. He never for one moment lost sight of the decrees, purposes, and engagements of eternity — all were present, and always present to his view.

How faithful he is to his trust! Having undertaken it — he will discharge it. Having begun — he will go through. Having signed the deed — he will carry it out. Cost him what it may of humiliation, sorrow, sufferings, shame, or pain — he will certainly do as he engaged.

How powerfully he reasons in prayer! From covenant transactions, from favors conferred — he pleads for the help, assistance, and result that he so much desires.

Thus he teaches us — especially does he teach us to keep the glory of God constantly in view — in all that we do, and in all that we suffer. This is God's highest end in all his purposes, plans, and works; this was the Savior's object in all he said, did, or suffered; and this should be our object too — always and in everything. We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and therefore we should glorify God in our bodies, souls, and spirits, which are God's. Whether therefore we eat or drink, or whatever we do — let us do all to the glory of God — though Jesus Christ our Lord.

Precious Lord Jesus! as you have power over all flesh, exert your power in me, to subdue my corruptions, purify my affections, and control my will. And as it is yours to give eternal life, to all who are given you by your Father — give me life eternal.

Give me power over myself, enable me to consult your will, and aim at your glory in all things!

Give me a satisfactory evidence of my regeneration, the sweet enjoyment of my justification before God, and preserve me unto your eternal kingdom and glory. Bring me to perceive your sovereignty, to submit to your authority, to acquiesce in your will, and to walk by your Word. May I ever . . .

keep the transactions of the covenant of grace in view for my comfort;

be faithful to my profession as your disciple; and

evermore aim to live simply to your glory and praise.

Holy Spirit, as Jesus was led by you to glorify his heavenly Father always and in all things — so lead me to glorify him evermore. And let me, as the effect of thy teaching and operations — to . . .

live by the faith in the Son of God,

copy the example of the Son of God, and

spread his fame to the utmost of my power!

## 03 Life Eternal

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### Life Eternal

Eternal life is God's best gift to sinners condemned to eternal death! In giving this — he consulted the needs and desires of our nature, and displayed the wondrous riches of his grace! For the bestowment of this gift, he . . .

provided before time,

promised it to us in his beloved Son,

and then sent him to confer it upon us. The knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus — is the beginning, the pledge, and the way to the enjoyment of eternal life in its best and highest sense. Therefore he shines into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus; makes it the medium of communicating unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness; and bids us not to glory in our wisdom, wealth, or fame — but to glory in our knowledge of himself. This also led our Lord to say, "And this is life eternal — that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3) The OBJECTS to be known. "The Father as God, the one only living and true God; not to the exclusion of the Son, who is called "the true God, and eternal life," but excluding all false gods — all the idols of the nations. The Father maintains the rights, the dignity, and glory of the eternal throne. The Father is, and always has been, invisible. "No man has seen God at any time." But he has revealed himself in Jesus, reconciling sinners to himself in Jesus. In the economy of redemption . . .

the Father chooses his people,

the Son redeems them, and

the Holy Spirit applies redemption to them. From the Father, all proceeds,

through the Son of God, all flows, and

by the Spirit of God, all is revealed and brought home. But the Father is to be known as a Father, in his paternal character. In which character he . . .

loves his people infinitely and eternally,

reconciles them to himself honorably, and

wisely secures at once, his own glory and their salvation. But Jesus is to be known too as the Sent One — sent by his Father as his Apostle and Ambassador, to be our Mediator and Savior.

Here is Jesus' antiquity: he was — before he engaged in the covenant to come. He was in the beginning with God, and he was God. His goings forth were of old, even from everlasting.

Here is Jesus' incarnation: the Word was made flesh. God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. He came into our world in our nature, to work out and secure our salvation.

Here is Jesus' office: he was God's ambassador, sent to speak of him, to negotiate for him, and to maintain the honor and dignity of his government.

Here is Jesus' authority: the Father commissioned him. He came in his Father's name. The Father, therefore, must be known — through the Son who reveals him. It is life eternal to know the Father in his Godhead, love, and grace; and to know the Son as sent by him to be the Savior, Mediator, and Friend of men. The NATURE of the knowledge intended. Not speculative or theoretical — but experimental and practical. Not merely an intellectual acquaintance with the doctrine — but a heart-affecting knowledge of the Father and the Son. To know, not merely by hearing or reading — but by personal dealings with the Father and the Son.

Christ being glorified — sends his Word and Spirit: the Word contains the representation, and the Spirit comes to give us a vivid, realizing conception of it. The Spirit, by the Word — teaches us to know the Father and the Son. The knowledge we acquire includes . . .

credit — we believe the revelation;

confidence — we trust in God as made known;

affection — we love God as he is revealed to us;

reverence — we are profoundly affected with a sense of his greatness and goodness;

worship — we adore and praise, we pray and plead with our God and Father;

obedience — we do his will, and do it from the heart;

acknowledgment — we confess both the Father and the Son. The true knowledge of God always . . .

consecrates the heart to God, and

devotes the life to the service of God. In the knowledge of God we find . . .

peace and joy,

pleasure and satisfaction,

holiness and devotion.

If our knowledge of God were perfect — our happiness would be complete. Knowing God,

we approach him through Jesus;

we hold sweet and hallowed communion with him;

we receive light and power from him, and

become gradually and increasingly conformed to him. In the unveiled face of the Son — we behold the glory of the Father, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Here we see Godloving — and as the effect of his love, sending his Son into the world, that we may live through him. "Herein is love, not that we loved God — but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins."

Here we see the Son of Godstooping — for being in the form of God, and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God — he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

What a wondrous stoop!

What profound humility!

What surprising grace!

Here we see truthflowing — flowing from the heart as well as from the lips of Him who was full of grace and truth. The truth that flows from Jesus comes from God; and it is designed to lead us back to God; which if it does — it sanctities us, and stamps the image of God upon us.

Here we see manrising — rising . . .

from death to life,

from degradation to glory,

from the dunghill to the eternal throne. To know God — what a privilege! To possess and enjoy eternal life through the knowledge of God — what a blessing! To know God, so as to come into fellowship with God, and to enjoy communion with the Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Spirit — what dignity is this!

Here we see Heavenopening — for what is Heaven, but to . . .

know God,

enjoy God,

be with God,

be like God?

What more than this, will Heaven be? For the knowledge of God in perfection, and the enjoyment of God without interruption — will exclude all sin, all care, all anxiety, and all sorrow; and will fill us with knowledge, joy, and purity!

O Savior, how much we owe you!

O Holy Spirit, increase our knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent!

O Father of mercies, come unto us, manifest yourself, and make your abode with us!

Reader! Do you have this knowledge? Do you know God as the only true God — and worship, love, and obey him? Do you know Jesus as the Sent One, sent to save sinners, just such sinners as you are? And do you trust your soul in his hands, that he may cleanse, adorn, and perfect it,

presenting it at last faultless before the glorious presence of his Father, with exceeding joy? This is life eternal — and without it we are in a state of death!

## 04 The Work Finished

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The Work Finished The Lord Jesus, our great High Priest and Intercessor, not only prays to his Father — but he pleads with him. He uses arguments, he assigns reasons why his requests should be granted. If he asks the Father to glorify him — he pleads that he may glorify the Father; that he has already received power over all flesh, that he may bestow eternal life; and adds, "I have glorified you on the earth; I have finished the work which you gave me to do" (John 17:4). Precious Redeemer! your Father's glory was dear to your heart; your Father's honor was safe in your hands!

WHAT Had Jesus Done? He had glorified his Father. This he did as a son, a servant, and a believer. As a son, he honored his Father, by the surrender of his will, the exercise of his affections, and the preferring his honor in all things to his own. As a servant, he glorified his God, by constant, cheerful, self-denying obedience to his will at all times. As a believer, he glorified his Lord, by receiving his Word, trusting his promise, and placing implicit confidence in his faithfulness.

He was the first of sons, the first of servants, and the first of believers. He takes the lead of all, and in all things he has the preeminence.

He glorified his Father . . .

by manifesting him — giving a clear, correct, and suitable revelation of his nature, will, and works;

by bringing the world to a crisis, judging it, and passing sentence upon it;

by conquering and casting out Satan; and

by securing the complete redemption of his people.

He glorified the Father . . .

in his teaching — when he expounded the law and preached the gospel;

in his miracles — displaying at once his power and his mercy;

in his sufferings — paying the penalty of sin, doing honor to the law, and yielding himself up without hesitation to the stroke of divine justice.

He glorified his Father . . .

by his self-renunciation, not seeking his own glory;

by his constant reference to his Father's will and decree;

by presenting his Father's likeness to the world;

by asserting his Father's claims in the world;

by obeying his Father's law, making it his rule in all things;

by meeting all the demands that could be made upon him — by the law and justice of God.

Yes, gracious Savior, you did glorify your Father, and may it be my honor and delight to glorify you! WHERE Did Jesus Glorify His Father? "On the earth." It were little to do so in Heaven, where . . .

all are happy,

all are holy, and

all are aiming at the same end. But Jesus glorified him on earth . . .

where God had been most dishonored, and was dishonored still;

where he himself was despised and rejected, and was treated with contempt and scorn;

where it was most difficult to do so, because all and everything was opposed to it;

where Satan reigned, and at the time possessed not only the souls — but the very bodies of men.

God had never been so glorified by anyone, or in any part of his universe before. He was glorified by his own Son, his own Son impersonating and representing his people; his own Son, impersonating and representing his people in their lowest condition — offering himself a living sacrifice, and consulting his Father's honor . . .

in every word he spoke,

in every work he wrought,

in every pleasure he enjoyed,

in every pain he suffered.

Never was self-annihilation so carried out before. Never did one so live for another before. Besides which, being divine as well as human — he presented not only a living — but a divine sacrifice, as his whole person was subjected to the Father's will.

Blessed Jesus, one seems to love you for this, with a special love; and we will praise you for this throughout eternity. We had dishonored your Father upon earth — and to earth you came in order that you might glorify him on this polluted, this cursed soil.

How Had Jesus Glorified His Father? By finishing the work which had been given him to do. He had undertaken a work upon which no one else would venture — a work which required . . .

infinite wisdom,

infinite condescension,

and infinite merit.

He was to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. He was to do all and suffer all that was necessary to satisfy divine justice, to expiate and put away

sin, so that God and man may be reconciled, and live together in peace, love, and holiness.

He was to conquer Satan, overcome the world, and open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers. This work he undertook to perform in the everlasting covenant; and to accomplish this work he came into the world, and was made under the law. The work was now as good as done. His active obedience was complete, and he was prepared to surrender himself passively to suffer all that he had engaged to undergo.

He had finished his work . . .

accurately — exactly according to the plan;

faithfully — in accordance with his engagement;

diligently — without delay or turning aside to the right hand or to the left;

and perfectly — without the least defect. As far as he had gone, all was complete; and as the parts were complete, so would the whole be.

Observe, God who gave him power, gave him work; and so he will empower us to give him glory. If he gives us grace — it is that we may bring him glory. Whatever, therefore, we receive from God — we should use for God; and in all we do, or suffer, or say — seek to honor him.

All was of God — and all a gift.

God gave the person to work, his Son.

He gave him power over all flesh.

He gave him the people to save and bless; and he gave him the work to perform for their salvation and his own glory.

God is glorified by works — rather than by words. Jesus glorified his Father by doing the work given him to do; and so should we. One good work — is worth a thousand mere words. Let us therefore ascertain what work God has assigned us; and if it is to . . .

preach his Word,

write his truth,

teach the young,

relieve the necessitous, or

to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction —

let us do it, and do it in order that God may be glorified.

Jesus glorified his Father in a life of poverty and privation; and so may we. Great gifts, an elevated situation, wealth or station, are not necessary. The poor woman in her cottage home,

the mechanic in his workshop,

the laborer on the farm,

the merchant in his counting-house,

the lady in her drawing-room —

each and all may glorify God; and each may glorify God most in their present position. Depend upon it, if we do not glorify God where we are at present — we would not do so if we were removed to another situation; for it is the state of the heart, and not the situation — which enables us to glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

Gracious Lord, give us grace, that whether we eat or drink, rest or work, or whatever we do — we may do all to your glory. Teach us to make your glory the object and end of life always and everywhere — that in every situation and every relation, we may honor you!

## 05 The Glory Sought

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### The Glory Sought

It is sometimes pleasant, in times of sorrow and trouble — to look back to more happy and prosperous seasons; and it is natural to long for a restoration of prosperity and joy. As a monarch, who for the good of his people had left his palace and his throne, and experienced all the privations of banishment to a foreign shore and a menial situation, would look back to happier times when in his glory and power, and sigh for the return of such happiness again — just so our beloved Lord looked back to the period when he was in the bosom of the Father, surrounded with glory and splendor, and prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify me with your own self, with the glory which I had with you before the world was!" (John 17:5).

What is clearly implied here? His humiliation. His divine nature was veiled, was covered in a tent or tabernacle, as we read, "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us." He was in the form of God, possessing not only the nature — but all the prerogatives, honor, and glory of God; but he humbled himself, assumed the form of a servant, and was surrounded by all the weakness, baseness, and contempt of a servant. His PERSON was complex. He was really divine — he was truly human. The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him — and a complete human nature was possessed by him. He was therefore God. He was also man. He was God and man in one person. His WORK was singular and arduous. It could not be performed by the Godhead alone, nor could it be produced by the manhood alone. Both natures must be united, and both natures must act. It could not be wrought in Heaven, nor be produced by him in his glory. He must come to earth. He must dwell here for years. He must become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Majesty and baseness,

omnipotence and weakness,

divinity and humanity —

must be united to produce it. His PRIVATIONS were great and many. Born in a stable; nursed in a carpenter's cottage in a lowly town like Nazareth; attended only by a few fishermen, and fed by a few kind-hearted women; exposed to the rudeness of man by day, and often to the roughness of the weather by night; homeless, and at times almost friendless — how painful his privations must have been! And the worst came at last; for his day grew darker and more stormy, until at eventide it blew a tremendous hurricane! His OFFICE required his humiliation. To be a suitable mediator, he must not only have both natures — but the experience of both parties. He must stand on the same ground as each.

He must pay the ransom,

he must offer the sacrifice,

he must produce the righteousness;

for only on this ground could God . . .

receive man to his embraces,

raise him to his throne, and

robe him with his glory. His DESIRES were pure and lofty. His desires must partake of the character of the nature that generates them. The nature of Christ being holy — his desires were pure. He being the high and lofty One — his desires were lofty. He desired that his Father should be glorified in the highest degree, and that his people should be raised to the greatest dignity; and to gratify such noble and glorious desires — he was willing to . . .

stoop to the lowest place,

undertake the most arduous work,

and suffer to the uttermost extent.

O you blessed Jesus, how wondrous is your grace — that being rich, for our sakes you should become poor, that we through your poverty may be rich!

What is plainly expressed? That Christ existed before the world. How could he have a glory with the Father before the world was — if he did not exist then? But in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. He is the image, portrait, or correct representation of the invisible God — as well as the first-born of every creature, having the pre-eminence in all things; for by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers. All things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things are held together.

He was with his Father before the world was. With him, distinct from him, equal to him — rejoicing always before him. He was divinely glorious. Who can guess or form the least conception of the glory that Jesus had, when he was by the Father as one brought up with him — when he produced all the angelic inhabitants of the upper world, who bowed before him, adored him, and ascribed their being and blessedness unto him. All the glory of Heaven radiated from him! But he was stripped of all — as if a monarch should leave his ivory throne, his princely robes, and his palace of polished marble — clothe himself in rags, sit on the cold damp earth, and reside in an unsightly goat's hair tent. He made himself of no reputation. He appeared as a servant. He placed himself on a level with the lowest. He had no form nor loveliness, so that when men saw him — there was no beauty that they should desire him. The now prays for the restoration of his glory. he design of his self-abasement was just answered. The end of his humiliation was accomplished. Now he looks back to what he was, to where he had been, to what he enjoyed, and he cries, "Father, glorify me with your own self, with the glory which I had with you before the world was." He could he satisfied with nothing less. He had not forfeited it. He had only left it in the care of his Father for a time. It was left behind him as a kind of pledge, only to be restored on the completion of his work. That work being completed — he can claim it again. But with profound humility he asks for it. "O Father," he says, "now glorify me."

O lovely Savior, every step I take fills me with greater wonder, and inspires my heart with warmer love to you!

What he so earnestly sought. His resurrection from the dead. He must die. He must be buried. His flesh must rest in hope — but not see corruption. His disembodied spirit must enter the invisible world in that state — but must not be left there. This he knew; he therefore longs and prays for the reunion of the soul and body in perfection and glory forever. His ascension to Heaven. The Son of man must ascend up where he was before. He must re-enter Heaven — but in a different manner from that in which he left it. He longs for this: the elevation of his body, spiritualized and immortalized, and made fit to enjoy the glories of the eternal world; the glorification of his entire person, in the honor and happiness which he once had; his admission as a priest into the holiest with his blood, that there he may present it, and plead it on the behalf of all that come unto God by him. His enthroning at God's right hand. This was promised to him. The Father had engaged to say unto him when his work was done, "Sit on my right hand — until I make your foes your footstool." This crowned him — a grant of all power and authority in Heaven and in earth, and a supply of all necessary agents and instruments, to carry on his work, and to carry out the purpose so near to his heart.

Glorious Father, how it gladdens our hearts to know that you have answered the prayer of your beloved Son, and have set him at your own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world — but also in that which is to come; and have put all things under his feet, and has given him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all!

Observe, Jesus prizes his honor; and so should we. We should seek . . .

to honor his dear name,

to exalt his glorious person,

to publish his finished work, and

to spread abroad to the utmost of our power his matchless fame. His glorification — is the pledge of ours. Where the Head is — the members shall be. As the Head is — the members will be. We are predestined to be conformed to his image. We are now like him in his humiliation — and we shall soon be like him in his glorification. O delicious thought! I shall be with Jesus, like Jesus, and enjoy Jesus forever!

They who would be glorified in Heaven — must glorify God on earth. Jesus glorified his Father here — and then he pleaded that he might be glorified with him above. So we in every plan and purpose, in every word and deed, in all places and at all times — should seek to glorify God for his amazing grace, and in full expectation of sharing in our Redeemer's glory. The Lord Jesus having been in Heaven, longs to return there. We, therefore, should long to go too — not that we should be anxious — yet with the apostle we may nourish the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Heaven should be looked upon by us as our fatherland — as we are born from above; and as our home — where our Father dwells, our Elder Brother resides, and all the members of the family are collecting together.

Those who are most humbled now — will shine brightest by-and-by. Who so humbled as Jesus once — who so glorified as Jesus now? From many a cold, damp cellar, from many a cheerless back garret, from many a hovel-like cottage — will be collected the gems that are to deck the diadem of Jesus! Soon, soon the day will come, when from the depths of poverty, or affliction, or humiliation — the righteous will come forth, to shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father forever and ever!

Glorious Redeemer, we rejoice in your dignity. It gladdens our hearts to know that you are now glorified with your Father; that you have the highest place in Heaven, and will be honored by the whole universe.

Holy Spirit, reveal to us more and more of our Savior's glory, and fill us with high, holy, and honorable thoughts of him.

Heavenly Father, we bless you for raising Jesus from the dead, receiving him up into glory, placing him at your right hand, and making him full of joy with your countenance.

Oh, to be enabled to honor Jesus more, and to give him the highest place in our thoughts, desires, and affections! And may it be our unspeakable happiness to be glorified with him, in the presence of his Father and the holy angels!

## 06 The Name Manifested

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The Name Manifested That God intends to manifest himself, and to make known his nature, perfections, and purposes, to his intelligent creatures, in all his works of creation, providence, and grace — is clear to the spiritual mind. But as this was his general object in all his work — so it was his special object in the person, work, life, and death of his beloved Son. Hence we read, "No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has revealed him." So also Jesus pleaded with his Father, "I have manifested your name unto the men whom you gave me out of the world: yours they were, and you gave them me; and they have kept your Word," (John 17:6). Notice — The Savior's Employment: Manifesting God's name. What did he manifest? The Father's name — or his nature. He gave the true idea of his mercy and justice, his grace and holiness; and so correct was the representation, that he could say, "He who has seen me — has seen the Father." His name includes his will, especially in reference to salvation. Jesus showed plainly . . .

WHOM he will save — sinners — all who sincerely believe in him;

WHY he will save — of his own good pleasure, or because it pleases him — that is, of pure grace, of mere mercy;

HOW he will save — by a ransom paid, by faith exercised, or gratuitously.

How did Jesus manifest his Father's name? By what he WAS — for his person and conduct formed a union to reflect the glory of his Father's nature and perfections. Also by what he DID — for he wrought the Father's works, in order to make the Father known. Or, outwardly — by his teaching, in which he explained and enforced the law, and proclaimed and illustrated the gospel. Inwardly — by his gracious illumination, as he said to his disciples, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven."

He more especially set God before them as a Father, as their Father; encouraging them to approach him as such, to trust in him as such, and in all things to act toward him as such.

Blessed Jesus, may I ever look upon you as the revealer of the Father; and by faith in your person, work, and teaching — may I receive into my mind correct views of the Father's nature, character, and will! The Privileged Parties. "The men whom you gave me out of the world." Not merely the apostles — but all who believe in his name. He speaks here not of the privilege of an apostle — but of the common privilege of all who receive, believe, and obey his Word.

All who were given him. The Lord's people were given by the Father to the Son. Mark their original proprietor, "Yours they were." They were . . .

the Father's creatures — as made by him;

his criminals — as having sinned against him;

his chosen ones — as elected to everlasting life.

Observe the special gift: "You gave them to me", "The men whom you gave me out of the world." From whence were they taken? Out of the world. They were in it — they were of it — they were like it; but by an act of special grace — the Father took them from it, and gave them to his Son! By whom were they taken? By the Father, as Jesus had said before, "All whom the Father gives me, shall come to me." And again, "No man can come unto me, unless the Father, who has sent me, draws him."

Why were they taken out of the world?

To glorify the rich grace of God,  
to gratify the tender mercy of God, and  
to satisfy the sovereign love of God.

He gives no other account of this matter — but simply says, "I will have mercy — because I will have mercy," and "I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful." We must, therefore, say with Jesus, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in your sight." For what purpose were they taken out of the world? That they may be Christ's — his charge, his property, his people, his seed, his jewels, his crown, his bride! With what design were they given to Jesus?

That he might release them from their guilt — by his death;

that he might restore them to the divine image — by his Spirit;

and that he might guide them to his throne — by his Word and his grace; to his throne of grace first, and to his throne of glory afterwards. The Commendation: "They have kept your Word." Jesus echoed the Father's word. What he had heard with his Father — he declared to them; so that those who heard Jesus — heard the very words of the Father. The privileged ones had heard the Word from his lips.

They understood the Word that he spoke;

they believed and received it into their hearts;

they preserved it in their memories;

they obeyed it in their lives. In them, was proved the truth of the Redeemer's words: "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will know whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." They knew the Word of Christ to be indeed and in truth the very Word of God; and as such they believed, received, and acted upon it. It was impressed on their hearts; for, as in the case of the Thessalonians, it came "not in word only — but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance."

It was expressed in their lives; for they were those spoken of by Jesus: "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God, and keep it." It was retained in their lives; for, like the church in Philadelphia, they had a little strength; they had kept his Word, and had not denied his name. It is not enough to hear the Word or read it — we must receive it and nourish it, as the good ground did the seed sown in it. Nor is it enough to receive it — we must retain it, be influenced by it, and let it dwell in us richly, ruling the heart, the mind, and the conduct. Only thus can we prove ourselves to

be the Lord's, as it is written, "If you continue in my Word — then are you my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Again: "He who has my commandments, and keeps them — he it is that loves me; and he who loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

God's purpose shall stand. His name shall be manifested. His people shall know his name. His Son shall save all those whom he has given him. Thus . . .

his grace shall be displayed,

his love shall be gratified, and

his sovereignty shall be glorified.

Christ's work shall be rewarded. Not only shall God be made known — but Jesus shall be honored by all who know it. All who know the Father, come to the knowledge of him through the Son; and all who come to the knowledge of the Father through the Son, glorify the Son equally with the Father.

God's saints shall be commended. God loves to praise whatever is good in his people, and to commend whatever good is done by his people. He often gives them the testimony of his approbation in the conscience now, and he will publicly commend all the little good deeds they have done by-and-by. The cup of cold water given, the visit of sympathy paid, or the loving word spoken to any of his little ones, for his sake — will be publicly acknowledged, commended, and rewarded at last.

Blessed be God the Father for the manifestation of his name — for the manifestation of his name by his Son — for the manifestation of his name to the understanding and the heart.

Blessed be the Son of God, for coming to make manifest the Father's name; for manifesting the Father's name to all those who were given him out of the world; and for carrying on the work of manifestation still, both on earth and in Heaven!

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, for the record given us by his inspiration — of what Jesus was, what Jesus did, and what Jesus taught — in order to manifest the Father's name! O for clearer, fuller, and more powerful manifestations of God to our hearts and consciences from day to day! And now, gracious Savior, as you manifested your Father's name to your disciples — manifest it unto me. Give me a deep and experimental knowledge of God, as your Father and my Father, and as your God and my God. Unfold to me his glorious perfections; give me a clear and correct knowledge of his divine attributes; and let me know him as my gracious covenant God and Father. O to know him and his glorious name! so to know him as . . .

to glow with love to him,

to walk in fellowship with him, and

be prepared to dwell with him in his own happy home! My soul, seek the full, clear, and heart-affecting knowledge of Jehovah's name!

## 07 All Things from God

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All Things from God The Lord Jesus manifests the most profound humility in his approaches to the Father; and though a Son — he renders all the homage of a servant. He proves to demonstration that he is meek and lowly in heart, and ever renders the deepest honor to his Father. Having testified that he had manifested his Father's name — he now witnesses that his disciples had received his testimony, and believed his Word. He speaks a good word for them, while he gives an account of his own ministry. He recommends them to his Father, while he pleads that he may be restored to his glory. Hence he says, "Now they know that everything you have given me — comes from you" (John 17:7). Mark — The Faithfulness of Jesus. He was sent to teach, and by teaching to manifest his Father's name. He had performed his work with fidelity, for he revealed the mind of God, and did so in the midst of . . .

gross ignorance,

dark superstition,

vile prejudice,

determined opposition,

continued misrepresentation, and

the greatest discouragement. As the Lord's servant — he was blind to all difficulties, and deaf to all discouragements. He set his face like a flint, knowing that he would not be ashamed.

He began his work in faith,

he persevered in hope, and

he finished it with courage.

He did all that his Father required, all that the inspiring Spirit had predicted, and in a spirit of self-renunciation, he referred all to the glory of God. Observe — The Proficiency of His Disciples. They knew that God had given Jesus very much; for he had assured them that he had received from his Father . . .

power over all flesh,

a special interest in his people,

the doctrine he promulgated,

the power with which he wrought his miracles,

the gifts and graces that adorned his person and shone forth in his ministry,

his mediatorial office and commission,

the union of the two distinct and differing natures in his one person,  
and his appointment to be the final judge of all.

All these things he had made known to them in his teaching, and they had received the same into their minds. They beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. They knew that all that Jesus had as the Son of man — was from God, from his sovereign favor, and in accordance with his eternal decree. And in this, as the Head of his Church, he represented her; for she, and every one of her members, receives all from sovereign grace, and all in accordance with his glorious purpose. See — The Gentleness of the Savior. He brings no charge against his disciples, he does not complain of them. All that he says of them is good. "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father." No, Jesus brings no accusation against them. Yet he had witnessed their backwardness to receive his Word. He had been grieved with the hardness of their hearts. He even marveled at their unbelief. Yet he only says,

they have received my teaching,

they have given credit to my testimony,

they have exercised confidence in my veracity.

Compassionate Savior, how great was your pity, how wondrous your mercy, how tender, how touching, the manifestation of your love! Truly you are touched with the feeling of our infirmities. You know our frame, you remember that we are dust! You have compassion on the ignorant, and on those who are out of the way. My soul, I charge you to think highly and honorably of Jesus, nor dare to doubt, distrust, or think harshly of him!

See, brethren, what we must LEARN: All good is from God.

All good is from God as its author, giving. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights." As every drop of rain is from the clouds, and as every ray of light is from the sun — so every temporal and spiritual good thing is from God. He is our "sun and shield; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly."

All good is from God as the agent, working it. It is God who works in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Every beneficial conviction,

every seasonable impression,

every holy inclination,

every spiritual desire, and

every believing prayer

— is from God.

O that he may fulfill in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of

our God and the Lord Jesus Christ!

All good is from God as he is the judge, ratifying. Every promise he confirms and fulfils. Every good purpose he ratifies and enables us to perform. Every good work he will register, commend, and reward.

See also what we should ADMIRE: The fidelity of Jesus. He was faithful to Him who appointed him. He did everything by rule. He went as it was written of him. He acted as he had undertaken. His Father's honor was dear to his heart — dearer than his own comfort, yes, than his own life. He is, therefore, not only a merciful — but a faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God.

See, finally, what we should imitate: The gentleness of Jesus. He would not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. He never expected babes to act as young men, or children to be as fathers. He never exposed the weaknesses of his people — but was ever ready to commend their excellencies.

How different some of his professed followers! How ready to publish a brother's faults, and to talk uncharitably of a sister's failings! How ready some are to see the mote in the eye, or the smallest deformity in the person; but how blind to the excellencies or the beauties of the life and character!

Beloved, like the two sons of Noah, let us be ever ready to cover over a brother's faults. May we never expose or make them known, except the cause of God or the honor of religion requires it. Oh, for more of that love which covers and hides a multitude of sins — not from the eye of God — but from the eye of man — especially worldly men!

Blessed Jesus, as you commended your disciples, help me to do so too. May I never be found looking after their faults, or exaggerating their follies; but may I . . .

love them with a fervent love,

cleave to them as the excellent of the earth, and

walk in fellowship with them as the sons of God.

Holy Spirit, teach all believers to imitate Jesus in this particular, that the whole Church may become one united, loving, and holy body, correctly representing Jesus to the present evil world.

Heavenly Father, give us grace to make us just like your beloved Son, especially in his deep humility, profound condescension, and ardent love. O that we were all taught to love the saints as Jesus loves them!

## 08 The Communication

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### The Communication

It must have been a most touching and affecting sight to have seen Jesus stand before his Father and plead with him, as his disciples saw. Such profound reverence, such strong confidence, and such filial love did he display! As the Son of man, he was clothed with humility; as the Son of God, he was filled with conscious dignity. His disciples were on his heart. For his beloved people, down to the end of time, he was concerned. He had undertaken for them, and he pleads with his Father on their behalf. Those immediately before him were especially on his mind, and to them he alludes when he says, "I gave them the Words you gave me — and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me" (John 17:8). The Communication: "I gave them the Words you gave me." He communicated unto them the gospel — the glorious doctrines of the new covenant. The word of truth — pure truth, truth without any mixture of error — truth in its clearness, fullness, and perfection. The word of grace — sovereign grace. Truth was for the intellect, to enlighten and enlarge it; grace was for the heart, to change and renew it. The word of faith — the Word that begets faith — the Word that is revealed to faith — the Word that feeds faith. The word of salvation — free salvation. He made known a salvation for sinners — a salvation all of grace — a salvation to be received and enjoyed at once — a salvation worthy of God, and meeting all the needs of the sinner who embraces it. This doctrine — this Word of the truth of the gospel — he had received from his Father. In the eternal council it was uttered by the Father, heard by him, treasured up in his wonderful memory, to be made known by his lips in time. This was the Word referred to by the prophet, who, as the mouth of God, said, "As for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord, My Spirit who is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth — shall not depart out of your mouth . . . from henceforth and forever." This word he had from his Father — on purpose to impart to his people. Hence we see the certainty of gospel doctrines. They are truth, infallible truth — truth that must not be trifled with — but which should be received with meekness, held with confidence, and confirmed by a godly life.

How striking the words of the Lord by Moses here: "I will raise up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto you; and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him. And it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name — I will require it of him." The doctrine of the gospel is a double gift — it was first given by the Father to the Son — and then given by the Son to us. These doctrines should, therefore, be highly valued and carefully preserved. As Jude said, "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Or as Solomon said long before, we should "buy the truth — but sell it not." Buy it at any price, cost what it may; sell it at no price, let others offer for it what they will! Its Reception. There are two things to be received — the Word, or the truth — and Christ through the truth. The truth to rule in the intellect — and Christ to reign in the heart.

Receiving supposes, presentation; the truth, and Christ in the truth, are presented to us in the gospel.

Receiving supposes, conviction; and the Holy Spirit produces the conviction, and then we receive the Word as the Thessalonians did, of whom Paul said, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you received it not as the word of man — but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe." Here was the conviction that the gospel was the very Word of God; and the effect of its reception, an effectual work on the mind and heart.

Receiving supposes, approximation; we come into close contact with the Word.

Receiving supposes, application; we apply or take home the Word unto ourselves.

They received the Word . . .

gladly, as good news;

with reverence, as good news from God;

with meekness, perceiving its majesty and glory;

with love, from a perception of the love of God revealed therein;

with gratitude, from a sense of the inestimable favor conferred.

They received it as the ground receives the seed — to nourish, quicken, and cause it to grow. They received it as the earth receives the rain — which causes it to bring forth and bud.

They knew surely that Jesus came out from the Father. Their knowledge was certain, though not full or perfect; they were fully assured of the fact, as the Samaritans, who said unto the woman, "Now we believe, not because of your saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." With this knowledge they owned him as the Savior, and confessed him as their Lord. They believed that the Father had sent him.

Knowledge is necessary to faith; hence when Jesus found the blind man he had healed, and said unto him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" he replied, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said, "You have both seen him, and it is he who talks with you." And he said, "Lord, I believe — and worshiped him."

True gospel knowledge produces esteem, affection, and love. We love Jesus, and God as revealed by him; we approach him, and seek union and communion with him; we esteem him as more precious than all things, than all beings beside.

They believed that the Father sent the Son to ransom by his blood; to seek out the sinners whom he redeemed, and to save by his grace and power, those whom he sought and found.

Observe, Christ works faith by his Word, and not by miracles. Some are always desiring signs and wonders; but though God may work by these, of themselves they never converted a soul to God, or produced faith in one sinner's heart. God's order is, that we receive the Word, embrace Christ, and enjoy salvation.

Observe, we may receive the Word, in its mere letter, and not receive Christ; but we cannot receive Christ but through the Word. If we receive the Word with understanding — then it will lead us to Christ; if we go to Jesus, we shall receive him; if we receive him, we are saved; and being saved, we should enjoy salvation. The love of the Father and the love of the Son are equal. The Father sends — and the Son comes. The Father communicates to his Son in Heaven — and the Son comes and communicates to us on earth.

How ready Jesus is to take notice of the least good in his people! He passes over all the faults, follies, and infirmities of his disciples — and tells his Father that they received his Word, and believed on him as his Sent One. So he promises to notice, remember, publish, and reward the least good thing done by his people to each other, in his name, and out of love to him.

How well he speaks of weak, wavering faith! Only just before, when they said, "Now we believe that you came forth from God," he said, "Do you now believe?" and then shows them how weak and fitful their faith would be in its exercise, so that they would all be scattered, and leave him alone. But now, when speaking of them to his Father, he says not one word of this — but commends both their knowledge and their faith.

Blessed, blessed Jesus, how tender your love, how great your mercy, how exquisite your compassion! Well may it be said of you, "The bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench!"

Reader! have you received the truth — as from the lips of Jesus? Do you know Jesus as coming forth from the Father on purpose to . . .

reveal his nature,

display his love,

disclose his purposes,

publish his promises,

deliver his invitations,

and proclaim his grace? Do you believe that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, and that the Son came in obedience to the Father to seek and to save those who were lost? Do you realize the fact, that Jesus, as the great intercessor, speaks to his Father of his people, and pleads for them with all the deep love that is in his heart? Can you trust yourself and your eternal concerns in the hands of Jesus, and so live in the enjoyment of holy peace?

Holy Spirit, direct our hearts into this wondrous love of Jesus!

Gracious Savior, reveal the truth more fully to my soul, and give me stronger faith in it!

## 09 Prayer for the Church

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Prayer for the Church When the Lord Jesus had finished his prayer for himself, he at once began to plead for his people — first for his immediate disciples, and then for all who would believe on him to the end of time. For them he lived,

for them he suffered,

for them he died, and

for them he prayed! The world lying in the wicked one seemed to lie off in the distance; his people, like a company of beloved children, appeared as if gathered around him, and, as if he had pointed to them with his finger, he said, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world — but for those whom you have given me; for they are yours" (John 17:9). Let us notice — The Character in Which Jesus Prayed. Not merely as a man, but . . .

as the Mediator, under a peculiar law, one command of which was, that he should lay down his life for his sheep;

as the Fathers Servant, sent into the world on an especial errand, and to perform a particular work;

as the High Priest of God's Israel . . .

bearing their names on his heart,

making an atonement for their sins,

and interceding for their persons;

as the Surety of the better covenant, who had become responsible for his brethren, and had engaged to bring them back safely to their Father;

as the Bridegroom, who had espoused his people to himself, to be his, to live with him, and enjoy his presence and property forever. As the Mediator, he speaks for those for whose salvation he assumed the office. As the Servant of the Father, he prays for those for whom he was sanctified and sent into the world. As the High Priest, he intercedes for all spiritual Israel, offering his incense with the prayers of all saints. As the Surety of the covenant, he prays for all he had undertaken to present guiltless before the presence of his Father's glory. And as the Bridegroom, his heart was set upon, and his voice was employed for, his beloved bride. The Persons for Whom He Prays: "I pray for them." Those who were given to him by his Father, in whom the Father still retained a right. Why? Because the Father had made them his charge. They were still the Father's, as the espoused bride is still the father's daughter.

"I pray not for the world." He did not pray against the world, nor accuse it to his Father; but he did not pray for it. His prayer now was for the elect — not for the non-elect, the scornful, persecuting world, which was lying in the arms of the wicked one. He knew his Father's purposes. He

acquiesced in his Father's will. He had no promise of success if he had prayed for the rest. If he had prayed for the world, and prayed for it as he did for his people — then either the whole world must be saved, or else the Father must refuse his prayer. But him the Father always hears. His prayer is never refused. As therefore the whole world is not saved, as the Father never refuses the prayer of his Son — then we must believe that he means just what he says, "I pray not for the world." Observe — The Blessings Which Flow from His Prayer:

1. Pardon and justification. Paul challenges the universe to bring a charge against God's elect, and triumphantly asks, "Who is he who condemns, since Christ died for them, is risen again, and is even at the right hand of God, making intercession for them?" If Christ . . .

died for us,

arose for us,

has gone to Heaven for us, and

ever lives to intercede for us —

then we shall be pardoned and justified — to us there is no condemnation.

2. The acceptance of our persons and services. Hence are we said to be "a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Our persons are pleasing to God as he views us in the Beloved; and our services are valued by him as perfumed with the sweet savors of our Redeemer's merits and intercession.

3. Boldness at God's throne. Our great High Priest, who made the atonement for us below, has now passed through the Heavens, and is in the holiest of all. There he carries on the intercession he commenced on earth; and in consequence of this, we are exhorted to come boldly to the throne of grace, to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.

4. Preservation from evil here — and Heaven at last. Jesus prayed especially that we may be kept — kept from the evil of the world, and that we might be with him where he is, to behold his glory.

Yes, all for whom he prayed shall . . .

be justified at the bar of God,

be accepted in the presence of God,

have boldness at the throne of God,

and arrive safely at the home of God!

Therefore, universal redemption is not true! The representation of Christ is special — he represents his people alone;

the substitution of Christ is special — he is the substitute of his bride alone;

the satisfaction Christ made was special — it was for damages done by his sheep alone;

the intercession of Christ is special — it is for his saints alone, and not for the world;

the love of Christ is special — for "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her — to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless." The world and the Church have always been distinct.

In the very first family — there was Cain as well as Abel;

in Abraham's family — there was Ishmael as well as Isaac;

in Isaac's family — there was Esau as well as Jacob — the former representing the world, the latter the Church. At the flood there was the Church in the ark, represented by Noah and his family — and the world was drowning. There have always been the elect remnant — and the rest of humanity. The world has not Christ on its side; therefore its condition is fearful. His own words are, "My goodness extends not to the world — but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips." He will not mention them to his Father, nor name them in his prayers. The honor and happiness of the saints are unspeakably great. This led one of the apostles to exclaim, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself unto us — and not unto the world?" For them the Savior prays,

to them the Savior comes, and

with them the Savior identifies himself.

We should pray especially for the saints. Yes, we should prefer them at all times, and in all things; as Paul teaches us: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men — especially unto those who are of the household of faith."

Believers and Christ are one. In praying for them — we pray for him; in doing good to them — we do good to him. Therefore he will affirm at last, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren — you have done it unto me." In all our labors let Paul be our example. Speaking of his troubles, persecutions, and imprisonment, he says, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." They were elected — but not yet saved. They were to obtain salvation through the gospel. The apostle, therefore, is commanded to preach the gospel to all — in order that the elect may obtain the salvation which Christ had procured for them.

Right views of the doctrine of election, therefore, will not . . .

cramp our energies,

limit our efforts,

or produce indolence;

but will rather stimulate us . . .

to labor more abundantly,

to suffer more patiently, and

to persevere more hopefully.

Oh, for grace . . .

to submit to God's will without objecting;

to receive God's Word without reasoning;

and to do God's work, without complaining!

Oh, to be like Jesus, and to feel as he did, when he said, "I thank you, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in your sight."

Heavenly Father, give us grace, that we may never stumble at your truth, or imagine ourselves wiser than your Word; but may we ever . . .

acquiesce in your will,

drink into the spirit of your Son,

believe the promises of your grace,

and observe all your holy precepts.

Holy Spirit, as you led and guided our beloved Savior — so lead and guide us; that we may be . . .

separate from the world,

superior to the world, and

ever testify against the world, that the works thereof are evil.

Oh, to be more like Christ in all things, especially in our devotions!

## 10 Jesus Glorified in His People

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### Jesus Glorified in His People

Amidst all the humiliation and suffering our Lord endured here below — he had a full and vivid conception of his own natural dignity and glory. He could always call God his Father, and rejoice that the Father loved his Son, and had given all things into his hands; as also that it was the Father's will that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. Now, therefore, as he stands interceding for his beloved ones, he pleads, "And all mine are yours — and yours are mine; and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10). The Joint Interest of the Father and the Son: "All mine are yours — and yours are mine." This may apply to things, as he had said, "All things that the Father has are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you."

It refers to nature. He had the divine nature in all its fullness and perfection, equally with the Father. Every divine attribute was his. Every perfection peculiar to Deity was his. He possessed all the works and wealth of the Father. He wore the same divine names and honors as the Father. It is impossible to exalt Christ too highly, or to ascribe too much to him! His name is above every name. He is Lord of all. But the claim refers especially to persons — the persons of his people. "The Lord knows those who are his;" and whom that the Father has, says Jesus, are mine. "All mine are yours!" They are mine by redemption — yours by election. Election, redemption, sanctification, and glorification, are divine works encompassing the same people.

All whom the Father chose — the Son redeemed;

all whom the Son redeemed — the Spirit sanctifies;

and all who are . . .

chosen by the Father,

redeemed by the Son,

and sanctified by the Spirit —

are certainly and eternally glorified!

"For those He foreknew — He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. And those He predestined — He also called;

and those He called — He also justified;

and those He justified — He also glorified!"Romans 8:29-30 This arises . . .

from the unity of the divine essence — the Godhead is one;

from the agreement of will and design between the divine persons in the Godhead;

and from the joint operation of each divine person in choosing, redeeming, sanctifying, and so saving the people. The Father's children — constitute the Son's Church;

the Father's beloved — is the Son's bride;

the Father's property — is the Son's portion.

"All mine" — my disciples, my friends, my sheep — "are yours." The Father as Creator, gives them to the Son as Redeemer;

the Son as Redeemer, hands them over to the Spirit as the Sanctifier: the Spirit works in them all the good pleasure of his goodness, and brings them to the Son, who presents them to the Father a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless! Now comes — The Son's Pleasing Acknowledgment: "I am glorified in them."

I HAVE been glorified . . .

by their faith, for they have exercised confidence in me;

by their choice, for they have left all and followed me;

by their ministry, for they went where I sent them, and preached as I directed them;

by their self-denial, for they have taken up their cross and have followed me;

by their perseverance, for they have adhered to me when others forsook me;

by their holy character, for they have endeavored to imitate me.

I SHALL be glorified . . .

in their full redemption and perfect salvation,

in their songs and services,

in their motives and actions,

by their undivided love and practical holiness.

Jesus gets glory by all that He does, or suffers, or procures for His people — and by all that they do and suffer for Him! This is a sweet and precious truth to the believer — full of comfort, and a source of the sweetest joy! Jesus is glorified by all that He does for me — and by all that I do for Him!

But, If the Father and the Son have an equal and eternal interest in us — then we are safe, and we should be happy!

SAFE! Yes! Will God part with the objects of His highest love? Never! Will Jesus surrender the purchase of His own heart's blood? Never!

HAPPY! Yes; if anything can render us happy, this should:

that we are God's choice, and the Savior's purchase;

that the Father and the Son jointly claim us, and highly value us! When we devote all that we have to God — then we may look up and claim all we need from God. Let us, then . . .

make over all to God,

put all into the hands of God,

consecrate our all to the service of God —

then we can sustain no losses — nor need we be agitated by any fears!

Oh, for grace, henceforth to give up all to Jesus, so as to be able to say to him, "All mine are yours, and yours are mine!" If we glorify Jesus — we may be sure of his intercession for us. He intercedes for his people; and they are his people, in whom, and by whom, he is glorified.

Holy Spirit, teach and incline me to glorify Jesus always, everywhere, and in everything!

If Jesus pleads for us — then we belong to the Father, who loves us. How precious are his own sweet words: "In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God!" That is, the Father's love for you needs no prompting from Me. It will scarcely be needful for Me to plead with the Father for you, because the Father himself loves you!

Yet Jesus did plead for us, to show his own love; and he ever lives to make intercession for us, to show the constancy of his love.

If we mind Christ's glory — he will take care of our salvation. This should be our object at all times — our aim in all things.

O Savior, give me grace to glorify you below, before I come to be glorified by you above! No one can lose by glorifying Jesus, for this proves that we are his; and thus Paul's words to the Corinthians are applicable to us: "All things belong to you — whether . . . the world, or life and death, or the present and the future. Everything belongs to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God!" What a fortune! Talk of wealth! who but the Christian can be said to be really wealthy! In salvation . . .

the Father glorifies the Son,

the Son glorifies the Father, and

the Holy Spirit glorifies them both.

Under the teaching of the Spirit, those who are saved — glorify the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit jointly and equally. And Father, Son, and Spirit unite to glorify every soul who, by faith in Jesus, obedience to the Father, and walking in the Spirit, loves to glorify God. Marvelous mystery! glorious scheme! — worthy at once of the wisdom, majesty, and grace of God!

Precious Savior, I am Yours! You have redeemed me with your most precious blood! Give me grace, that, realizing my obligation to you, and being fired with your love — I may evermore make your glory the grand end of my existence! May I live for you — and for you alone. May I seek to honor you above everything. In every thought I think,

in every word I speak,  
in every feeling I indulge,  
in every action I perform —  
may I endeavor to glorify your thrice blessed name!

## 11 Father, Keep Them!

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Father, Keep Them! The concern of Jesus for the safety and happiness of his people, is both great and astonishing! He had watched over his disciples while he was with them, and being about to leave them — he would make them the special care and charge of his Father. He refers now more especially — though not exclusively — to his disciples who were then present with him, and thus he prays, "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, KEEP through your own name, those whom you have given me — so that they may be one, as we are one!" (John 17:11). We notice — The Circumstances in Which the Disciples Were Placed: "They are still in the world." They are chosen out of it, are raised above it — and yet are left in it, for holy and important purposes. The world to the believer — is a place of trial. Every principle he has, as well as the profession he makes, will be tried here.

Storms will arise, and often suddenly and unexpectedly.

Labors have to be performed, and self-denying labors too.

Persecutions must be endured, and at times these are fiery and long-continued. This world is . . .

a field of labor,

a weary land,

an enemy's country,

a changeful climate. The world to the Christian is a place of DANGER. He has foes both within and without. From some he must escape by fleeing — and from some by resisting.

"The corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Peter 1:4) is defiling, debasing, and disturbing! It must be overcome; we must cleanse ourselves from it, and escape from its contagion!

Then we have to do battle . . .

with the god of this world — the prince of the power of the air;

with the powers of the world — or ungodly, persecuting men in office and authority;

with the men of the world, or the masses surrounding us;

with the things of the world, especially . . .

the lust of the flesh,

the lust of the eye,

and the pride of life! In such a world, surrounded by such evil elements and diabolic agents — we must be in danger, and shall be severely tried!! The disciples were now to be in the world without

the bodily presence of Jesus. He says, "Now I am departing from the world . . . I am coming to You." His work on earth was just done; his presence would be required here no longer. He was going . . .

home to his Father,

to rest from his labors, and

to wait for his reward. But his people would be left here in this evil world . . .

to serve their generation,

to perfect their characters,

and to honor his dear name.

Hence — The Advocate's Prayer. Jesus pleads with his Father; he fixes on the holiness of his nature and character, and cries, "Holy Father!" His grace, or his mercy, or his pity — more generally attracts us; because we feel unworthy, or miserable, or weak. But his holiness fixes the eye on his righteous servant, his obedient Son, and our great High Priest!

He prays for their preservation: "Holy Father, KEEP through your own name, those whom you have given me." Keep through your own name; that is — keep them . . .

in the knowledge of yourself and of your truth;

by your power, mercy, and providence;

to show forth your truth, your mercy, and your love. The Lord's people, therefore, will be kept by God's power through faith unto salvation.

He prays for their UNION: "So that they may be one — as we are one." That is,

one mystically — all holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with all the increase of God;

one morally — being one in will, judgment, and affection;

one as God is one — enjoying a union among themselves, resembling the union of the divine persons in the Godhead. This union of the Godhead is . . .

spiritual, the persons being so;

close, the persons having but one nature;

constant, nothing being able to affect or disturb it;

holy, holiness being the glory of the nature and persons in the Godhead; orderly, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each having his place, office, and work in the glorious economy of grace. In the Godhead there is also a union of plan, purpose, and love; so Jesus desires that his people should all have . . .

one plan,

one purpose,  
and one affection.

Beloved, if Jesus thus prayed for us — then our preservation is certain, and our perseverance is sure. We shall be kept in answer to the prayer of our great High Priest . . .

to his gratification,  
for his honor, and  
to the Almighty Keeper's glory!

Whatever storms may arise,  
whatever foes may assail us,  
whatever trials may come upon us —  
our Heavenly Father will keep us, in honor of his Son.

Kept by the eye and hand of Jehovah — we shall persevere, though . . .

the road is rough,  
the journey is long, and  
our strength is but small.

Let us in every season of danger . . .

when foes and fears beset us,  
when our hearts misgive us, and  
the cross lies heavy upon us —

then let us hear Jesus praying for us, "Keep through your own name — those whom you have given me!"

Union has been planned — and will be surely completed. Yes, as sure as there is union in the divine nature, and unity in the divine counsels — so sure shall there be perfect union in the Church, and unity among the saints. All cause of disagreement and all ground of difference shall be removed — and we shall be one. Possessing one spiritual and holy nature — we shall one day have one mind, one judgment, and one will. Then there will be . . .

one body,  
united to one Head,  
influenced by one Spirit,  
regulated by one motive,  
walking by one rule, and

aiming at one end!

Christ's people will soon be . . .

one loving family,

one holy flock,

one glorious church!

We should pray to be both kept and united. The prayers of Jesus should regulate ours. What was near and dear to his heart — should be near and dear to ours.

If he pleaded with his Father to KEEP us — we should do so too, and do so constantly and right heartily.

If he prayed that we may be UNITED — so united that we may be one — much more should we. And while we should sanction no sin, nor any just cause of disagreement among brethren — we should carefully avoid whatever would separate brother from brother, or church from church.

Reader! are you OF the world — or are you one of Christ's members IN the world? Saints in the world are like . . .

pure lilies among stinging thorns,

precious diamonds among dirty pebbles,

harmless sheep among ravenous wolves!

If the world loves us, smiles on us, and speaks well of us — then we are certainly OF it! And if of the world — we shall certainly be damned along with it. But if the world to us is a place of trial, and a place of danger; if we feel that we are not at home in it; if we are longing and preparing to leave it, that we may go home and dwell with Jesus in his Father's house forever — then all is well with us, and will be well forever! But let us not deceive ourselves on this point! We are either for Christ — or against him! We either gather with Christ — or we scatter from him. Blessed Spirit, show us our true state, reveal to us our real condition; and leave us not without good and solid ground to believe that we are one with Christ — and are therefore the true objects of the prayer and pleading of Christ!

## 12 None Lost!

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### None Lost!

Some cities need a strong guard — and God's Church needs an omnipotent Keeper. No Christian can stand alone! The whole Church would fall — if left to itself. But to the whole Church, as to every individual member, we may say, "Behold, he who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade upon your right hand. The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; he shall preserve your soul." In the spirit of this testimony, Jesus says, "While I was with them in the world — I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me — I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." (John 17:12). Mark — The Savior's Care: "While I was with them in the world — I kept them." He kept them . . .

by his visible presence, which was a preservative to them;

by his outward ministry, which cautioned, warned, and instructed them;

by his close fellowship with them, in which he solved their doubts, explained his parables, and warmed their hearts;

and by his holy example, which taught them to be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

He kept them . . .

from the world, its fascinations and its frowns;

from the flesh, its lusts and its pleasures; and

from Satan, his wiles and his terrors.

He kept them in his Father's name; that is, by his authority and power, and in his doctrine and service. To keep the sheep was the shepherd's employment. To keep his disciples was the Savior's care. He kept them in accordance with their position, his engagement, and his Father's will. And now, being about to leave them, he commits them to the care and keeping of his Father. The care of Jesus was constant, tender, and uninterrupted. See — The Result of That Care: "None of them is lost." Neither death nor apostasy had thinned his flock. All that the Father had given him to save — he had kept. Yet the son of perdition was lost. He was given only as an instrument to use — not as a child to save. He was chosen only to office — not to holiness and everlasting life.

'Son' refers to character or likeness. Judas was a son of Belial — a child of wrath — a son of perdition. He was of his father the devil, and the lusts of his father he would do. Satan was in him. Satan filled his heart. Satan claimed him. Satan wrought by him. Satan refused to give him up. His sin, or ruling lust, was covetousness. This led to hypocrisy, to treason — and ended in despair. His

punishment was, that he was left without pity, or respect, or hope. He then became a suicide, and went to his own place.

Judas was a type of Antichrist, or Popery, which personified, is called "the son of perdition" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Was Judas a professed friend of Christ? So is the Pope. Did Judas sell Christ for a trifle? So does the Pope his masses; yet he says the wafer is Christ. Did Judas betray the Son of God with a kiss? So does the Pope. Was Judas guide to those who took Jesus? So the Pope and his Church hands over Christ in his members to the civil powers, to be imprisoned, punished, and put to death. The Pope is Abaddon, or Apollyon, the destroyer — in opposition to Jesus who is the Savior (Revelation 9:11). The Scripture must be fulfilled, in keeping some, that is, all God's chosen; and in the destruction of others, as of the son of perdition, whose conduct, character, and doom, were predicted long before, in the 109th Psalm. He deserved to suffer. He prepared himself for his sentence. He was doomed to his own place.

Jesus prepares a place for all his people in his Father's house, and will fetch them, and introduce them to it. Satan prepares a place for obstinate sinners in Hell, who here prepare themselves for it, and will therefore be doomed to it.

Observe, we cannot stand without special keeping. We need to be watched every moment, and to be kept as the apple of the eye. Only while God keeps us — are we safe. May we realize our dependence, and ever look to the strong for strength.

Some will destroy themselves. Every one who loves to sin, and lives in sin, is a self-destroyer. He may not commit suicide so far as the body is concerned — but he destroys his own soul.

Sons of perdition may be in the Church! Judas was, and many besides him have been. They may be baptized; they may preach the gospel; they may sit at the Lord's table; they may be esteemed by the Lord's people — and yet they may be the children of wrath, sons of perdition, as Judas was! Baptism changes no one's nature. The Lord's supper never saved a soul. Preaching is no evidence of saving grace. How far we may go — and yet not go far enough — not take the first step in the way of life!

Nothing happens by 'chance'. All is foreseen or fore-appointed! The Scriptures have revealed, they have predicted — and they are most true. Not one jot or tittle of God's Word can fail. How solemn, and what a warning for the lost sinner — every threatening will be fulfilled! How pleasing, what an encouragement to the saint — every promise shall be made good! This subject refutes the favorite opinion of some, who say, "If the Church did her duty — then the whole world would be saved." Was Judas saved? Who failed in duty to leave him to perish? Did not Jesus do his duty? Did not the eleven apostles do theirs? Yet Judas was the son of perdition, and perished in his sin. Let us not be wise above what is written. Let us not ascribe the work of the Holy Spirit to man. Let us not unduly blame those who have gone before us. They had their work to do. They did it, and are gone home. To their own Master they stand or fall. We have our work to do. Let us do it, for we shall be rewarded according to that which we do.

Let us make sure that we are not only in the Church — but in Christ. Let us take heed and beware of covetousness. No sin sooner hardens the heart. No sin is more offensive to God; therefore it is called "idolatry." No sin is more dangerous in a professor of religion. It is a sin to which a certain class of professors is peculiarly liable. It has ruined thousands — millions; and will no doubt ruin

millions more!

Judas, because covetous — was called "a thief." A covetous man is seldom honest.

Judas, though an apostle — was called "a devil;" because a professor under the power of sin, is more like a devil than any one beside, for Satan transforms himself into an angel of light on purpose to deceive. Judas was not suspected by the other apostles; let us not, therefore, be satisfied that we are right — because the Lord's people have a good opinion of us.

Merciful Lord, preserve us from self-deception, keep us from the power of Satan, do not allow any iniquity to have dominion over us. Let us be numbered with your chosen, and walk with you in white, in glory everlasting!

## 13 The Gracious Design

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The Gracious Design The presence of a wise, kind, sympathizing friend, is always pleasant, and at times peculiarly valuable. What, then, must the presence of Jesus be to his disciples! But as our nearest and dearest friends must at some time leave us, so it was necessary for Jesus to leave his disciples, and return to his Father. Having, therefore, pleaded with his Father to keep them, he says, "Now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13). The Savior's Departure: "Now come I to You." He was returning home — ascending up where he was before. This was necessary, for his work on earth would be finished. He had no more to do for his people on earth which required his personal presence. His foes would be all conquered; for he spoiled principalities and powers, and made an open show of them, triumphing over them in his cross. The serpent's head was bruised. The world was overcome. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. His engagements were met. All that he undertook to do, was done. Every bill was met. Every bond was honored. The Surety may now be discharged. His sacrifice would be offered; which sacrifice .

. .

put away the sins of his people,

made reconciliation for them, and

satisfied divine justice on their behalf. His departure was desirable, as well as necessary. If he did not go, the Comforter would not come. Besides which, it was in order to his exaltation, to his honor and glory. The seat at his Father's right hand was prepared and waiting for him. All the hosts of Heaven were ready and desirous to do him honor. He must, therefore, depart and go unto his Father. The Place of His Prayer: "I speak in the world." Jesus on earth, addressed his Father in Heaven — and addressed him on behalf of his disciples. He prayed audibly. He seems to have been accustomed to do so. On a former occasion, the disciples were so struck with his prayer, that it seemed to them as if they knew not how to pray, and therefore, when he ceased praying, they said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." And he gave them, not a form of prayer — but a model, after which they were to pray, saying, "After this manner, pray."

He now prayed where his children were met, in the open air, at eventide, near to the garden of Gethsemane. In the world, where his disciples were exposed to dangers, afflictions, and sorrows — Jesus prayed for them. Earth has been consecrated by the prayers of the Son of God. Every place is hallowed ground. Therefore the apostle says, "I will that men pray everywhere." When we pray, let us remember that Jesus prayed here before us. The Object He Had in View: "That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." He uttered his prayer in the presence of his disciples, to make them happy. In prayer we . . .

open our heart,

reveal our feelings, and

give expression to our desires. Jesus wished his disciples to see how his heart glowed with love to them, how deeply he felt interested in them, and how ardently he sought their good.

Jesus not only prayed for them — but with them. He stood among them. He was surrounded by them when "he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, Father, the hour has come." He had bequeathed to them his peace, and he wished to impart to them his joy, his own joy, that which filled his heart, and had sustained him in all the past. Jesus rejoiced and had joy . . .

in what he had done for them,

in what he had obtained for them, and

in the glory arising to his Father therefrom.

He wished his beloved ones also to rejoice in what he had done in their name and stead; and he wishes us still to do so. For us he has . . .

fulfilled the law,

satisfied divine justice,

paid the penalty of sin,

conquered Satan,

shut the gates of Hell, and

opened the doors of Heaven,

obtained . . .

a title to glory,

grace to help us in every time of need,

all good things on earth, and

all glorious things in Heaven!

And, O blessed thought! God's glory will be great in our salvation. God will be honored in the salvation of his Church, more than by all his works besides. He will be more honored by the salvation of one of the elect — than by the damnation of all that are lost.

Jesus wished to fill them with joy, as he had said to them before: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Often do we read of the disciples afterward being filled with joy, and rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The object of our joy is infinite, for it is God himself, "We joy in God," who is our "exceeding joy." The supply of our joy is inexhaustible, for it is the fullness of God. Ought we not, then, to be filled with all joy and peace in believing?

Observe, Christ is the author of our joy. We would have no joy but for Jesus; but in him we may rejoice always. His joy is ours, and we should rejoice in the same objects and subjects that he does.

Joy flows from Jesus through the truth; therefore he spoke before them, and gave utterance to such deep and solemn truths. Nor should we expect to be happy but as we believe, receive into our minds, and seek to have communion with God through the truth.

Joy is a great blessing, as it strengthens for duty, and prepares for suffering. The happy Christian is the holy Christian. True joy always . . .

dedicates us to God,

fills us with zeal for God, and

makes us careful in our observance of his precepts.

So, also, joy fortifies the mind against suffering, and makes us bold in his cause.

Christians should aim to make each other happy; and in order to this, they should pray together. When Jesus would fill the hearts of his disciples with joy, he led them to the throne of grace, praying with them, and for them. So we, if we would comfort one another, should meet together for prayer, and should pray with and for each other when we meet.

We should encourage joy by looking back — once we were not a people — but are now the people of God; once we had not obtained mercy — but now we have. (1 Peter 2:10)

We should also encourage joy by taking right views of the present — we know that all things work together for good (Romans 8:28).

We should also encourage joy by looking forward to the future — holding fast our confidence, and the rejoicing in hope firm unto the end (Hebrews 3:6).

Nothing is so likely to make us happy as dwelling upon what Jesus has done for us, and is to us. He has for us magnified the law and made it honorable. He is to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He has for us obtained everlasting salvation. He is to us, all and in all. Let us, therefore, rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Let us dwell upon the discourses of Jesus, and the prayers of Jesus — that we may have his joy fulfilled in ourselves.

Beloved, true religion makes happy; and the more we have of it, the happier we shall be. Joy flows from Jesus; and the more we are with him, and the more communion we have with him — the more joy shall we receive. O to be wholly, entirely, and everlastingly taken up with Jesus, and with Jesus alone! My soul, remember that Jesus has gone back to his Father, and now he appears in the presence of God for you. While on earth he did all, and said all, that was necessary to make you happy; and what he did and said, the Holy Spirit has recorded, in order that your joy may be full.

There is more in Jesus to make you happy — than there is in yourself or in the world to make you miserable. Keep the eye fixed on what Jesus has done for you; and let your heart rest upon what Jesus has said to you. Remember his Word is, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me." Nothing is so likely to keep the mind and the spirit composed, as confidence in Jesus. Confiding in Jesus — you will be happy, and your happiness will bring honor to your Savior and his cause.

Holy Comforter, when fears rise within me, whenever doubts beset me, whenever gloom creeps over me — direct my mind to what Jesus did and said, and bring home these sweet words with power to my soul, "These things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Precious Savior, I bless your dear name, for your regard not only to my welfare — but my happiness!

## 14 The World's Hatred

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The World's Hatred The more one thinks of Jesus, or reads his holy Word — the more one is struck with his wondrous love and amazing condescension. Everything in Christ is wonderful; and everything done by him is wonderful too. O that the Holy Spirit would unfold to us more and more of his glory, and allow us to enjoy more and more of his love!

All that he received from his Father — he gave to his people — in order to render them holy and happy in this miserable world. Hence, addressing his Father, he says, "I have given them your Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14). The Communication: "I have given them your Word." The gospel comes as directly from God, as the law did. In giving the law, God came down in awesome majesty on Mount Sinai, and spoke the words of the law, making even Moses exceedingly fear and quake. But in giving the gospel, he sent his well-beloved Son, to speak to us with man's tongue, in words of tenderness and love. Jesus committed the gospel to his disciples . . .

as a trust, which they were carefully to keep;

as a light, which they were widely to diffuse;

and as a testimony, which they were to bear. This gospel of the kingdom is to be published in all nations for a testimony; and then shall the end come. The gospel is given to us,

that knowing it, we may profess it;

that professing it, we may preach it;

that preaching it, we may enjoy it;

that enjoying it, we may work with it;

that working with it, we may be sanctified by it;

that being sanctified by it, we may war with it;

and that conquering our enemies with it, we may hold communion with God through it. The Danger or Trial: "The world has hated them." There is in the world, a bitter hatred to godliness; for as fallen man cannot bear to stand in the presence of God — so he cannot endure to look upon his image in his people. Every true disciple of Christ is more or less hated by the world. The world hates . . .

their persons — as professing Christ;

their principles — as preferring Christ;

their profession — as openly espousing the cause of Christ;

and their practices — as being a copy of the life of Christ. The more we resemble Christ — the greater will be the hatred of the world. "If the world hates you," said Jesus, "keep in mind that it

hated me first. If you belonged to the world — it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also!" "You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake." The heart of the world is full of the bitterest enmity against God; and just in proportion as we resemble him, obey him, and take part with him — will the world hate us. So the apostle testifies: "All who live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." Until Satan is bound, and man is reconciled to God, there will be hatred in the world to the godly, and to godliness. The Reason or Occasion of It. Christians receive God's Word and act upon it; which is offensive to carnal reason, and opposed to all vice. They are not of the world.

They differ from the world in nature — being born of God, they are spiritual.

They differ from the world in worship — for they worship God in spirit and in truth.

They differ from the world in spirit — for they have the Spirit of Christ.

They differ from the world in behavior — as they imitate God as dear children.

They are living testimonies against it — being weaned from its wealth and turned from its wickedness.

They are not of the world — even as Christ is not of the world. They are not equally unlike the world, and separate from the world, as Christ was; but there is a measure of conformity between him and them. To real Christians — the world is a foreign land, an enemy's country, a desert and a wilderness. The roving Arab of the East, does not more really differ from the civilized inhabitant of one of our cities — than does the worldling from the Christian. Heaven is our fatherland. Heaven is our home. The saints' lot is, to be hated by the world. It is the enemy of Christ, and will therefore be our enemy too. We must not expect its good word; and if it grows very friendly, there is reason to fear that we are becoming like it! If we have its good word, it is a bad sign. Our Lord said, "Woe be unto you — when all men speak well of you." The saints' privilege is to be delivered from this evil world. This was God's purpose. For this Jesus died. This is sure to be effected by the Spirit's work. We . . .

are unfitted for the world,

lose our relish for the carnal pleasures of the world, and

are called to come out from the world and to be separate. The saints' duty is, to be dead to the world. Jesus was dead to the world; and by virtue of our union to him and fellowship with him, we should be dead to the world too. Paul was crucified to the world, and the world was crucified to him, by the cross of Jesus; and just so it should be with us.

Christ highly respects those who suffer with him. He has a sympathy, a fellow-feeling with them. He remembers how he suffered in the world and from the world once, and therefore he looks upon and supports those who suffer now.

Hatred to the saints is the very image of the devil. Satan hates God supremely. He hates the Lord Jesus bitterly. He hates all who love Christ — and just in proportion as they love Christ. The same spirit he has infused into the world. The devil has stamped his image upon the world. Just in

proportion as we dislike godly men, and hate gospel holiness, do we resemble Satan.

True religion is a crime in the world's opinion. False religions, the world will tolerate, approve, applaud, embrace, and support; but true religion it hates, despises, and persecutes! And the purer and the more Scriptural our religion is, the more criminal and offensive will it appear in the eyes of the world! The world IN the Church and the world OUT of the Church — will hate the godly. The world and the Church are pretty much mixed together in our country in the present day, and therefore certain forms of persecution have ceased. Instead of the world being converted and brought into the Church — the Church is converted and become mixed up with the world! But though there is an amalgamation, if there is any spiritual life, there can be no union between the Christian and the world — there can be no fellowship. For what fellowship has light with darkness? As it always was, it is now, and will be: "He who was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even so it is now."

O for grace to live distinct from the world, unlike the world — that the hatred of the world may prove our likeness to Jesus! Spirit of Jesus, make me more like my beloved Lord, and enable me to count the hatred of the world for Christ's sake, my glory. I would not have that world which hated and crucified my Lord — to love me. I would rather have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings!

## 15 Keep Them From Evil

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### Keep Them From Evil

It is no uncommon thing for Christians to get weary of the world — in consequence of its toils, trials, and troubles; and they sometimes become impatient to leave it. Their cry is, "O for the wings of a dove! then would I fly away and be at rest!" But this is wrong — decidedly wrong. The Lord wants us here. He can make use of us here. It is necessary, for our own sakes, that we should remain here. The Savior taught us this when pleading for his disciples, for he said, "I do not pray that you should take them out of the world — but that you should keep them from the evil" (John 17:15).

What the Savior Did Not Pray For? He would not pray for the death of his disciples, or their translation to glory. To us it may appear best if the Lord were to regenerate, justify, perfectly sanctify his people — and remove them to glory at once! But it did not appear so to Jesus. He considered it best to continue them here, because his kingdom is here at present. It is not of the world — but it is in the world. It is totally distinct from the world — but it is located here for a season. He has, therefore, need of his disciples here; for they are his subjects, his servants, and his witnesses.

Christ's kingdom is spiritual in its nature, laws, ordinances, and subjects; and it is increased, established, and sanctified — by the united efforts of his disciples. They can glorify God more on earth at present — than they could in Heaven. Here they honor him . . .

by suffering for him,

by working for him,

by believing on him, and

by exhibiting the Christian graces, the fruits of the Spirit.

It is better for the Lord's people to remain here for a time, that they may . . .

learn wisdom,

gain experience,

exercise faith in God,

and be tried by him.

It is much better for the world, that God should keep his people here; for they are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. They show practically what is the nature, power, and tendency of real religion — how it purifies, sustains, and gives the victory over it, and all that is evil.

What Jesus Did Pray For? That they might be kept from evil:

1. From the evil of the world — from its evil spirit, which is carnal, and directly opposed to the spirit of Christ, and the requirements of God's holy law.
2. From the evil course of the world — which is downward, corrupt, and corrupting.
3. From the evil customs of the world, which are vain, wicked, and opposed to the mind of God.
4. From the Evil One, who is the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. He stirs up evil men — to hate, oppose, and persecute them. He stirs up corruptions within them — to weaken, discourage, and mislead them.
5. From all evil, Jesus prays that they may be kept.

God keeps them by his Spirit — who warns, teaches, strengthens, and works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

He keeps them also by his providence — which sometimes removes sinful objects from before them — and at other times, prevents violent temptations from assailing them.

God graciously keeps his children, in answer to the prayer of Jesus, by not allowing the inclination to sin — and the opportunity to sin, to meet! Sometimes they are violently tempted to sin, and feel inclined to yield — but they have not the opportunity. At other times, the opportunity presents itself — but they have not the inclination. Thus they are divinely kept and graciously preserved. The world is full of evil! All that is in the world is . . .

the lust of the flesh,

the lust of the eye,

and the pride of life.

Jesus hates evil — but he does not hate the world. Just so we should distinguish between the world — and the evil that is in it. We may, we ought, to pity its victims; but to hate the evil which victimizes them.

We may be in the world — and not be injured by it. The world is the field — in which we are to labor for Christ. Here we are to plough up the fallow ground, to sow the good seed, and reclaim the waste places for Jesus. The world is the battleground — on which we are to fight the good fight of faith, to overcome Satan, and crucify the old man. The world is the ocean — over which we are to sail to the port of glory; and it befits us to look well to . . .

the vessel in which we sail,

the captain who commands it,

the pilot who steers it, and

the compass by which it is steered

— so that we may . . .

avoid the rocks and quicksands,

outlive the storms and tempests,

and cast anchor within the veil! The world is the school — in which we are to learn . . .

the evil of sin,

the power of corruption,

the craft of Satan,

the preciousness of Christ,

the value of Heaven, and

the importance and worth of God's promises. The world is the hospital — in which we are under the Spirit's treatment, in order that we may be restored to health, and prepared to enjoy our Father's eternal house and home.

We should, therefore, rather pray to be kept from evil, than be removed out of the world. We may be useful, very useful in it, and useful in a way in which we cannot be in Heaven. Here, we can . . .

visit the sick for Jesus,

clothe the naked for Jesus,

feed the hungry for Jesus,

relieve the widow and fatherless for Jesus,

and teach the ignorant for Jesus — and thus feed, clothe, visit, relieve, and teach Jesus in doing so — for He has said, "Inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these My brethren — you did it unto Me!"

Let us not, therefore, be anxious . . .

to leave the field of labor until our work is done;

or to get out the battle until the victory is gained;

or to leave school until our education is complete;

or to be discharged from the hospital until we are perfectly cured. Our dependence and confidence should be in God. We cannot keep ourselves; but he can keep us. The evil that would be too strong for us — is as nothing to him. As he kept Israel in Egypt,

as he kept the three youths in the burning fiery furnace,

and as he kept Daniel in the lions' den —

so he can keep us.

Let us, therefore, place our dependence on him,

let us exercise confidence in him,

let us earnestly plead with him — and in so doing he will keep us from the evil of the world, and preserve us unto his kingdom and glory!

Blessed Jesus, how kind, how thoughtful, how gracious of you — thus to pray for your disciples and for us! You now intercede for us in the same manner — you now are pleading with your Father, that while your people are in the world — they may be kept from the evil of the world!

Holy Father, did you not accept and register the prayer of your beloved Son? Did it not meet with your approbation and approval? Will you not answer his prayer in my experience?

Holy Spirit, is it not your work and your delight to keep the disciples of Jesus from the evil of the world? Will you not keep me — for his dear sake, and to the honor of his holy and ever blessed name? Keep, O keep me from . . .

evil thoughts,

evil words,

evil tempers,

and evil courses!

Keep me . . .

by your power,

by your inward teachings, and

by your special providence — until summoned from the world to enter into glory!

## 19 Saints Not of the World

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Saints Not of the World The world and the Church are essentially and eternally distinct — and they ought to be distinguishable. The Church ought not to mix with the world — but to bear a practical testimony against it, that its works and ways are evil. All through our Lord's prayer, he keeps up the distinction, and twice over he asserts of his disciples, "They are not of the world — even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). The Lord Jesus Was Not of the World. He did not descend from Adam by natural and ordinary generation — or else his nature would have been polluted, and he would have been implicated in the guilt of the first transgression. The Holy Spirit descended on purpose to form his Humanity in the Virgin's womb; and by his influence and operation, it was preserved pure from all stain of sin, and all spot of corruption. His human nature was perfectly holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. His life and conduct were righteous, perfectly righteous; every emotion, sensation, thought, word, and deed — were in strict accordance with the requirements of God's holy law, so that his Father was pleased with him in all things. His end and aim, which he kept constantly in view, and which he reached in every action — was God's glory. His birth being supernatural,

his person being perfectly holy,

his conduct being strictly righteous,

and his aim being always God's glory —

he was clearly not of the world! This being the case — the world hated him — hated him, though he ever sought its benefit! The world manifested its hatred in the most bitter and cruel way. But he will subdue and transform it, and claim it at length; for he sympathizes with God, who created it for his glory still . . .

claims it as his own,

commands its obedience,

threatens it for its sins,

invites it to his throne of grace,

beseeches it to be reconciled

— and is yet hated by it!

O Savior, you are infinitely superior to the world, eternally distinct from the world — but a friend and benefactor to the world!

Believers Are Not of the World: "They are not of the world — even as I am not of the world." They are born from above, and have another spiritual nature in them. They possess a nature far superior to that of the world — which unfits them for its pleasures and pursuits, and qualifies them

for the enjoyments and employments of the better world.

They are delivered from the thralldom of the world, by virtue of their union with Christ — and are raised above its wealth and its joys. They are sent to testify unto the world — that its ways and works are evil, and continually witness against it. They are citizens of another country, even a Heavenly one, and look forward to the time when they shall take up their freedom!

They will not be conquered by the world — but overcome it by faith.

They will not be judged with it — but with Christ will sit in judgment on it.

They will not be punished like it — neither in the present nor in the future state.

True believers are not of the world!

Look at the world's state, condemned — at theirs, justified!

Look at its condition, wretched — and theirs, happy!

Look at its character, enemies to God — and theirs, the friends of God!

Look at its course, sin — and theirs, holiness!

Look at its god, Satan, the most degraded, depraved, and despicable being in existence — and theirs, Jehovah, the high and lofty one, the holy and happy one, the great and glorious one!

Look at its end, destruction — and theirs, salvation. The world is darkness — they are light. The world is corrupt — they are purified. The world is in chains — they are free.

We are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world!

If we are poor — let us not, then, envy the world. A saint in rags — is preferable to a sinner in robes! A believer in a hovel — is happier than a worldling in a palace! A Christian at the worst — is far better off than a worldling at the best!

Whatever we have, we have with God's blessing!

Whatever the world has, it has with God's curse!

We are training for greatness and grandeur! The world is preparing for shame and everlasting contempt!

Let us not be worldly, if wealthy. The world is no model for a Christian. We should not dress so expensively, nor furnish our homes so extravagantly, nor live so luxuriously as the world does! But as strangers and pilgrims in the world, we should abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

Let us not be dejected — if we are stripped of what we now have. We are not of the world — we do not have our portion here. We need but little of this world's goods, and our Heavenly Father will see to it that we have enough. He will not allow us to lose anything that is essential to our holiness or happiness. As our lives are insured by our Heavenly Father — so all our needs are anticipated, and provided for. Lose what we may — we shall never lose . . .

our God,

the title deed of our glorious inheritance, or

our place at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

Let us never court the world's friendship. We should be civil, courteous, and obliging — we should be ready to do it all the good we can; but too close an intimacy is injurious. "Don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" We must therefore be devoted to God, walk with God, and be on terms of the closest intimacy with God. But if we would — we must . . .

keep distinct from the world,

beware of the spirit of the world, and

declare by our whole bearing that we are not of the world.

Let us not be troubled much about the world. As we are . . .

chosen out of it,

redeemed from it, and

shall soon leave it — we should not allow ourselves to be very much affected by any of its affairs. The world's politics, pleasures, and pursuits — should be looked upon by us with the eye of a foreigner — for we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, as all our fathers were. We arrived in the world but yesterday — and we leave tomorrow; let us not, therefore, mix up with the world, or be much taken up with its schemes and cares, its speculations or its prospects.

Let us always keep up our distinction from the world. Not in a spirit of pride or self-righteousness, as if conscious of some supposed superiority in ourselves. But in a meek, lowly, and loving spirit — let us avoid all that is really evil, and abstain from what has the appearance of evil.

Let us always appear on the Lord's side, assisting the Lord's cause, and helping forward the Lord's work.

Gracious Savior, we bless you that we are not of the world, even as you are not of the world. Help, O help us, by your grace and Spirit — to walk in the world as you did, and to treat the world as you did; and so either be the means of its conversion, or leave it without excuse.

Heavenly Father, as You have chosen us out of the world — give us grace to live above the world, and enable us to glorify You in the world! Make us like your beloved Son, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Oh, to live in this world as strangers and pilgrims — as those whose treasure is above — and whose hearts are there also!

## 20 Sanctify Them

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Sanctify Them The Lord has set apart the godly for himself; and as set apart for God — they ought to stand out in bold relief from the world. As consecrated to God — they should live for him, and for him alone. This is the design of grace, and this is the desire of Jesus; hence he prays for his disciples, "Sanctify them through your truth; your Word is truth" (John 17:17). The Favor Sought: "Sanctify them." To sanctify, is to separate and set apart entirely for a holy use and purpose. Thus the tabernacle was sanctified, and all its vessels, for God's service; and they were no more to be considered common — or used for common purposes. They were the Lord's, and they were for the Lord, and for the Lord alone. But to sanctify people includes the idea of cleansing and purifying. Therefore, to cleanse his people from the guilt of sin — Jesus suffered and died for them; as it is written, "That he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered outside the gate." Thus he expiated their sins, put them away, and delivered them from all the penal consequences of them.

Having by himself purged their sin — he sends the Holy Spirit to purify their souls, and to stamp his own image upon them. That Spirit . . .

convinces of sin,

sets the heart against sin,

delivers from the power of sin, and

ultimately purges away every stain of sin!

Therefore Paul, speaking of some of the foulest crimes which could disgrace humanity, and of some of the greatest criminals to be found in the heathen world, and having testified that as such they could not inherit the kingdom of God, adds, to the glory of God's free grace, and the Spirit's sanctifying power: "And such were some of you; but you are washed — but you are sanctified — but you are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The sanctification of God's people includes also the adorning of their persons with all the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ whom they receive, produces in them love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance — along with every moral virtue and Christian grace which can perfect or adorn an intellectual and immortal being.

When, therefore, Jesus prayed that his disciples may be sanctified, he prayed that they may be . .

wholly and entirely set apart for God and his glory;

delivered from the guilt and power of sin; and

adorned with every moral virtue and Christian grace.

Observe, None but God can sanctify us. It requires a divine right in us — and absolute control over us. He who claims us, and can get easy access to the heart, changing and controlling it — he alone can set us apart for himself, and make us like himself.

Sanctification is the glory of an intelligent creature. What can be a greater honor than to be set apart for God, and conformed to the moral likeness of God — to be devoted to the service and glory of the all-glorious Creator?

God's aim in all he does for us, is our sanctification.

He chose us in Christ — that we might be holy.

Jesus gave himself for us — that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

He called us with a holy calling; and on the ground of it Peter says, "As the One who called you is holy — you also are to be holy in all your conduct; for it is written: Be holy, because I am holy."

Sanctification was imperfect, even in the apostles. Sanctification is a progressive work, begun in regeneration, carried on through life, and completed at the resurrection of the just. For though we were set apart in the decree of God, and actually set apart by God when he called us by his grace — yet our characters are not perfectly formed, our likeness to Christ is not complete, nor shall we be entirely holy in body, soul, and spirit — until Jesus comes.

Sanctification should be sought as a favor from God. Jesus sought it at the hands of his Father, for his immediate disciples as such, and so should we seek it for ourselves. May the Lord sanctify us wholly; and I pray God that our whole body, and soul, and spirit may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The MEDIUM Through Which Sanctification Flows: "Sanctify them through your truth — your Word is truth." The Bible is not only true — but it is the truth; only in a little lower sense than the Lord Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and of whom John testified, "We beheld his glory, full of grace and truth." God's truth, in its purity, simplicity, and perfection — is to be found in God's book.

God works by the truth. Are we begotten of God? It is "by the Word of truth." Are we born again? It is "by the Word of God which lives and abides forever." Are we quickened? "Your Word has quickened me." Are we enlightened? "The entrance of your Word gives light." Are we comforted? It is by the "comfort of the Scriptures." By his Word, God . . .

forms the judgment,

disposes the mind,

directs the feet, and

preserves from falling. The great truth by which God sanctifies, is the gospel — the good news . . .

of his amazing love to us,

of the sacrifice of his Son for us,

of his Spirit's work within us, and

of the glorious provision he has made for us.

God's order is:

first the truth of the gospel,

then the illumination of the Spirit,

then the bestowal of saving faith, and

then holiness of life and conduct. As holiness flows in the channel of truth — so sin flows in the channel of error. As God sanctifies by the truth — so the devil degrades and debases by error. It was by believing the devil's lie in preference to God's truth — that man fell at first; and it is by preferring error to truth — that man continues in opposition to God, alienated from the life of God.

Truth is precious — error is pernicious.

Truth is medicinal — error is poisonous. That alone is the truth of God . . .

which tends to purify and make us like God, and

which sets us apart from the world for the service and glory of God. The truth, therefore, should be valued, preserved, and used. We cannot value truth too highly — unless we put it in the place of Christ. Hence, when Solomon exhorts us to buy the truth, he puts no price upon it — but would have us buy it at any price, cost what it may.

Having the truth, we should carefully preserve it. The martyrs laid down their lives to preserve the truth; and if necessary, so should we. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

We should use the truth; for as food will not strengthen except it is eaten, as medicine will not cure except it be taken — so truth will not sanctify, unless it is applied and employed.

We should daily pray for God to confirm, carry on, and complete his work of sanctification in us. We need that the testimony of Christ be confirmed in us; that He who has begun the good work should carry it on, and complete it in the day of Christ. This being the case, we should pray for it, even as Jesus did for his disciples. The grace which began the work — must complete it; and the completion of it will be to the praise of his glorious grace.

We should look for the effect of truth in our deeper sanctification. There are diseases in the physical system which prevent a man increasing in size, or in strength — eat what he may; and there is something very like this in some professors of religion. But if the truth works effectually and properly in us, it will produce . . .

firmer trust,

stronger love,

steadier zeal, and

more complete obedience to the divine will. The truth will more thoroughly . . .

devote us to God,

conform us to the image of God, and  
set us apart for the service and praise of God.

Beloved, are you sanctified? Is your heart set upon the entire and thorough sanctification of your person, that you may be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and prepared for the Master's use? The truth must sanctify you; but it will only sanctify you as you mix faith with it, and have communion with God through it. And you will only be able to mix faith with the truth, as you enjoy the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit. Seek, therefore, to enjoy more of the presence, power, and operation of the Holy Spirit in your soul. The Spirit will . . .

lead you to the truth,  
unfold the truth to your mind,  
show you Jesus in the truth, and  
lead you to have personal dealings with him as the great Refiner.

Jesus' heart is set upon your sanctification, and as you drink into his mind — your heart will be set upon it too. He wishes you to be like himself in holiness, even as he is like his Father; and you will wish above all things to resemble him too.

Holy and ever blessed God, as you sanctify your people through your truth — be pleased thus to sanctify me. Give me a growing love to the truth, a fuller and more correct knowledge of the truth, and may I feel more of its cleansing, separating, and elevating power!

## 21 The Mission

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The Mission In how many ways the Father has displayed his love and manifested his goodwill to us! What wondrous proofs he has given of his grace and mercy! But the great proof was the gift of his Son for us, and the mission of his Son to us. The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world; and in pleading for the sanctification and preservation of his disciples, Jesus alludes to this great fact, saying, "As You sent Me into the world — I also have sent them into the world" (John 17:18). The Mission of the Savior. He was God's Sent One — sent for an especial purpose, and to do a work which no one else could effect. He was equal in nature with the Father; for being sent does not imply superiority in the sender. Indeed, there may be circumstances in which the superior may agree to be sent by the inferior. But here the sender and the sent are equal. This was one of the arrangements of the everlasting covenant; which covenant grew out of the eternal council about man's salvation. In which covenant, it was arranged:

1. that the Father would represent the divine nature in Heaven, and invisibly maintain the rights of the eternal throne;

2. that the Son would be sent into the world, visibly to represent the divine nature to man, and maintain the honor of that throne in the matter of man's salvation;

3. that the Holy Spirit would be sent by the Son, to work secretly and spiritually on all them that are saved. The Sent One, therefore, was the glorious Son of God. The Sender was the glorious Father. Here we see the distinction of the persons in the divine nature. The Sender is not the Sent One, neither is the Sent One the Sender — and yet there is but one God, one divine nature; in which nature is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each distinct from the other — yet all being naturally, essentially, and eternally divine. The Father engaged to send the Son — and the Son condescended to agree to be sent, to carry out the plans and purposes of the everlasting covenant. The sending implies three things:

1. It implies an office. Jesus came to fill the office of a Mediator, and to do all the work necessary thereunto.

2. It implies that he was qualified, for God would not send an unqualified person on such an important work. His qualification arises out of the glorious mystery of his person, as the God-man, comprising a fullness of wisdom and knowledge, of gifts and graces.

3. It implies also a commission; he did not take this honor upon himself — but was called of God, as was Aaron. To him his Father said, when he ordained and commissioned him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." The PLACE into which he was sent was not the Jewish temple — but the world. He was to be . . .

the one Mediator for the race,

the one atoning sacrifice for sin,

the one High Priest of our profession,

the one Savior of the world.

He therefore pushed down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and sent his apostles to teach all nations, to preach the gospel to every creature. The DESIGN with which Christ was sent, comprises the whole work of mediation.

He was sent to say just what he did, and all that he did.

He was sent to do just what he did, and all that he did.

He was sent to be just what he was, and what he is.

He delivered the whole message with which he was sent, every word.

He did all he came to accomplish, nor failed in one point.

He became all that was designed by his advent, and is now the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him. The Mission of the Apostles: "As You sent Me into the world — I also have sent them into the world." Jesus was the Father's ambassador; the apostles were his ambassadors. He was the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession. He was the Angel of the Covenant, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. They were sent as ministers, to preach as he did, to confirm their doctrine as he did, and to suffer for the truth as he did; to suffer for truth, as martyrs — not for sin, as a sacrifice of expiation. They offered up no sacrifice for sin — but proclaimed and published in every direction the one all-glorious and all-sufficient sacrifice which Christ had made when he offered up himself.

They were sent to fill a solemn office; to negotiate with men for God, beseeching them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God; to perform a difficult work, being witnesses for Christ, and publishing his gospel to all nations; and to occupy a dangerous position — filling the front rank in the Redeemer's army.

They needed, therefore, power and protection; and the Holy Spirit furnished them with the power, and the presence of Christ with the latter. They needed deep sanctification and constant preservation; and for these Jesus entreated his Father. Jesus had authority to send them — and he used it. He had power to protect them — and he employed it. He promised them his presence — and he never failed to grant it.

Observe, Preachers are messengers, not mere letter-carriers. They receive their message from Christ, and are sent to proclaim it in his name everywhere, and to everybody. No one has a right to forbid them, for the earth is the Lord's. They are not required to ask anyone's permission, or to neglect their work because anyone threatens them. The apostles did not. The apostles would not — but put the silencing question, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to obey man rather than God — you judge!" They felt that necessity was laid upon them, and therefore confessed, "We cannot but speak the things which we have heard and seen." And Paul afterwards boldly acknowledged, "Necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

Preachers should go, preach, and be faithful. Watching the leadings of divine Providence, they should go wherever the finger of Providence points them. They should preach the gospel to every

creature to whom they can gain access. They should be faithful to their message — and deliver it plainly, forcibly, and as if feeling its importance in the depths of the soul. They should be faithful to their calling — as set apart for the promulgation and defense of the gospel. They should be faithful to the people — unmoved by the frown of the great, unmoved by the applause of the many.

O Lord, make all your ministers faithful, that they may work up to the highest point of their ability — that they may fearlessly and with all plainness of speech, deliver their message to all whom they can, and persevere in their work until called from it by yourself.

Christians are sent into the world — not into a monastery, or nunnery, or hermitage — but into the world. In the world, they are to . . .

learn out the value, importance, and sanctifying power of the truth;

observe God's law, walk by the Savior's precepts, and adorn the holy gospel;

live by faith, believing in the presence of an invisible God, trusting in the atoning work of an absent Savior, and resting on the promises of One, the dispensations of whose providence tries them to the very core;

conquer corruption within them, and strive against sin without them,

overcome all that is opposed to the honor of their beloved Lord. In the world they are to glorify God — this is the one grand business of their lives, and to this they should devote all their ransomed powers.

If Jesus has sent us into the world — then he has a work for us to do for him, and he intends thereby to do good to us; let us therefore be content.

If Jesus has sent us into the world, depend upon it, that it is the best place for us at present; and therefore let us prefer being where Christ would have us to be.

If Christ has sent us into the world, it is with a purpose worthy of himself; let us therefore daily put ourselves afresh into his hands, saying, "Here I am, Lord; do with me as seems good to you."

O Jesus, as you have sent us into the world, and as we are here by your will and appointment — keep, O keep us from the evil of the world, and preserve us unto your eternal kingdom and glory! Help us to speak for you, to act for you, to suffer for you; everywhere, and always, to bring honor to your most holy name.

Holy Spirit, fill us with courage, arm us with zeal, and fire us with love, that as Jesus honored his Father who sent him — so we may honor our beloved Savior who has sent us!

Heavenly Father, be with us in the world, and enable us to overcome the world, so that, when our mission is ended, we may forever rest with you!

## 22 Jesus Sanctifying Himself

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### Jesus Sanctifying Himself

Every wise man will fix on an end worthy of himself in all his undertakings; we may trust him for this. Just so, the Lord Jesus had an end in view worthy of himself in all that he did and suffered. Upon that end, his heart was set. Toward that end, every action tended. Having, therefore, prayed for the sanctification of his disciples, and having referred to the mission for which he intended them, he says, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:19).

WHAT Jesus Did: He sanctified himself. He separated and set himself apart to be a sacrifice for their sins. He had a right to do this if he desired — for he was an independent being, and had a full and unquestionable right to his own person. He had authority to do this — according to the arrangements of the everlasting covenant, as well as on the ground of his own absolute supremacy. He had power to do so — for he had full control over himself, to do as he pleased, or what seemed good in his sight. He had love enough for his people to do it.

He would therefore break away from the association of angels, leave his Father's house, and vacate his glorious throne — in order to set himself apart, as was the paschal lamb of old — to be a sacrifice to God for the sins of his people! He devoted himself to endure unparalleled sufferings, even the wrath and curse of God; all that injured justice could inflict upon him, as the penalty of his people's sins! He undertook to drink and drain the cup which contained the bitter portion deserved by them. He devoted himself to endure all of this with patience, being led as a lamb to the slaughter, and standing as a sheep silent before its shearers. He undertook all of this, not only with patience — but with delight, as he said, "I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." The will of God was our sanctification — our sanctification by the sacrifice of his life for us; and for this he set himself apart with delight. What wondrous, what amazing love!

He qualified himself for his work by taking the body which the Father promised to prepare — by assuming our entire nature, free from all stain of sin, and actually holy. His sanctification, therefore, comprised . . .

the setting himself apart for the work of our redemption,

the devoting of himself to it, and

the qualifying or preparing of himself for it. For WHOM He Sanctified Himself: "For their sakes I sanctify myself." He had reference primarily to his disciples — but not exclusively so, for he included his whole Church, the entire body of God's elect. Hence the apostle says, "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her — to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless!"

He did it for all who are sanctified by God the Father, in his eternal decree. They are said also to be "sanctified in Christ Jesus," and therefore we read, "By one offering he has perfected forever those who are sanctified." He did it for the whole family of God, of which he is a part, and which are identified with him; as says Paul,

"In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are of the same family." Thus Christ and his people have one nature, and are of one family; for which cause he became the true and proper substitute for them, being both suited and sufficient. The OBJECT He Had in View: "That they also may be sanctified through the truth." This sanctification includes:

1. the purging or expiating of their sins by his blood, and "by himself he purged our sins;"
2. the separation of them from the world, which is the carrying out of the Father's "eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus;"
3. the consecration of them to God, to serve him, enjoy him, and glorify him — that they also may be sacrifices to God, not to make an atonement — but to express gratitude and give praise. Paul therefore could say, "I am ready to be offered" — "If I am offered on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all." And he exhorts believers, "by the mercies of God, to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, as their reasonable service."

Also their sanctification is . . .

IN truth — that is, truly — not typically; spiritually — not ceremonially;

THROUGH the truth — as the rule according to which, and the instrument by which they are purified and set apart for God;

FOR the truth, that is — to receive it, retain it, spread it, defend it, illustrate it, and honor it. By nature we are all unclean, and mixed up with the world. There is no difference between us and the rest; we were following the same course, and were children of wrath, even as others. Our separation and consecration is by blood — the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Holiness is the best thing for us; the very best thing we could possess — better than Heaven, if it were possible to possess Heaven without it. The Lord Jesus had . . .

infinite wisdom to choose for us;

infinite love to dispose him to choose the best thing for us;

infinite merit to procure anything he pleased — and he fixed on holiness! The choice of the highest wisdom,

the gift of the greatest love,

the purchase of the greatest merit

— is holiness, or the sanctification of our persons to God, and the making of our persons like God. The Lord Jesus was both priest and victim, sacrifice and sacrificer. No one else ever was. No one else ever could be. "He offered himself without spot to God." "He offered up himself." Being God

and man, divine and human — he could do this, and he did it.

All who are savingly interested in the death of Christ as a substitute, will be sanctified. Holiness makes God beautiful in the eyes of his intelligent creatures — it is the very glory of his nature. Holiness makes saints amiable — and they appear as fair as the moon, and as clear as the sun. Holiness makes believers happy — as it leads to communion with God, and prepares them for Heaven. The more holiness — the more happiness. The more holiness — the more fellowship with God. The more holiness — the more preparation for Heaven. My soul, are you sanctified? Are you set apart for Jesus, and in some measure made like Jesus? If so, seek a deeper work, seek to be more thoroughly imbued with the mind, temper, and disposition of Jesus. Your sanctification may be more thorough,

your consecration to God may be more complete,

your conformity to Jesus may be more perfect.

There is grace in Jesus to be had for seeking. More of the power of the Holy Spirit may be obtained by prayer. Oh, seek for more grace, for more of the power of the Spirit of God; so will . . .

your evidences be brighter,

your prospects clearer,

your faith stronger,

your hope firmer, and

your happiness greater!

Oh, to be a thorough, devoted, decided, energetic, working, useful Christian! Lord, sanctify me wholly, in spirit, soul, and body.

Beloved, are you like-minded with Jesus? Is your heart set on holiness as his heart was? If you drink into his spirit, if you walk in close and intimate communion with him — it will be. The very glory of Heaven is its holiness. The beauty of the Divine nature is its holiness. The perfection of our nature will be its holiness. On holiness, the heart of God was set.

Toward holiness, all the purposes of sovereign grace point. In holiness, will the mystery of redemption terminate. In holiness, will all the perfections of God be glorified. In perfect holiness alone — shall we find perfect happiness.

If, therefore, you would be happy,

if you would rise to honor,

if you would please God,

if you would delight the heart of Jesus —

then make the attainment of holiness your object!

Believe in Jesus for sanctification — as well as for justification. He is a fountain of holiness, and by faith we may receive holiness from him. Only by union to Jesus, by communion with Jesus, and by

the exercise of faith on Jesus — can we attain to deep, personal, experimental holiness.

Holy Spirit, you are the sanctifier of the Lord's people — O sanctify us, through the sanctification of Christ for us. Let all the benefits of his death be imparted to us; and may we be changed into the same image by your almighty power.

## 23 All Believers Prayed for

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### All Believers Prayed for

What a wondrous heart, was the heart of Jesus! How vast and comprehensive! How exquisitely tender! How full of love, even to overflowing. He loved his own people — all of his own people. He loved them from eternity. His love ran through all time. He comprehended the whole of them. He felt intensely interested in them all, and in each one. Having prayed for himself, for his disciples, for all who believed on him — he then looks forward and takes up into his prayer all of his people to the very end of time. Hence he says, "I do not pray for these alone — but also for those who will believe in Me through their word" (John 17:20).

Every Believer is the Special Object of the Savior's INTERCESSION. He prays for all who shall believe — for all whom the Father had given him, for all who were entrusted to him. Faith proves our saving interest in Christ. Being chosen in him, being predestined to the adoption of children by him, and being preserved in him — we were virtually united to him, and had a saving interest in him. But we know nothing of that interest, we enjoy none of its benefits experimentally — until we believe in him. The moment we believe, we are manifestly entitled to all the benefits of his life and death.

Every believer is the object of Christ's eternal, unending love — that love which preceded ours, and prevented our falling a prey to Satan, being ruined by sin, or cut down by the stroke of justice. Who can tell the evils, the dangers, the miseries — which were prevented by the love of Jesus!

Every believer is the special object of the Savior's CARE. He took charge of us in the everlasting covenant, and he exercised his care over us until we were called by grace, and brought into vital union with himself. He cared for us in infancy, in youth, and in manhood. He cares for us still, and he will care for us even to the end. No goldsmith was ever so careful of his precious metal,

no shepherd was ever so careful of the lambs of his flock,

no mother was ever so careful of her first-born son

— as Jesus has been careful of us!

Every believer is the special object of the Savior's CONCERN. Jesus was concerned for our persons, and for our salvation, before time commenced; and, therefore, he engaged to become our surety in the everlasting covenant. His concern for us . . .

fixed his eye intently upon us,

placed his everlasting arms beneath us, and

prompted him to do everything he could for us. Nor is he less concerned for us now, nor will he be at any future period of our pilgrimage here below. The weakest believer has his name on the heart and in the prayer of Jesus — equally with the apostles. Peter, James, and John, were not more on

the heart of Christ than we are; nor did he pray more for them, than for us. All of his people are . . .  
loved by him alike,  
cared for by him alike,  
prayed for by him alike.

Oh, what comfort we may find here . . .

when the heart is straitened,

when the soul is burdened, and

when the spirit is bowed down,

when we feel prayer to be a task and a burden,

when we feel as if we could not pray — but were only mocking God! What comfort is it to think that Jesus has prayed for me! That he is praying for me at this very moment! And when I come into the swellings of Jordan — Jesus will be interceding for me then. The Nature, Instrumental Cause, and Warrant of Faith Are Here Pointed Out. It is faith in Christ. Not merely believing what Christ says, which is assent or credence — but believing in Christ himself. A man may believe all the four Gospels, yes, the whole word of God — and yet not believe in Christ — many do, and, it is to be feared, stop there, to their own undoing. To believe in Christ, is . . .

to have confidence in him,

to rely upon him,

to make him the sole object of our trust. The man who believes in Christ, renounces himself and everything of his own, and relies on the person and work of Christ alone for salvation. Where there is true faith in Christ — there has been a vivid sense . . .

of sin,

of misery as the effect of sin, and

of the wrath of God as the desert of sin. The Holy Spirit has revealed Christ as exactly suited to the necessities and desires of the soul; this draws forth the soul to Christ. The going out of the heart to Christ, and embracing him as God's gift for man's salvation, is faith.

Then comes the constant making use of Christ . . .

to prevent evils,

to conquer foes, and

to obtain both temporal and spiritual blessings.

It is faith through the Word, which is the instrument that produces it; for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Faith is produced, not by tradition, or baptism, or any ceremony, or sacrament — but by the Word of God. It pleases God to use the Word, and generally the preached Word; as it is written, "For in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it

pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe." This is suitable to man's nature — for it appeals to man's understanding, and through that it reaches the heart. There it works, producing a thorough change, which leads to a new course of life.

It is agreeable to God's counsel, who so determined in his infinite wisdom and love. It commends God's grace, which is therein revealed, and thereby communicated. The Word is made powerful by the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit; and thus it becomes the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes. The Word is the warrant of our faith. It reveals Christ, in his person and personal glories, in his glorious righteousness and precious blood, in his infinite love and almighty power, as able and willing to save all and every one who applies to him. It calls upon every one who hears it to come to Christ, to come as a sinner, to come immediately — to come for a present, perfect, and everlasting salvation. It not only calls us to Christ — but it commands us to believe, and tells us that if we believe not, we make God a liar. The call indicates love — the command interposes authority.

Now, if the Word sets forth Christ before us, presents Christ to us, calls us to him, and commands us to believe on him — it must be a clear and full warrant for our faith. The gospel Scripturally preached, and clearly understood — warrants every sinner who hears it to come to Christ confident of being saved by him, and to exercise instant faith in him as the Almighty and All-sufficient Savior. Lord, help us so to preach the gospel, and so to hear the gospel, that millions may believe to the saving of the soul!

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word." This declaration of Jesus looks both backward and forward. Backward, to all who had believed, through the preaching of John, himself, or his disciples — for their sanctification and preservation he prayed. Forward, to all who in all ages, and in all places, would believe on his name through the Word preached, printed, and read. The loving and large heart of Jesus grasped the whole who were to be saved by him.

Christ seeks what he merited. He merited the salvation of his people, and procured for them all spiritual blessings; he therefore only asks for what he might claim, and entreats what he deserved. He pays the price — and then asks for the blessing. He satisfies the law — and then pleads with the Lawgiver for privileges.

Jesus comforts the believer. What can give us more comfort than the knowledge that Jesus has prayed for us — prayed for us before we sought him — prayed for us before we were born! He knew what we would be, knew what we should need — therefore he prayed for us. His prayers are registered in his Father's book of remembrance, and will be answered in our happy experience.

Jesus encourages us to believe. Believing, we prove our interest in the prayers of Jesus. Believing, we may expect an answer to the prayers of Jesus. Believing, we please and honor Jesus.

Jesus sets forth the excellency of faith. It is that which brings us to him, connects us with him, and so pleases him that he prays for every one who has it. Faith always honors Jesus, and Jesus always honors faith. The Word is necessary to faith. It is the seed from which it springs, the instrument by which it is begotten, and the food on which it lives. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." The Word makes known Christ — that we may believe on him. To

show the necessity of preaching the Word, the apostle asks, "How shall they believe on him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Faith is necessary to prayer. We cannot pray aright without faith. God is the object we address in prayer — we must believe in him. Jesus is the only way of access to God — we must believe in him. And the Word is our only warrant to expect good things in answer to prayer — therefore we must have faith in it.

Prayer is necessary to salvation. "Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." The prayerless soul is a lost soul. How important, then, is the publication and proclamation of God's Word, as it . . .

begets faith,

leads to the Savior,

entitles us to claim a saving interest in the Savior's prayer,

and nourishes our souls unto life eternal!

Believer, how full of comfort is this precious portion! Jesus stands before his Father, with his eye fixed on us, with his thoughts full of us, with his heart glowing with unutterable love to us — pleading with his Father for us. He anticipated our needs. He entered into all our feelings. He sympathized with us in all our sufferings. He prayed for us. His prayer for us was heard in Heaven, was registered in Heaven, and is ever before the eye of our Father in Heaven!

Let us, then,

when our hearts are cold and dead,

when our minds are confused and troubled,

when we attempt to pray and cannot —

let us then remember for our comfort, that Jesus has prayed for us. For every believer, the feeblest, the most fearful, the most imperfect — his prayer has ascended! For them his prayer was heard, and in them his prayer shall be answered.

Precious Lord Jesus, how wondrous is your love! How amazing is your pity, your sympathy, and your compassion! How deep and tender is your concern for all, and for every one, of your people. May I drink into your spirit, and imitate your lovely example. Give me grace to sympathize with your little ones, to pray for them, and by earnest intercession, endeavor to bring down blessings upon them.

## 24 Union Sought

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### Union Sought

If we had a dear friend, profoundly wise, and equally kind; and if we knew that his mind was taken up with us on the most solemn and momentous period of his life — would we not wish to know what he thought, and what he desired for us? Such a friend is Jesus, and in his intercessory prayer — he opens his loving heart, and breathes forth his most enlarged desires for us. What does he desire? Not health or wealth, not fame or honor, not even ease or happiness at present — but something higher, nobler, and better. Hear his wondrous words: "That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:21). The Blessing Sought:

Union to CHRIST. What a privilege is this, to be united to Christ — resting the whole weight of our soul's salvation upon him, as the building on the foundation — drawing all our supplies from him, as the branch from the root — living in holy love and fellowship with him, as the bride with her bridegroom — so united to him as to be one with him, as the members of the body are one with the head! Jesus would have us in the closest, holiest, and happiest union with himself.

Union to the FATHER. As Jesus is one with the Father, so he would have us be "One in US." Between us and Christ — comes the Holy Spirit, and unites us to him, as the breath unites the soul and the body. And between us and the Father — comes Jesus, and inseparably unites us to him. Between us and Jesus — there must be nothing but the Spirit — no ceremony, sacrament, priest, or virgin. And between us and the Father — there must be nothing but Christ and his most precious blood.

Union to all BELIEVERS. "That they all may be one."

One body, animated by one Spirit, each member bound to the whole body by the bond of love.

One flock, cared for and tended by one Shepherd.

One family, or household, loved and provided for, cemented and bound together by one Parent. The Lord's family are united and held together, not by a creed, or a service, or a system — but by love. The love of God shed abroad in the heart unites them to Christ, and unites them to each other. And just in proportion as we feel and enjoy the love of God within us — shall we love and feel union to all the Lord's family, however in some things they may differ from us. The Pattern Presented: "As You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in US."

God is in Christ. "In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." "I and my Father are one." The Son is in the Father. Between the Father and the Son there is a union the most close, spiritual, and holy. The most perfect union is that which exists between the Father and the Son.

Saints are to be one, as the Father and Christ are one — as really one — as closely united — as beneficially one — all deriving from the fullness of the Father, through the Son, and communicating to each other. The union between believers . . .

is spiritual, not ceremonial;

it is holy, not carnal; and

it is permanent, not changeable. As the saints have the same nature, and are all united to the same living Head, they should . . .

bear the same testimony,

breathe the same spirit,

aim at the same object,

and walk by the same rule.

How glorious it will be to see all who are united to Christ — visibly united to each other! Now they are one in heart — but when this prayer is fully answered, they will be openly and eternally one. But who shall attempt to say what is indicated in these wondrous words, "That they also may be one in US"? To be one with Christ is unspeakably glorious — but to be one with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be "one in US," what can this import! Now we know only in part — but by-and-by we shall know fully, and enjoy perfectly, this wondrous mystery. The Design in View: "That the world may believe that you have sent me." The world will be brought to give credit to the mission of Christ — by the unity, holiness, and unearthliness of the Church. It will then assent to his doctrines, and acknowledge his authority and right to reign. This will be to his honor — as Lord over all the earth. This will benefit his people — as all persecution and open opposition will cease. This will be to the world's advantage — as we see in our own country; which, in consequence of its admitting the authority of Christ, avowedly reverencing the Word of God, and doing homage to the God of the Church, is honored and distinguished above all the nations of the earth. Our Lord does not say that the world will believe in him so as to be saved by him — but only believe that the Father had sent him.

Nothing stumbles the world like divisions and dissensions among God's people; and nothing will make such a beneficial impression upon it, as the perfect, and glorious union here prayed for. O that the Church may soon become One! — one really, as it is now one professedly — one in action, as it is now one in heart.

Union among Christians is a great blessing.

It is one of our greatest blessings. In union is our strength. In union is our happiness. In union is our glory.

Let us, then, each one, and all, strive and pray for the union of the living Church of Christ. There may be real union, without uniformity. Christ does not pray for uniformity — but he does for unity. There is unity in nature — but there is not uniformity. Everywhere we see diversity — even where there is the greatest harmony. So in the Church, there may be a diversity of opinions, different ceremonies, and various forms of Church government — and yet there may be unity. Unity will

produce conviction, and recommend godliness. A united army strikes terror into the foe. A united family makes a beneficial impression on a neighborhood. And a united Church exercises an influence for good of incalculable value. O that every member of the Church of God realized this, and would make it the end and aim of his life to bring God's people into union, and to keep them united! The prayer of Christ is now partially fulfilled — and will be perfectly fulfilled. There is now much more union among real Christians than many suspect, or that the world has any idea of. The work of the Spirit of God brings the whole of them into union with Christ; and being in union with Christ, in heart they must be united to each other. Mistakes, prejudices, and misconceptions may keep them apart, and prevent them mixing with each other. But when they get near the cross, and forget their creeds, customs, and favorite forms of Church government, they feel that they are all one. O that we lived nearer to the cross, and then we would realize and manifest a closer, stronger, and more spiritual union to each other!

What Christ so earnestly prayed for — he dearly paid for. He died, as Caiaphas prophesied, that "he might gather together in one, the children of God which are scattered abroad." He had become responsible for the preservation, collection, and union of the whole flock of God; as he said, speaking to the Jews, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold," — more literally, there shall be one flock, "and one shepherd." For this he engaged in covenant; for this he laid down his life; for this he ardently and believingly prayed — and therefore unquestionably his Church shall be one.

Reader, are you a member of a church of Christ? If so, do you realize that you are not merely a member of that section of the church to which you are visibly united — but of the One Church, which comprises all who believe in Jesus? Do you live in the exercise of Christian love and forbearance toward all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, though in many things they may differ from you? We should love a believer more than a sentiment, or creed, or religious form. We should so love all believers as to be prepared to unite with them in all that is holy, devotional, or charitable. Creeds may keep us apart — but love will bring us together. Forms may separate — but love will unite.

Now, as Jesus does not pray that we may all see exactly alike — but that we all may be one — we should strive more for union among the Lord's people, than for the maintenance of any favorite sentiment, creed, or form.

Holy Spirit, lead all of us who profess the name of Jesus, to meet at the cross, to fix the eye on Jesus, to be more taken up with him; so shall we become more like him, and shall love one another.

## 25 Glory Given

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### Glory Given

How wonderful is the conduct of our Lord Jesus Christ! His love to his people is so strong, so tender, that he never appears to think that he can do too much for them, or confer too much upon them. Very early he began to act for them, and at every opportunity he has poured blessings upon them. All that he has — he shares with them, as he said, "And the glory which you gave me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one (John 17:22).

Jesus Would Have His People like Himself.

Like himself in holiness. This is the glory and perfection of his person. In this he rejoices, and by this he is distinguished from all others. He is "The Holy One." Holiness is the great need of our nature, for in holiness consists its true dignity and glory. For holiness, when under the teaching of the Holy Spirit — we sigh, pant, and pray. On holiness, the heart of Jesus is set — nor will he be satisfied until we are exactly like himself.

Like him in happiness. Once he was the Man of Sorrows, and knew as little of happiness as most of us. He suffered, being tempted. He came daily into contact with sin, though never so as to be defiled by it; and sin was a constant source of grief to him. But he is now happy, perfectly and eternally happy; and he wishes his people to be happy as himself, and happy with himself. Happiness grows out of holiness; and therefore in order to make us happy — he makes us holy. Holiness is God's delight — it is a principal part of the divine image; and therefore Jesus would have us holy, even as he is holy.

Like himself in honor. He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, for us. But now he is highly exalted, and wears a name which is above every name. Every honorable title is given to him, the most honored position is assigned to him, and the highest honor of Heaven is paid to him. He does not wish to enjoy his honor alone — but wishes his people to share with him; therefore he appoints unto them a kingdom, awards them white robes, and will confer on them crowns of glory!

Blessed Jesus! our highest aspirations are, to see you, be like you, and be with you forever. This will be honor enough, happiness enough, and Heaven enough for us. To be as holy as you are, as happy as you are, and as honorable as you are — not only meets our desires — but goes far beyond all we could have dared to think of!

Jesus Communicates to His People What His Father Conferred on Him: "The glory which you gave me — I have given them." All the glory that arises from his finished work, meritorious sacrifice, and wondrous substitution for them — he confers upon them. Every honor in which they can share with him — he shares with them.

It is one of his highest honors to be the Son of God, the object of God's highest love, his infinite delight. This honor he confers on them. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power," or

on them he conferred the privilege, "to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on his name."

Out of sonship grows heirship; he is "heir of all things," and to them it is given to be "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." He is the image of the invisible God, the only revealer and manifester of God. But stamping his image, his likeness upon them — he gives to them the honor of making known the Father. So that while he is the mirror in which they behold the Father's glory — they are the mirror in which the world sees it.

He received of the Father, the Holy Spirit without measure, being anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; which Spirit fitted and qualified his human nature for his great and glorious work. That Spirit he gives to his Church, to every one of his people; which Spirit is its life, the source of its holiness, happiness, and honor. The glorious gospel, containing the brightest, deepest, and most glorious thoughts of God, was committed unto him. He brought it into our world, he published it himself, he imparted it to his apostles, and left it as a choice legacy to his people. As he is appointed to be King of kings, the great High Priest of our profession, and the Judge of all — so has he given to his people to be kings and priests unto God, and has appointed them with himself to judge the angels, and also to judge the world.

All that is contained in that sweet, profound, and wondrous word "grace" — he has conferred on them. Grace, which is the seed of glory! Grace, which beautifies, adorns, and renders the divine nature so attractive to us!

O beloved, Jesus parted with all for us once — and Jesus confers all on us now! Through his wondrous beneficence . . .

we are the sons of God, and the heirs of God;

we are stamped with the image of God;

we are inhabited by the Spirit of God;

we are entrusted with the glorious gospel;

we are made kings, priests, prophets, and judges;

and we possess all the fullness of grace, as introductory to the fullness of glory. The Object Jesus Had in View Was Worthy of Himself: "That they may be one — even as we are one." That is, one in feeling, in principle, and in purpose. This is the case now, in a measure — but it is not perfectly so. On many subjects, and those the most important, we do all feel alike.

Yet the grand principle of action in every child of God is the same. Our one purpose is, that God may be glorified — glorified by all our works, and glorified in every possible way. As God had but one purpose in creation, redemption, and our sanctification — so Jesus would have us have but one purpose in all that we do. His heart was set upon making and keeping his people one. For this he lived, and suffered, and died. For this he pleaded on earth, and for this he intercedes in Heaven. Nor, until all the objects of his love are one, as he is one with the Father, and as the Father is one with him — will he, can he, be satisfied.

Let us, then, set our hearts on the same object. For this let us pray and strive; and, by every means in our power, let us seek to bring the Lord's people together, and keep them together. What sacrifices Jesus made for this! What sacrifice, then, shall we think too costly — to obtain an end so near to the heart of Jesus, as this was?

Beloved, our glory will be substantially the same as Christ's. What God communicates to him — he communicates to us. Most probably, through all eternity, Jesus will be the medium of communication between God and us. All the glory of the Godhead will shine forth on him, and through him, in mild, softened, and united rays — will shine forth on us. All the happiness of Deity will flow into his capacious soul, and be by him — transmitted to us. In him we shall see all the glorious perfections and attributes of the divine nature — and from him we shall receive and enjoy all that is communicable in God.

One with Christ, we shall be near to God — and not only near to God — but one with God, and as holy as God is holy. O blessed, blessed prospect — for such poor, miserable, wretched creatures as we are! We are in a better condition than Adam was before he fell. His was a short season of joy — but centuries of suffering; ours will be a short season of suffering — and after that, an eternity of happiness! Our present afflictions are light — but there awaits us a weight of glory. The sufferings of the present time, however severe or protracted, were not, in the estimation of the apostle — worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us! Our glory is the fruit of union. Jesus acquired the right to it, and then gave us the promise, the pledge, and the first fruits of it. Without union to Christ — we can have no title, no right of inheritance; but in union with Jesus — all things are ours. All the acquired glory of Jesus, as the head of his body the Church — he reflects upon them, and imparts to them; and as he is the glory of his Father, so his people will be his glory forever.

All that he can communicate to his people — he will. All that they can receive and enjoy — they shall. Having given them himself — he gives them his glory too.

They are Christ's, who are really like him. Like him in a measure now, they will be perfectly like him at last. As John says, "This we know, that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." We are made like him, by receiving from him. As he said to Peter, "If I wash you not, you have no part with me," — so, if we do not receive from him, we cannot be like him; and if we are not like him, we have no part in him. For, "if any man has not the Spirit of Christ — he is none of his." If we receive grace from Christ, we shall receive glory from Christ; if we receive from Christ now — we shall receive from Christ forever.

Holy Spirit, unfold this wondrous subject more clearly and more fully to our minds. May we realize more powerfully our oneness with Jesus; may we receive more largely from Jesus the grace that we now desire and need; and may we reflect more clearly and more fully, the glory of Jesus, in all we do, or say, or suffer!

Gracious Savior, truly your love is wonderful, it passes knowledge! What a sublime, what a generous nature is yours! O for confidence in you — the confidence which your nature, your Word, and your conduct warrant; for surely we may well say: He who has given himself for us, he who has given his acquired glory to us, he who has promised to share his throne with us — how shall he not after this, freely give us all things!

Beloved, what an example for us! Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Here he places the fact in the clearest and most striking light. When he came into our world, in order to enrich us, he became poor; and now he is prepared to communicate to us what his Father has communicated to him. If Jesus is thus liberal — shall we be niggardly? If he is prepared to give that which cost him so much labor, suffering, and even death itself — shall we object to impart that which cost us so little, perhaps nothing? If he is so lavish with his spiritual riches, conferring even his glory on each and every one of his people — shall not we give them of our temporal things? Shall Jesus hunger, in his people — and we not feed him? Shall he be naked — and we not clothe him? Shall he be sick — and we not visit him? Shall he be homeless — and we not take him in? How can we without shame and blushing, receive so much from him — if we refuse, or neglect, to give liberally to him?

## 26 Perfect Union

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Perfect Union The heart of Jesus is so set upon his people, that only the highest honors and the greatest blessings will satisfy him for them. No one but Jesus could have asked for what he did. No one but his Father could or would bestow such blessings on them. Oh, the dignity desired, the glory sought for them! He acknowledges that he had given them his acquired glory, the glory which the Father had given him; and now he reveals his design in so doing — that their union may be perfect: "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me" (John 17:23) The Nature of this Union. The Father is in Christ, for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Christ is in his Church, yes, in each believer, as Paul prayed, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Christ is in his people — as the Father is in him. The Father was in Jesus as the source of life; as he says, "As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he who eats me, even he shall live by me." If, therefore, we receive Christ, if we feed on him as the living bread, he becomes a source of life within us, and we live by him. Oh, marvelous mystery! Yet the apostle realized it, as he said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I — but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." The Father was in Jesus sustaining him; as he spoke by the prophet, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him." So we being in Christ are sustained and preserved by him; as Jude states, commencing his brief epistle, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."

Noah was not more preserved in the ark,

nor Lot in Zoar,

nor the manslayer in the city of refuge,

nor the branch in the vine —

than believers are preserved and sustained in Christ. The Father was in Christ working; as he said to Philip, "the Father that dwells in me, he does the works." So it is our union to Christ, and receiving from Christ, that enables us to do good works; as he said, "I am the vine, you are the branches: he who abides in me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing." This was the source of Paul's great strength, and the ground of all his wondrous achievements; as he testified, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Oh, glorious union! the Father in Christ, and Christ in us as the source of life, strength, and operation! The End of this Union: As to themselves — that they may be . . .

perfectly one with God, in the highest and most glorious sense;

perfectly one with Christ, dwelling in him, and he dwelling in them;

perfectly one with each other, the whole forming one perfect, compact, and complete body. As it is written, "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." This is the destiny of the Church of Christ — to be one complete, perfect, and glorious body. On this the Savior set his heart, for this he prays, and with this only will he be satisfied. As to the world — that it may be thoroughly convinced of the divinity of the Savior's mission. Before, he prayed "that the world may believe that you have sent me" — now, that "the world may know that you have sent me." Not only so — but that the world may know the great privilege of the saints. Christ is the first object of God's love; as he said, speaking of God going forth in the great work of creation, "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." So also the Father testified at his baptism, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He is, therefore, called "his dear Son," or "the Son of his love." The God who loves the Head — loves the members. The Father who loves the Son — loves the saints. He loves them — because he loves Christ. He loves them as he loves Christ — with the same paternal love. Is Christ his Son? they are his children. Is Christ his image? they put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. His love to Christ was eternal; and so was his love to them. His love to Christ was tender; and so was his love to them. His love to Christ was unchangeable; and so was his love to them. His love to Christ was passing knowledge; and so was his love to them.

He manifested his love to Christ by opening his mind to him: "The Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that himself does." Just so Jesus dealt with his disciples: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his Lord does; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father — I have made known unto you." Thus "the secret of the Lord is with those who fear him, and he will show them his covenant." Here is one proof of his love — his heart is with us, he opens his mind, and tells his secrets to us.

Another proof of his love is, he bestows gifts. "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand" — "All things are delivered unto me by my Father." Just so with us: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world — but the Spirit who is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Does the Father reveal his secrets to his Son? So he does to us. Does he bestow the choicest, richest gifts on his Son? So he does on us. Did he assist his Son? He works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Did he accept his Son and award him the most honorable place in Heaven? So he has made us accepted in the Beloved. Did he reward his Son, giving him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession? So will he reward us; as Jesus says, "If any man serves me — him will my Father honor."

Oh, how blessed to be loved of God! — to be loved as Jesus is — to be blessed as Jesus is — to be one with Jesus, and one with God for evermore!

Observe, Christ is ever between the Father and us. Let us always bear this in mind.

If we do anything, let us do it in Christ's name;

if we present anything to God, let us present it in Christ's name;

if we expect anything from God, let us expect it in Christ's name.

Nothing less than perfect union will satisfy Jesus. Let us, therefore, make it our aim — let us in every possible way strive for it, and let us look forward and joyfully anticipate it. Happiness flows from union — from union with God — from union with Christ — from union with the Lord's people. No union — no happiness. Imperfect union — imperfect happiness.

If God loves us as he loves his Son — then we should be patient in affliction, for no affliction will befall us but what is in accordance with his love. The knowledge of this fact should impart joy in sorrow; for however trying our circumstances may be, the thought of this wondrous love should raise us above them.

It also demands our confidence, and our confidence in God at all times; for if God loves us, and loves us as he does Jesus, will he, can he, withhold any good thing from us? Will he not fulfill his Word? Will he not secure our best interests? Will he not sympathize with us — let what will happen to us. Will he not raise us up, and place us before his throne forever? And if God so loves us — we ought to love him in return, and to manifest our love by seeking . . .

to live near to him,

to walk with him, and

to enjoy close and constant fellowship with him.

So, also, we should love one another. Love brings the Lord's people together, and keeps them together. As we are all one in Christ, we should seek to be united to all who are in union with him. As Jesus desires that we should all through him be one with the Father, we also should desire the same.

Instead of being satisfied with a low state of spirituality — we should seek to rise high in the enjoyment of divine things. We cannot long for holiness too ardently. We cannot desire or seek to realize oneness with God in Christ too earnestly. Our fault is, we are satisfied with too little. O to be enabled to rise higher and higher — to seek more and more, until we are "filled with all the fullness of God"! This is our privilege, and this ought to be our pursuit. On this our hearts should be set, and for this we should daily believe, strive, and pray. God's wondrous love gives us every encouragement to do so.

Father of mercies and God of all grace — I bless you, I praise you, I adore and magnify your holy name, for loving me at all! but oh, how shall I suitably and sufficiently praise you for loving me — as you have loved your only-begotten Son?

Holy Spirit, write — write this great, this glorious truth upon my soul; and in all seasons of sorrow, in all times of tribulation, and in the article of death, whisper these words of Jesus to my spirit, "You have loved them — as you have loved ME." Oh for faith to believe, to realize, to enjoy this astounding truth — that God loves me, a worm, an atom, a nothing — as he loves his own glorious Son!

## 27 The Claim

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The Claim The heart of the believer finds its center and its home in Christ. It wishes to be wholly taken up with Christ, and to be always with Christ. And the heart of Jesus seems to find its center and home in his people; therefore he has promised to be always with them, and has provided to have them forever with himself. The presence of Christ is our Heaven; and to be surrounded with his people is real happiness to him. Hence he prays for them, "Father, I will that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). The Request: "Father, I will that they be with me." What manner of address is this? How different is . . .

that of Abraham, the friend of God;

that of David, the man after God's own heart;

that of Daniel, the man greatly beloved; or

that of Solomon, the wisest of men! They never said, "I will," but implored blessings in the deepest humility and self-abasement. They never sought such a blessing, nor pleaded in such a way.

It was the request of a SON — the Son of God. He was inspired with conscious dignity. He realized his near relationship to God. He was sensible . . .

of the merit of his work and sacrifice;

of the honor he would bring to God, and

the glory he would throw around the divine government. As a Son, he addressed his Father. As a Son, he opened his whole heart to his Father. As a Son, he spoke to his Father in a way in which none but himself could be justified in speaking.

It was the request of a SAVIOR:

a Savior who had engaged in the everlasting covenant to save his people from their sins;

a Savior who had undertaken to meet all the demands of justice, to magnify the holy law, and to bring eternal honor to his Father in their salvation;

a Savior whose heart's love was set upon his people; who felt that he could not do too much for them, or ask too great things on their behalf.

It was the request of a SOVEREIGN. With kingly dignity he speaks, and a kingly request he presents — for great things, with the greatest freedom and the strongest confidence, he asks: "I will that they be with me where I am." In this request, we see authority and love blended. He asks as for a right. He asks in loving words. He asks for what would do honor to his authority, and at the same time gratify his love. He expresses strong, earnest desire. The request is for all saints. Not for patriarchs, or prophets, or apostles, as such: not for the great, the gifted, or the extensively

useful, as such — but for . . .

all whom the Father had given him;

every one whose name was in his book of life;

every one for whom he laid down his life;

every one who believed on his name.

Yes — for the least, the weakest, the poorest, the most despised. Every child in his family, he would have with him. Every lamb of his flock, he would meet at home. He would give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. His request was a noble one; it comprises all that we could possibly desire. It was that we might be with him. Nothing was nearer to his heart — and nothing is nearer to ours. To have Christ with us now, reconciles us to any place, and makes us happy in any circumstances. To be with Christ — will be enough to satisfy us throughout eternity. No matter where we are, if Christ is not there, we could not be happy.

If God were to fit up a world on purpose for us, and lavish on it his immense wealth, and display in it his boundless wisdom — it might gratify us for a time; but if Christ were not there, it would not satisfy us very long. Our love is not set on place, possessions, or any circumstances — but on Christ; and without Christ, our happiness never could be perfect. His loving heart longs to have us with him! And our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that we may be with him. But he not only requests that we might be with him — but with him to behold his glory. Not his essential glory, as God; but his acquired glory, as the Savior of his people. This will be to see . . .

the largeness of God's heart,

the immensity of his wealth,

his delight in his Son, and

his estimate of the value of his sacrifice and death.

What will that glory be! What an inheritance! What a city! What robes of glory! What a crown! What a scepter! What a retinue! O the grandeur, the magnificence, the dignity conferred on Immanuel! And we shall see it all, share it all, and enjoy it all! He wishes us to behold it, that we may enjoy it. And we shall enjoy it forever. Our love to him, will make us enjoy it. The thought that he acquired it by dying for us, will make us enjoy it. Our participation in it, will make us enjoy it.

We shall be with him; we shall behold his glory; we shall enjoy the blissful sight; and we shall be like him forever! Not his equal in dignity and honor — we do not even wish for this; but . . .

like him — holy;

like him — happy;

like him — glorious;

and holy, happy, and glorious forever! The Argument Urging the Request: "For you loved me before the foundation of the world." He does not plead our love to God, our love to himself, or our love to each other. Jesus was loved as the Son of God, the Mediator, the Head of his body, the

Church — with the highest, greatest love of God from all eternity. Because so loved, and on account of his great work — a special glory was given to him. In this special glory, he wishes us to share. He asks this favor of the Father on the ground of his great love to him. Love thinks nothing too great or too good to confer on its object; Jesus knew this. The love that was in his heart toward his people prompts, him to ask the greatest conceivable gift of his Father for them; and to ask it for them on the ground of his love to him.

Oh, wondrous love of Jesus to his people! Oh, wondrous love of the Father to his Son! Yes, as surely as the Father loves his Son, as surely as he loved him before the foundation of the world — so surely shall we be with him where he is, to behold his glory. Wherever Jesus may be, in Heaven or earth — there we shall be. Whatever glory Jesus may receive and wear — we shall behold it. And for all that Jesus is, for all that Jesus has — we shall be the better.

Gracious Redeemer, you have exhausted our desires, you have comprehended all our wishes, in this request of yours. All we can say is, "Be it unto us according to your Word!"

Jesus came where we are, to our homes. He came and dwelt among us. How did we treat him? Did we prepare a magnificent palace for his reception, and surround him with luxury and plenty? No; at his birth we could afford him no better chamber than a stable, no better bed than a feeding trough. We treated him first with coldness, then with contempt, and at last with the greatest cruelty.

He wishes us to go where he is, to his home. How will he treat us? Nothing will be considered as too great, too good, or too glorious for us! He will have us with him, near him, like him. He will glorify us with his own self, and fill us with unutterable joy and glory!

We have seen him in his humiliation — and he wishes us to see him in his glorification.

We have seen him as the Man of Sorrows — we shall behold him as the brightness of glory.

We have seen him in the feeding trough — we shall see him in his Father's house.

We have seen him on the cross — and we shall behold him on his throne! Our eternal happiness will consist in our seeing, enjoying, and being like Christ. We have no conception of Heaven beyond this. We desire no Heaven but this. May I but see my Savior in his glory, may I but enjoy his presence and his love, and may I but be like him — and I have enough! Anywhere with Christ — I shall be happy. Anything with Christ — I shall enjoy. Let me but share with my Savior, and I ask, I desire no more.

Christ greatly delights in the company of his people. The language of his conduct seems to be — anywhere with them, anything with them. For them he could . . .

part with his glory,

leave his Father's house,

become a homeless wanderer,

the prince of sufferers,

and accursed of God! For them he would live and labor;

for them he would suffer and die;

and for them he would request of his Father that they might be with him where he is, to behold his glory. Truly his delights are with the sons of men.

Ascertain what kind of a Heaven a man desires — and you will know what a man is. A sensualist will desire a sensual Heaven. Health, wealth, and freedom to enjoy himself — will satisfy a natural man. Not so with the soul that is born again. He pants for the spiritual, the pure, the glorious. If, therefore, we sigh for holiness — if we desire above all things to see Jesus, be with Jesus, and be like Jesus — we are unquestionably among the number of those for whom he prayed; and we shall be with him, where he is, to behold his glory. This prayer is for our consolation; but it is not our pattern. We must not pray thus. "I will," does not befit lips like ours. Jesus never prayed so when he prayed for himself: then he said, "Not my will — but may your be done." Our model is that which Jesus gave to his disciples, not this prayer which he offered for them.

O Savior, let me in solemn silence, muse on your wondrous love, and adore your glorious grace! Send the Holy Spirit to unfold the subject more fully to my mind, and to apply it with his own power to my heart. I want to realize the depth, the glory of your love. I want to drink into your spirit, and in all things to be like-minded with you. I want to be with you — let me therefore enjoy more of your presence on earth, to prepare me for your presence in Heaven.

O Jesus, it is my heart's desire that you should be with me — unfolding your glory to me, and satisfying my soul with your presence. O visit me, visit me daily; or rather, come and dwell with me, that I may fix and feast my eye and heart upon you evermore!

Holy Spirit, as you love to honor and exalt the Lord Jesus — endear him to my heart more and more, until I am wholly taken up with him, until I am ravished with his love!

## 28 The Righteous Father

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### The Righteous Father

Satan having usurped authority over the present world — which he was permitted to do by divine justice, in consequence of man's sin — has enthroned himself in man's heart, working in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. He has succeeded in . . .

blinding the understanding,

pervverting the judgment,

stupefying the conscience, and

estranging the whole soul from God;

so that man is in darkness upon the most essential points, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him. He knows not God. He cares not for God. He desires not the knowledge of his ways. Therefore the Savior, when pleading for his people, says, "O righteous Father, the world has not known you; but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me" (John 17:25). The Condition of the World: A state of ignorance and darkness — of ignorance and darkness in reference to the most important objects and subjects. The world was divided into two parts, comprising the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews, with all their privileges, and they were many — for they had the Scriptures, the service of God, the temple, and the priesthood — yet they knew not God. This the Lord Jesus frequently testified, especially when he said, "He who sent me is true, whom you know not" (John 7:28). "You neither know me, nor my Father; for if you had known me, you Would have known my Father also" (John 8:19). "You say that he is your God; yet you have not known him" (John 8:54-55). "These things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (John 15:21). "These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (John 16:3). The Jews, therefore, knew not God. The Gentiles were more degraded and ignorant than the Jews! Their wisest men had no correct views or just conceptions of God. "The world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Corinthians 1:21). How deplorable the condition of poor fallen man! — man under all circumstances, however exalted above, or distinguished from his fellow-men. The world has no true knowledge of the Scriptures, nor can it, until taught of God. It is incapacitated by sin, all man's powers being injured by the Fall. "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But even if he were capacitated — he would not, because "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The enmity of the heart against God — prevents our seeking for the true knowledge of God. This fact of the world's ignorance of God is clear from observation. To all the Lord's people, the fact is known by experience; for they also were once darkness, who are now light in the Lord. The ignorance of the world,

arising as it does from enmity to God,

and leading to practical opposition to God

— brings the world under condemnation.

It is therefore condemned and doomed! Its condemnation is just! Its doom is dreadful!

"This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed!" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. Oh, terrible doom of a God-hating, Christ-rejecting world! The Privilege of the Saints: "But I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me." True Christians know God, and their knowledge of God is the source or foundation of life, enjoyment, and obedience. It is eternal life to know the true God! As the knowledge of God always leads to communion with him, it becomes a source of the truest and most hallowed enjoyment; which enjoyment produces hearty obedience to his law, and entire consecration to his service.

Knowing God, they acknowledge him by receiving Christ, the Sent One. Thus they become connected with Jesus, who knows God fully, and reveals God clearly. He could say, "As the Father knows me — even so know I the Father." He had as full, as clear, and as complete a knowledge of the Father — as the Father had of him. And so clearly did he reveal the Father, that he could say, "He who has seen me — has seen the Father." The knowledge of Jesus of the Father — is the cause of our knowledge of the Father. He reveals the Father's nature, mind, will, purposes, promises, and precepts unto us. In his light — we see light; and by his teaching — we understand and know the Father. The Title Given to the Father: "O righteous Father." This is the sixth time he calls him "Father," in his prayer. He prayed, "Holy Father, sanctify them," — make them like yourself, and thoroughly set them apart for yourself. Now he prays, "O righteous Father, glorify them; let them be with me where I am, to behold my glory, which you have given me."

It is a righteous thing for God to glorify believers in Jesus. The Savior prays for it as such. He refers to his merit. He was just about to finish his work, a work full of merit, a work which would enable God honorably to carry out the dearest purpose of his heart. Hence we read, that we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice . . . he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus." Romans 3:24-26. As, therefore, Jesus had procured a title for us to eternal life by his merit, he appeals to God as righteous to glorify us.

He refers also to the promise. God had promised eternal life to Christ for all his seed, in the everlasting covenant. "This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life." When was this promise made? "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." If the promise was made before the world began, it must have been made to Jesus, who in the covenant stood for us, and undertook our cause. And if the Father promised in the covenant to give eternal life to all believers — then Jesus could very justly and very consistently claim our glorification at the hands of the Father, as "The Righteous One." A similar view John presents to us when he says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to

cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Faithful to what? The promise, in which he has pledged his Word that he will pardon. Just to what? to whom? To Jesus and his infinite merit, which procured us a title to pardon, according to the arrangements and stipulations of the everlasting covenant.

God is righteous, therefore Jesus may expect his prayers to be answered, and his claims to be admitted. He deserved an answer on the ground of justice; he could claim it as a right, because of his meritorious work; and while God is righteous, he cannot be denied.

God is righteous, though the world is ignorant and condemned. Man had the knowledge of God once; but he made no proper use of it, nor would he retain it. Therefore the apostle, accounting for the deplorable state of the heathen, says, "Because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Again: "Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God — God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity!" You see they knew God — but would not glorify him. They had the knowledge of God — but did not like it, would not preserve it and hand it down to posterity; and therefore God said, "Well, take your own course!" He just left them to themselves — and all the abominations of heathenism followed. So it was with Israel, as God testifies: "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would have none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts; and they walked in their own counsels." They got tired of God. They would not have him. How insulting! How provoking! No wonder that God should say, "Well, if you will not have me — have whom you will." And from this, followed all their ignorance, superstition, pride, and enmity against God, and against his Christ!

Observe, None can reveal God — but Jesus.

Jesus is the mirror in which God is seen.

He is the medium through which God is made known.

He is the prophet by whom God is proclaimed.

He could say, "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." The Father reveals the Son; as Jesus said to Peter, when he made his noble confession, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you — but my Father who is in Heaven." As the Father reveals the Son — so the Son reveals the Father. "He who has seen me — has seen the Father!" As the Father reveals the Son, and the Son reveals the Father, so the Holy Spirit, as "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation," reveals both!

Thus, by the joint revelation of each divine person in the Godhead — we come to a true, experimental, heart-affecting knowledge of God. None can give us the capacity or ability to know God, but Jesus. "We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true!" We receive no new faculty — but we receive grace and power to use the faculties we have aright, and for spiritual purposes. In the light the Lord gives — we perceive the truth, and especially the truth concerning himself.

Ignorance flows from sin, and is highly dangerous. Some imagine that ignorance will be an excuse; but as it is more or less willful — it rather aggravates than lessens guilt. How solemn the

words of the prophet, "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he who made them will not have mercy on them, and he who formed them will show them no favor!" The knowledge of God flows from grace, and is both excellent and necessary — so excellent, that nothing can be compared to it — so excellent, that Paul suffered the loss of all things for it, and counted them but dung and dross in compare with it.

Ignorance generates cruelty, and cruelty is ever shown toward those who take part with God. Hence the persecutions endured by the primitive Church, and more or less, according to circumstances, by all the Lord's people.

Jesus pleads, 'These have known you — therefore let them be with me.' The knowledge of God is a preparative for glory. If we know God on earth — we shall see and enjoy God in Heaven. The knowledge of God makes us thirst for God, and creates an appetite that can never be satisfied with anything but God.

Jesus pleads, 'I have known you — therefore let me and my people be with you.' The presence of the Father — is the Heaven of the Son; and the presence of the Father and the Son — will be the all-satisfying Heaven of the saints. Blessed be God, the prayers of Jesus will be answered; and separated from an ignorant world, and filled with the knowledge and presence of God — we shall be glorious and happy forever!

Forever blessed be your holy name, good and gracious God, that you have given me the knowledge of yourself, and have thus distinguished me from the inhabitants of this poor, sinful, unhappy world. Give me a still clearer and more experimental knowledge of yourself, in your love, grace, and power — so that I may . . .

love you more,

serve you better, and

live with you forever!

## 29 The Final Purpose

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### The Final Purpose

Jesus is the great revealer of God. As our words reveal our thoughts, and the thoughts reveal the man — so Jesus, as The Word, reveals the thoughts of God, and by revealing his thoughts, reveals his nature. In nature we see the print of God's foot — but in Jesus we see the revelation of his full person; and there is as much difference between seeing God in nature, and God in Jesus — as between seeing the foot-print of a man on the soft clay — and the whole man standing erect before you! This was a great part of the Savior's work; as he says, "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26). The Work Jesus Had Done: "I have declared to them Your name." A name is to distinguish — and God's name distinguishes him from his creatures, and from all the false gods of the heathen world. His name teaches what he is in himself, what he is to his creatures in general, and to his saints in particular. His proclamation of his name to Moses was just adapted to meet the case of his Israel. He declared himself to be the self-existent, immutable, and covenant God of his people in general. He then particularized . . .

his mercy, which sympathizes with man's misery;

his grace, as meeting man's unworthiness;

his longsuffering, as affording hope to old and hardened sinners;

his abundance of goodness and truth, as suiting the poverty, ignorance, and fickleness of his people. So Jesus had declared, made known, or revealed . . .

God's nature as spiritual,

his disposition as merciful, and

his purposes and designs as gracious.

Jesus had declared the name or title by which God would be known to his people — even that of Father.

It they had any needs — he assured them that their Father knew their needs.

If they prayed — he directed them to say, "Our Father."

If they looked forward to the end — he assured them that it was their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom.

He taught them that God wished to be thought of as a Father, and to be addressed as a Father. He had so declared God's name — as to produce veneration, confidence, and love. His greatness and holiness produced veneration;

his grace and faithfulness awakened confidence;

his mercy and compassion called forth their love.

"I have declared unto them your name." The Work He Intended to Do: "I will declare it." Jesus reveals God's name gradually, clearly, and correctly. He had revealed much — but he intended to reveal more — and in his sufferings, death, and resurrection, he did so. There he showed . . .

what the justice of God was,

what the holiness of God was,

what the wrath of God against sin was,

and how faithful God was to his covenant engagements and to his Word.

Afterwards, by sending the Holy Spirit — he completed that manifestation of the divine name, which was intended for the present world. The revelation which Jesus makes is clear; he gives not only a clear statement of the truth — but he imparts light to the mind, so that in God's light we see God's name. The revelation when most incomplete, is correct so far as it goes; there is no mistake or misrepresentation. Though all may not be seen, what is seen is correct. One degree of knowledge, prepares us for a further revelation. We learn by degrees — and perhaps throughout eternity we shall be learning more and more of God, who is infinite, and be engaged taking into our minds more clear and full discoveries of his glorious nature and perfections! One favor is the pledge of another. One spiritual blessing never comes alone — or, if it comes alone, it is as the harbinger of another. When we receive one favor from God, we may cry out, "Call its name Gad, for a troop comes!" The Design with Which Jesus Reveals the Father: "That the love with which You loved Me — may be in them, and I in them" — that the Father's love may be in his people. Love is the source, proof, and forerunner of all spiritual blessings! Was Hezekiah delivered from the pit of corruption? He says, "You have in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption." Is the Church sanctified and saved? It is because Jesus "loved it, and gave himself for it." Is the saint comforted? It is because God our Father has "loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace." Are believers made kings and priests unto God, and raised to enjoy his presence and glory? It all flows from love; hence they sing, "Unto him who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father — to him be glory and dominion forever and ever! Amen."

Jesus desired not only that we may have spiritual blessings — but that the source and spring of them all, may be in us! "That the love with which you have loved me — may be in them." God's love to us is astonishing; and the more we dwell upon it — the more astonishing it appears, so that we are often ready to cry out with the apostle, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

God's love is in Christ; Paul therefore calls it "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is also in us; hence he says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us." Jesus would have us possess the love of God in its great and glorious effects, as life, peace, courage, and conscious acceptance with God.

Christ would also dwell in us himself, as he adds, "And I in them." Jesus is not only for us — but in us — in us . . .

as a source of holiness, comfort, and strength;

as the hope of glory;

as the very life of our souls;

in us living, in us working, in us dwelling.

"Christ lives in me!" "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith."

Observe, Love is the fountain of all good — and union with Christ is the medium of its conveyance. Every blessing, favor, and benefit — flows to us from the free, sovereign, and eternal love of God; union with Christ directs the stream of that love into our souls — and on it float all divine blessings. O the importance of union with Christ! We cannot overestimate it. We cannot too highly appreciate it. May we live realizing that we are in Christ — and that Christ is in us! May our hearts be directed into the love of God — and may the love of God be directed into our hearts! This will make us at once . . .

holy, happy, and useful;

a credit to the gospel;

an honor to religion;

a comfort to the Church;

and a glory to God. The gospel is the means of . . .

revealing God,

kindling confidence in our hearts,

and conveying blessings to our souls. The gospel is a mirror in which God's glory is seen.

Christ is the portrait by which God is represented. In Jesus, we behold as in a mirror, the glory of God. The knowledge of God is obtained . . .

by knowing Christ,

by looking to Christ, and

by close, personal, experimental dealings with Christ.

Through the knowledge of Christ — all necessary good things come into our possession. As Peter says, "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires." Through the knowledge of Christ — we have confidence in God, and rejoice in hope of his glory.

We should study God's name, as David did, who said, "My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord." We should make use of God's name, and then we may say as Paul did, "If God is for us — who can be against us?" As John did, "We have known and believed the love which God has to us. God is love; and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him." The best thing which Jesus desires for us — is more love and closer union. On these, his heart was set. For these, he poured out his soul. For these, he would exert his utmost influence. Shall not we, then, seek more love from God — so that we may love God more, and love the saints more? Shall we not seek to realize more and more that Jesus dwells in us, and that we dwell in him? We ought to be satisfied with nothing less. On this our hearts should be set — to this we should bend all the strength and desires of our soul.

O Holy Spirit, do you not shed abroad the love of God in the hearts of his people? Shed it abroad in mine, and shed it abroad copiously and constantly there, for it is a blessing of which I can never have too much! Do you not unite the soul to Jesus, and Jesus to the soul? Oh, allow me to experience more of the indwelling of Jesus in my soul — more close, intimate, and hallowing union to him, and fellowship and communion with him!

Reader! Have you accompanied me in my meditations on this sublime prayer of our adorable Savior? If so, let me ask: What evidence have you — that you are one for whom Jesus prayed? Have you been led to believe on him, through the word of his servants? Do you know anything experimentally of union to Christ, or communion with Christ? Do you ever enjoy the presence of Jesus, and is the presence of Jesus — the Heaven you long for? Is he precious to your soul — more precious than all things beside? Or are you ignorant of God as he is revealed in Jesus and by Jesus? Are you a stranger to the power of godliness, and the pleasure that flows from fellowship with him? If so, then be assured of one thing — that whatever you may enjoy, you are a stranger to true, solid, substantial happiness, while you are a stranger to the Lord Jesus.

I cannot, therefore, leave you until I exhort you to make sure work of the salvation of your soul. Nor would I leave you with this, if I knew that you had not found the Savior — but would most affectionately invite you to come to Jesus, and prove . . .

the truth of his Word,

the greatness of his love, and

the perfection of his glorious salvation!

Come to Jesus, if you have not. Come to Jesus at once. Jesus only, Jesus only can meet your case, and save your soul!

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