

THE HIDDEN LIFE

by Whitmore Winslow

Journal entries of Whitmore Winslow reflecting on the deceptiveness of the world, the sufficiency of Christ's love, and the anticipation of eternal glory over earthly pursuits.

3 Chapters

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Gems written at the age of 14

The Hidden Life

Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow written at the age of 14. His journal, which was previously unknown to his family, was found among his papers after his unexpected death, at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of Octavius Winslow.

How frail the thread! How short is time, and what a small portion is allotted to man to prepare for another world!

And yet how careless is he of that time!

How frail the thread upon which life hangs!

A few hours' illness may carry him away into a world of endless happiness or of endless woe!

What a vain world it is! What a fallen creature is man!

Day by day calls forth more hidden depravity of his heart; and yet his whole affections are set upon the very object which is fostering and encouraging that depravity.

His great ambition is to win the approbation of the world; a world that slew the King of kings; a world full of sin and sorrow, the medium by which Satan endeavors to blind the eyes of the children of men.

And yet, after all, what a vain world it is!

It promises much, but realizes nothing.

The more we expect pleasure, the more are we disappointed in it.

Oh, what would man be, if instead of seeking the friendship and the love of a dying world, he would seek that of Jehovah!

And yet how prone are we to lament when we are frowned upon by the world. If we did not seek its smiles, we would not mind its frowns.

But the more we are delighted at the world's praise, the more are we discomfited and made unhappy by its disapprobation.

But take the world as a whole; what is it? A speck in the universe; a ball floating in the air, surrounded by other worlds greater and more magnificent than itself.

Shall we love the world which hated and scorned, and ultimately slew our loved Redeemer?

That ever promising, yet ever deceiving world? How little have appearances to do with realities!

The outward show has often the effect of deceiving.

Deceit is, indeed, one of the prominent features in man; he deceives others, he deceives himself.

The world is truly a false world. And does it not show the depravity of man's heart when after tasting its bitters, feeling its pains, and experiencing its disappointments and sorrows, he should still cling

to that ever promising, yet ever deceiving world?

Changeable! What a changeable world is this, and what changeable creatures are we! But what a glorious thought that there is a Being who changes not! We chase it like a bubble in the air! What could the Christian do in a poor world like this if he had not Christ for his Friend?

Truly is he often seeking other friends, but God will make him know, by sad yet blessed experience, that there is no friend like Jesus; and that while other friends are fickle and changeable, He changes not.

Oh that we followed not this poor world as we do!

We chase it like a bubble in the air, and with all its apparent beauty, it fades into nothing!

But oh, when we taste the preciousness of Jesus, what a heavenly morsel it is! It raises our drooping

spirits to contemplate the joy that awaits us in another world, the happiness that is laid up for us above, the glory that will crown the final end of our weary pilgrimage through a dying and unsatisfying world.

Pride eats at the root of all happiness! Ah! blessed is he to whom God shows his own weakness and insufficiency to do anything of himself. Deem it not a curse, but a blessing, when God humbles your pride, however severe the discipline may be by which He does it. When He teaches you to lean upon Him alone for support, thank Him for it.

Pride eats at the root of all happiness; and a proud spirit God will abase, but the humble spirit He will exalt.

Toilsome journey through this weary world I had some sweet sights of Jesus by faith, some feeble glimmerings of the happiness and glory which we shall realize above. It is only these glorious feelings that will solace the Christian in his toilsome journey through this weary world.

Come what may, pleasure or pain, happiness or woe, life or death, I am in the hands of the Lord of Creation, the King of kings, and in His keeping no evil will befall me.

Surrounded with trouble at almost every step? Today I have been surrounded with trouble at almost every step. But with all this, I can fly to Jesus as my never failing Friend, and He can give me all I need.

A bountiful Savior and a needy sinner just suit each other! This precious jewel, where can it be located? Happiness! Where is it to be found?

This precious jewel, where can it be located?

Is it to be obtained in the world, its pleasures and delights? No! the Christian will answer it cannot!

Happiness, if there be such a thing in this world, can only be obtained from Jesus. In His bosom alone can we find repose.

I am persuaded that the more the believer has of sanctified sorrow, tribulation, and affliction in this dying world, the more he will have of happiness and glory in the blessed realms above.

I feel now as if death would be a welcome messenger to my soul, to waft me from this sinful world to Canaan's joyful shore. Ah! it is a blessed thing to be able to meet death with a beaming countenance and a gladsome heart.

There have been times when amid pleasure and enjoyment I have loathed the very thought of death.

But when God afflicts a man, then he feels the vanity and deceitfulness of the world; and if he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will long to see his Redeemer, and be with Him in the abodes of happiness and light throughout an endless eternity!

I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all.

All the troubles and afflictions of His people How gracious has the Lord been to me today! His promises, they never fail. They have been indeed my chief support.

Oh, to have a simple trust in the Savior! He will not betray your confidence. He is a faithful and just God, merciful and gracious, and ever ready to lend an ear to all the troubles and afflictions of His people.

Open all your heart to Jesus, and He will open the fountain of His mercy to you.

Afflictions come from God! How soon can God change a man's circumstances!

He is elevated today, and is cast down tomorrow.

So it is, and so it will be in this changeful world, until we arrive at a better and brighter one, where there will be no sin, and consequently no sorrow.

But oh, we should remember, that afflictions come from God! When a Christian neglects prayer, for instance, God places him, perhaps, in a situation of great trial, and he is driven to pray.

Or, when a man's affections are set upon the world, God makes that world his greatest enemy (and I feel it to be mine), and he is compelled to make Christ his Friend.

Oh, may every afflicted saint of God profit by the trials which God shall see fit to lay upon him! But

even in judgment, our heavenly Father will remember mercy. If the world satisfies you? No being knows the trials I have undergone the past week, but Jesus. And as He only knows, so He only can help me through.

I have felt such a willingness to die! a feeling that death would be no dreadful thing to me, having a wish to leave this more dreadful world. But painful, yet no less blessed trial has done it all.

And oh, may I be able from my heart to thank God for having made the world my enemy, and Christ my Friend!

But mark this: if the world does not suit you, you will be sure to have a welcome in heaven. But if the world satisfies you, hell will be the most adapted to receive you. While we sojourn in this world Oh, to realize the happiness in store for us in the next world! If we more anticipated the blissful future, we should not so much mind the miserable present.

A few short years will bring the Christian to the end of his pilgrimage, and to the beginning of his eternal rest!

But, oh, let us never forget that while we sojourn in this world we have a never failing Friend to whom we can take all our trials and sorrows!

God is our guide Oh, that we did but realize that we are the Lord's and the Lord is ours! No harm can befall us which is not for our benefit.

And were it not for the corruption within, and our guilty consciences, no evil from without could materially affect us.

But may we remember that God is our guide through life, and will be unto death.

Decay is inscribed on earth's fairest flower! January, 1851. We have entered upon another year, which, like the preceding ones, will flit quickly by.

Solemn thought!

We also shall soon pass away, and the place where we dwelt and lived will know us no more.

The ravages of time, written in letters too deeply engraved to be erased, are stamped upon everything mortal.

Decay is inscribed on earth's fairest flower!

Oh, how solemn is the reflection! Our short period of existence here on earth should be taken up with preparation for another and a better world.

And yet poor, blind, fallen man seldom gives the question a moment's consideration, while his whole thoughts are absorbed in obtaining that which, even while he seizes it, crumbles in his grasp.

I feel this with regard to myself; and oh, that I always may have a keen perception of it! The least prosperity or participation in happiness, as the world terms it, sets me mad after chasing the poor

baubles, as if I had never known their deceitfulness and insufficiency. Does not this show the fallen nature of man in a glaring light?

'I know the right, and yet the wrong pursue.'

Ah, have you cause to mourn over sin? Do you see that in you which is hateful to yourself, and which causes you sorrow? Then thank God for it, as the most decided proof that He has planted within you the germs of a being that shall one day burst the bonds of natural corruption, and with all the beauty and purity of the God who created it, start forth a glittering gem, forever to shine in the crown of the Redeemer.

But what is the sequel? Truly it becomes a Christian to be always happy.

What reason has he to be otherwise, when every step of his journey, every incident, however minute,

that occurs in his pilgrimage through life, is ordered and ordained by his heavenly Father, his loving

Savior, his best Friend?

True it is that he has often more care, more affliction, than the worldling has; while the worldling prospers in his way, the believer is often bowed down with care and trouble, scarcely able to struggle through life.

But what is the sequel?

The ungodly enjoy the pleasures and wealth of this world, only to realize more bitterly their loss in the world to come; while the Christian sees the worst side of this world, and tastes more of its bitters, only to enhance the happiness of a better world, where he will enjoy the sweetest bliss.

But even in the deepest afflictions the believer in Christ has cause to be happy, if he can but realize

the truth that the All seeing Jehovah, who framed and created out of nothing the vast universe, and

who guides its great machinery, has ordered that event for his essential good.

Love so undeserved, so great, so free! Oh, what a loving Father He must be! Ah, yes! that

love so undeserved, so great, so free, gave from His own loving bosom His only beloved Son a sacrifice for man, when every heart rankled with hatred to God.

Are there no choice beings who reap the fruits of their Redeemer's love? Yes! God has a chosen church, and for them the blood of Jesus was shed, to redeem them from the curse and to bring them to heaven! I am utterly helpless! I have been led to feel that in myself I am utterly helpless. God has made me to see that all my hard studying, and all my talents, abilities, and boasted knowledge, will be of no avail to me in this crisis, if He withholds His blessing.

I have been led to leave the outcome of it all in God's hands, and to feel that He will do all for the

best, yes, better than the wisest of us could imagine or desire. One mightier than all is for me! When we can trace His loving hand Brief, but sweet, is my diary of today. Oh, how savory every morsel when the blessing of God is upon it! When we can trace His loving hand, what unequaled happiness does it give!

Oh, to trust Him, though He may seem at the time to blight our fond hopes; to have a thankful heart for mercies undeserved!

How has He especially appeared to me today none but Himself can tell. And to repay it is out of the power of mortal. O what changeable and fluctuating creatures! Man, with all his boasted wisdom, understanding, and sagacity, seldom learns the necessary lesson of profiting by the past. That which at one time made an apparent and indelible impression upon his mind is now entirely forgotten, or, if not forgotten, viewed in a careless and indifferent light.

O what changeable and fluctuating creatures are the human race! We travel with time in all its changes and fluctuations; and wherever it tends and winds its onward course, we often pursue the same given track, and, unsuspecting and unalarmed, are led to the brink of a fearful precipice, and are lost to all eternity!

It is good for a man that he should reflect upon his own condition: what he is? and where bound?

Gems written at the age of 15

The Hidden Life

Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow written at the age of 15. His journal, which was previously unknown to his family, was found among his papers after his unexpected death, at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of Octavius Winslow.

A picture repulsive to every refined feeling. Truly does the world present a picture repulsive to every refined feeling. It is devoid of all sources of true happiness to its earnest seekers, and produces no end of evils, embittering the life of man, and ensnaring his heedless steps.

It is a field of conflict between two opposite powers.

The one winning his foes to his side by overwhelming love, and subduing them into perfect submission by the power of irresistible goodness.

The other, enlisting his adherents by the offer of false happiness, alluring them by spurious pleasures, only to disappoint their hopes, and when life has spun out its last thread of existence to engulf them

in eternal despair.

How it ensnares, and allures, and taunts, and disappoints! What a wretched world it is! How it ensnares, and allures, and taunts, and disappoints!

I am persuaded that a Christian cannot remain in worldly company, or be engaged in anything worldly, without his heavenly mindedness being damaged, and his holy feelings and resolutions being vitiated and weakened.

Christ's unchanging love and tenderness Christ's unchanging love and tenderness scatter all the gloomy mists and dark clouds of our pilgrimage, and gladden the drooping spirit.

Cheer up, tried and tempted Christian!

A blissful eternity will make up for all the crosses and trials, the bitters and woes of the present. Then

shall real happiness dawn upon your spirit, warming and delighting your soul through eternity.

Strive not for the world's smiles; they are deceitful. And fear not its scorn while God smiles upon you.

This bewitching world, these alluring pleasures! What a changeful world is this, and what changeable creatures are we!

Oh, how have I seen this in myself and in others! Friends whom I have most trusted have suddenly grown cold and indifferent, freezing my affections by their unfaithfulness and wavering.

But, oh, has not this some end? Methinks I see it.

The world's charms have too much allured my gaze from Jesus and fixed it upon its empty bubbles.

And was not this trial sent to deaden my affections to the world, and fix them upon something more

substantial? O yes, it was all for my good.

This bewitching world, these alluring pleasures, how they ensnare! O God, keep me from their power.

May I be weaned from them, and attracted to Jesus, finding the center of my happiness in leaning in sweet repose upon His bosom who never changes nor forsakes those who put their trust in Him.

We sometimes envy the wicked How sweet is a calm after the tempest! It would not do for us were it always smooth. The little roughness of the way increases the pleasantness of the calm.

How little do we value a blessing until it is taken from us; and yet how unconcerned and lifeless we are until stirred up by adverse circumstances. O how should we value every chastisement we receive!

We sometimes envy the wicked because they seem to go on sinning, and yet unpunished. Did we but realize that it is a Father's hand that is guiding us, and that it is because He loves and cares for us

that He chastises us.

The ungodly He leaves to themselves until their ternal punishment. But He watches over His children with the eye of a father, and all that He does is for their good now and hereafter.

O what a blessing to be one of His children, to have such a Protector, such a Friend! He is worth all the dearest friends the world can produce.

The believer's life The believer's life, though short and passing as a vapor, is eventful of circumstances of the greatest significance. It is a period allotted to him to prepare for another world. And oh, what a blessed thought that there is another and a better world!

We shall soon leave our present abode, full of sin and full of sorrow, changeful as the wind. Friends

change, circumstances change, age changes; soon the light and joyous childhood of our youth begins

to taste the bitters of life, and his sincere and happy brow becomes wrinkled with anxiety and care; old age creeps on, and we apparently are insensible of it. But soon it will be over, and a happy eternity follows.

The Christian has his happiness to anticipate; the sinner his eternal misery to look forward to.

Oh, it is better to be at the disposal of God than at any moment to have the full control of ourselves!

Infectious, ensnaring, delusive So infectious is the world, so bright and ensnaring, yet in reality so delusive, that before you are aware, it will arrest your glance, steal upon your affections, and so deaden your spirituality and communion with God, and thus call for some gentle chastening of your

heavenly Father to bring you back again to His bosom.

Look not for happiness in anything connected with the world.

I, as a youth, have done so, and have been disappointed.

There is no pleasure of any description, I am fully persuaded, that is not accompanied with some bitter.

God has wisely ordained that Christians in general should partake but little of this world's enjoyments, that they may not make the world their home, but that, all their thoughts taken up with Christ, their eyes may be blind to its pleasures and enjoyments.

Oh, what will be the ecstasy of that moment! If there are two things that will more fill us with

wonder and amazement when we arrive at heaven than another, it will be, first, that we ever got there; and second, the vast difference of the world we have left to the one we shall then enjoy! Oh, what will be the ecstasy of that moment when we find ourselves in heaven!

And yet we are so mad and so blind as to fear to die, still clinging to this poor world! Sometimes in solitude I look forward and enjoy the anticipation of a better state.

Oh, if this should ever meet the eye of an afflicted child of God, whatever may be your trials, dry up those untimely tears, brighten up that saddened countenance, and look forward with the confident and blessed assurance of an eternity of bliss.

Your thoughts of affliction are not as God's thoughts.

If your limited comprehension cannot take in the wisdom of all His plans with regard to you. What you deem most unfavorable, God regarding as most beneficial. Yet thank Him, if He is weaning you from this poor world, although the means He uses may appear to you most grievous.

True religion The religion of God has to do with the heart, whatever may be the sect to which a man belongs.

In the matter of his salvation he has not to do with churches, or with opinions, or with creeds, but with God.

True religion consists not in notions, forms, or outward profession. These can avail a man but little when he is laid upon a dying bed, and is about to appear before God, when the great question will

be, not to what sect or church he belonged, but how he, a vile and fallen sinner, can be justified before God?

No sect, or church, or religion, can possibly be honoring to God which sets aside Christ and His atonement, and lays its foundations in wretched SELF.

When is affliction sweet? When can we thank God for it.

When it brings us near to Jesus.

When it fixes our wandering thoughts and desires upon One that is mighty; mighty not only to save,

but to make us happy in this dark valley of tears.

Oh, it compensates us for all the humblings and disappointments which we may experience.

'Sweet affliction, That brings Jesus to my soul.'

A glimpse of Jesus is a little heaven below.

Who would not part with the world's honors, reputation, or wealth, to gain it? And yet we are so prone to fix our affections upon these poor baubles which must soon pass away.

Happy is he whose lot is cast with the tried, the poor, the humble of Christ's flock, for there Jesus abides.

Gems written at the age of 16-18

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Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow written at the age of 16 to 18. His journal, which was previously unknown to his family, was found among his papers after his unexpected death, at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of Octavius Winslow.

When He afflicts, it is only out of kindness Sweet it is not only to believe, but also to experience that as much affliction as God is pleased to give, so much of His divine blessing He invariably bestows with it.

He causes us to feel His rod that His blessing may be experienced the more. He makes us to taste the bitter only to prepare us for the sweet.

And when He finds that prosperity weans us from

Him and assimilates to the world, He chastens us.

Oh, how sweet to be resigned to His will, feeling

assured that He does all things for our best welfare;

that when He afflicts, it is only out of kindness;

and that when He accomplishes the end, He returns

to us laden with blessing.

O the demon SELF!

Alas! our noblest actions are so mixed with SELF.

Such is the real fact, I need not disguise it. This

it is that chills our warmest feelings, and mars our

happiness in looking to Jesus.

O the demon SELF! it will ever come in to spoil

that which is holy.

Alas, alas! how cold we are! How insensible

to the greatest mercies, perpetually reminded that

we are not only mortal, but sinful.

When I reflect upon the spiritual blessings which

I have received, and feel how insensible I am, oh it is a cause of mourning. I think nothing is so ungracious as a thankless spirit, and yet how often do we manifest it when God has been so good! We take care not to be ungrateful to an earthly friend for the slightest benefit, and yet how careless in thanking God!

How has God led me these many years! How has He been the Protector and Guide of my youth! And how has He brought me to what I am! When I thought of all this I did lift up my heart in gratitude. What He has done for me is overwhelming.

Oh, my precious Savior

What a blessed thing it is that we are not to live here always, that our existence is not bounded by this lower sphere!

Holy Father, may our hearts, while aching, praise You that Your chastenings but wean us from this sinful and disappointing world, and fill our minds with holy joy, and longing hope for the blessed heaven to come. Oh, may Your love more completely fill these truant hearts! May Your ceaseless affection, changeless ever, when we wander, link our souls in closer union with You.

Oh, my precious Savior, may that look of pity and love, which beamed so gloriously from Calvary, light upon Your weak and sinful child! May I find in Your loving bosom a shelter from the storm. And though the world, or those I love, cease to sympathize,

precious Savior, You will never look coldly down,
but will open Your heart of love to receive me.

How low and humbled do we feel

As truly as the sinner feels himself unfit for heaven
and for heavenly society on earth, so truly does the
child of God feel sad and unhappy when in the society
of the wicked.

How low and humbled do we feel when accidentally
or necessarily obliged to listen to unholy conversation,
or to witness some open act of sin.

Alas! next to our own sinfulness we ought to deplore
the wickedness of those we are constantly coming in
contact with. All we can do is to observe a marked
silence, and show by our conduct and example how
painful it is to our spirits, though we would desire
openly to rebuke.

Words, however, are sometimes less significant
than conduct, and I have often found how powerful
is the effect of silent example. But we need much
wisdom and much grace both to speak and to act
as we ought and when we ought.

But, blessed thought, that with all our deficiencies,
the righteousness of Christ is our complete covering,
and by its merit we shall soon reach the realms of
purity where sin can never enter.

O Father, preserve me from the deadening
influence of all within and without; and grant
me an eye to see, and a heart to feel, all your
tenderness, forbearance, and love.

It grasps an airy bubble floating by in momentary splendor
Amid all the characters given by poets and philosophers
to Life, perhaps the least regarded is the IMAGINATION.

Life in its loveliest forms consists in a great measure
in the imagination. Thus thought loves to dwell upon
scenes of future or imagined happiness, grouping into
the most felicitous shapes all one's future career.

Thus it grasps an airy bubble floating by in momentary
splendor, and builds upon it a destiny of the highest and
most substantial happiness.

How one's youthful imagination seems to bear us on, blind
to the misery and woe all around us; blind to the stern and
sometimes sickening realities of existence, and alive only
to the beautiful and happy, the gay and glorious.

How imagination, that wonderful power of the soul, can
magnify a transient beam of sunshine into an ever abiding
and increasing stream of effulgent radiancy! How a look
from the eye, a smile of the countenance, a trifling act
of love, can kindle a flame in the soul, which our fond
imagination would persuade us to believe is enduring,
giving power and warmth!

How gladdening are feelings of youth; how keen its
susceptibilities to the beautiful!

But alas, alas! how Life in its onward progress alters
this beautiful picture! How soon do the dark shades
pencilled by the experience of sin and sorrow cast their
chilling influences upon the canvas once so gaily tinted!

How soon the keen blast of adversity sweeps away, as
with a whirlwind, all that before seemed so beautiful and

promising! How soon the slow but fearfully sure disease
cuts down the budding flower!

Yes, how strange a mystery is Life!

Yes, when once the eye has been turned in the right
direction, and the mists and phantoms have disappeared,
we shall see that life is the theater of action, and the
prelude to eternity; an eternity whose untold wonders
are beyond the highest flight of the imagination!

Can a man suppose that he was made for himself?

What a glorious motto for a man, "I Live for God!"

It is religion's truest definition.

It is a motto for a life.

Can a man suppose that he was made for himself?

Miserable thought!

Yet the world acts upon this belief. They devise, and
scheme, and accomplish apparently for others; but
the spring of action and the end of action is, SELF.

This is a course abhorrent to God.

A mere bubble, a toy, an insignificant nothing!

How blessed when one is low and downcast in mind
and body, to feel a little uplifting, and to trace, yet
more blessed, the healing hand of the Great Physician.

To see the Shepherd of the sheep stooping to take and
embrace in His arms of love the weak and feeble lamb.

"When men are cast down, then You shall say, There
is lifting up." Oh, the delightful feeling, this 'lifting up!'

Who can express it but the man who has been down
into the lowest depths, and then brought up so high
that the world appears, as it were, a mere bubble,

a toy, an insignificant nothing! The world no longer is visible to him; lost in the glorious light shed upon his soul by the sight of Jesus.

We sometimes reason ourselves into the belief, that the world, with all its grandeur, beauty, and wonder, must be something worth our attention.

But, oh! five minutes' communion with God, in spite of reason and of ourselves, convinces us that nothing but the object upon which our soul rests is truly great.

The way we read the Bible

What a difference there is in the way we read the Bible; taking it up sometimes as a matter of form and duty, perusing some of its most precious truths, and laying it down again without sensible benefit.

There can be no mistake as to where the fault lies; a cold or worldly heart, an eye covered with the film of sensuous objects, are the real causes.

We do not know what Popery really is!

(The following was written by Whitmore Winslow at the age of 18, after visiting a Roman Catholic Cathedral in France.)

In England, we do not know what Popery really is!

We imagine it to be something repulsive, and cannot conceive how people can be deceived by it.

But once to witness it as it really is, with its gorgeous paraphernalia, you are admitted to the secret of its power. The whole structure seemed to look down upon you in conscious magnificence, and is intended to inspire you with awe and reverence.

No system could possibly have been invented more captivating to the senses, or better adapted to the natural heart.

It allows its devotee free scope to sin, while covering him with a cloak of religion.

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