

WORKS OF JAMES SMITH REFI

by James Smith

Devotional writings by the Victorian-era minister James Smith, providing spiritual nourishment in brief portions for daily use. His work 'Food for the Soul' offers meditations designed to feed the inner life of believers between public worship.

3 Chapters

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Food for the Soul James Smith, 1867

PREFACE

The soul needs food as well as the body — not only in set seasons, or in public ordinances — but frequently and privately. Here then, is spiritual food in small portions — with which the soul may be fed, and the time not be missed.

Every portion leads to Jesus — or brings something from Jesus; for the author has leaned in the school of experience, that Jesus alone will satisfy and sanctify the believer's heart. The more we have to do with Jesus — the better for us, and the more glorifying to God.

Gracious Lord, honor this little book — by making it the means of honoring your beloved Son, and feeding the souls of your beloved people.

Oh, to exalt the Lord Jesus more and more! Oh, to be made more like Jesus from day to day! Sacred Spirit, use this little book to so great and glorious a purpose!

"Your heavenly Father knows!" Matthew 6:32

Yes, believer, your heavenly Father knows . . .

the thoughts that trouble you,

the needs that oppress you,

the sins that grieve you,

the enemies that oppose you,

the domestic trials that distress you,

the financial troubles that bewilder you,

the shattered nerves which alarm you, and

the complicated sorrows that cast you down.

He knows — for He is God.

Knowing, He sympathizes with you — for He is your Father.

Being full of paternal sympathy, He will . . .

strengthen you,

comfort you, and

ultimately deliver you!

"When He has tested me, I will come forth as gold!" Job 23:10 The Lord puts all of His people into His furnace! Some are long in melting and refining — and with others the work is quick. But long or short, the Lord will keep His people in the fire — until they are purified! A genuine Christian loses nothing in the furnace, but his dross. He comes forth bettered, purified, refined. He is more humble, his faith is more simple, and his life more spiritual. He shines like molten gold, and reflects the image of the great Refiner.

"He will sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver; He will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver." Malachi 3:3

"We are the children of God!" Romans 8:16

Never let us forget or lose sight of this — but let us live, walk, and act under the impression that, "I am God's child!"

He knows me — and knows all about me.

He loves me — and loves me with the same love with which He loves His only-begotten Son.

He cares for me — and so cares for me that I ought not to be anxious about anything.

He is with me — and will never for one moment trust me out of His sight, or out of the reach of His hand.

He appoints my daily lot — and will overrule everything for my eternal welfare!

"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish — ever! No one will snatch them out of My hand!" John 10:28

Jesus here speaks . . .

of His sheep,

of those whom the Father had given Him,

of those whom the Father drew unto Him,

of those for whom He died,

of those who sit at His feet to learn of Him.

Jesus loves His sheep.

Jesus laid down His life for His sheep.

Jesus lives to take care of His sheep.

Jesus will never, on any account, part with His sheep.

He can guard them, and He will surely keep them.

Whoever may perish — they never shall.

His Father will not permit it.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit will prevent it.

The love, power, and honor of Jesus combine to render it impossible!

"Men ought always to pray!" Luke 18:1

We have always something to pray for. We may always gain something by praying. The Lord loves to hear us pray — and Satan tries to prevent us. The flesh is a great hindrance unto us.

Yet the throne of grace is always open unto us. In any place, in any frame, under any circumstances — we may pray, we ought to pray. Importunity in prayer pleases God, and prevails with God. Then let us not faint, let us not be weary, let us not give up praying. If God is not weary of listening to us — then we ought not to be weary of asking of Him!

"You shall be free indeed!" John 8:36

That is — really, truly, perfectly free!

Yes, Jesus will free me from the power, guilt, and indwelling of sin.

He will deliver me from this present evil world.

He will raise me above the craft, subtlety, and designs of Satan.

He will . . .

introduce me to His Father,

free me from every fetter, and

I shall serve Him day and night in Heaven!

What a blessed freedom, will freedom from sin be! What a glorious freedom will freedom to serve God without weariness, and without imperfection or interruption be! As Jesus is free — so shall I soon be!

"He determined to go to Jerusalem!" Luke 9:53

And Jesus well knew the sufferings which would befall Him there! But such was His zeal for God, and such His love to us — that He was willing to go anywhere, suffer anything, or do anything — that would honor God or do us good.

He went to Jerusalem — that we might not go to Hell.

He was condemned — that we might be justified.

He was punished — that we might go free.

He died — that we might have eternal life.

Precious Lord Jesus, may I ever be willing . . .

to go anywhere for You,

to do anything for You, or

to suffer anything in Your cause.

"He shall never see death!" John 8:51

Believer, you have nothing to do with death — for you can never die! For you, Jesus has abolished death, by dying for you, and in your stead. You are in Him, and in Him you may fall asleep — but you shall never die! Death can have no dominion over you.

As to . . .

when you shall physically die,

where you shall die,

or how you shall die —

you have no more to do, than you had with when, where, and how you would be born!

Life is your business — not death!

Your only concerns are . . .

living on Christ;

living for Christ;

living like Christ; and then,

living forever with Christ!

"Abide with us!" Luke 24:29

So said the disciples when Jesus was about to leave them — and so shall we say, if we know the sweetness of His presence. When Jesus comes and manifests Himself, when He draws out our souls into sweet communion with Himself — then . . .

we enjoy a Heaven on earth,

our hearts glow with gratitude and burn with love,

we are filled with joy, and

dread nothing so much as His leaving us!

Then we cry, "Abide with us!"

Precious Lord Jesus . . .

come and visit my soul,

reveal Your glory,

shed abroad Your love in my heart, and

draw me into the closest, sweetest communion with Yourself!

"My eyes have seen your salvation!" Luke 2:30

So said Simeon — when he saw the child Jesus. Yes, Jesus is God's salvation, and everything necessary to save a sinner is to be found in Him!

His blood atones for our sins.

His righteousness justifies our persons.

His Spirit sanctifies our natures.

His precepts direct our steps.

His promises comfort our hearts.

His peace keeps our minds.

His intercession secures our lives.

His power subdues our foes.

His providence supplies our needs.

His beauty feasts our souls.

Jesus is enough. Jesus is all. Happy sinner, wait on the Lord — until you see God's salvation — Jesus!

"Now he is comforted!" Luke 16:25

Poor suffering Lazarus had little comfort on earth — but he has plenty in Heaven. The discomfort he suffered here — must make his comfort there tenfold more sweet!

As it was with him, so will it be with us — we shall not lack comfort for long. We have much to comfort us now, even in our worst seasons — but the best is yet to come! The God of all comfort, who sends down drops of comfort now — will soon call us up to enter into the torrents of the fullness of His joy forever! Weeping may endure for a night — but joy comes in the morning. Soon our sufferings and sorrows will be forever ended!

"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain!" Revelation 21:4

"He has opened my eyes!" John 9:30

When Jesus opened my eyes . . .

I saw what a vile sinner I was;

I saw what fearful danger I was in; and

I saw what a glorious Savior He was!

When I first saw His beauty — I thought I would never take my eyes off Him!

When I first tasted that He was gracious — I imagined I should never lose the relish!

When I first felt Him to be precious to my soul — it appeared to me that I would never value anything else!

Blessed Jesus, you have opened my eyes — or they would have been forever closed to my danger, your loveliness, and Your salvation!

"We have no bread!" Mark 8:16

Can we be worse off than the disciples were? They had no bread — but then they had Jesus with them, and He would supply all their needs.

Well, Jesus is as really with us — as He was with them; and He loves and cares for us as much — as He did for them. His hand is not shortened at all — neither is His ear closed! Not one of His disciples died from need — and neither shall we!

He brings us into trials, troubles and afflictions — to try us — to see whether we act in faith, and to whom we turn.

Every one of our needs say, "God and tell Jesus! He will hear you! He will supply you!"

"All things work together for good!" Romans 8:28

What! Shall all my severe trials and troubles work together for my good? Yes — but they are not good alone — but only in connection with other things.

Outward and inward,

painful and pleasant,

joyous and grievous,

gains and losses,

victories and defeats —

all work together, and God superintends the working — so as to secure our good and prevent our injury! God aims at our real and lasting good in all that He does — and in all that He permits. He does nothing, nor allows anything to be done which affects us — but what we shall bless and praise Him for, when we see the entire whole in the light of glory!

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

Thus the infinitely wise God appeals to us — His poor foolish creatures.

We want our own way.

We wish to carve for ourselves.

But God loves us too well, to allow us to do so!

He has drawn the plan of our lives.

He has marked out the paths we are to tread.

He has fixed the bounds of our habitation.

Yes, He has numbered the very hairs of our head!

He has arranged to prevent evil, and to secure our spiritual and eternal good. This He has told us in His Word — and yet we are not satisfied. But, "Should it be according to your mind?"

"The Lord searches all hearts!" 1 Chronicles 28:9

Then the Lord searches my heart! Yes, He is searching my heart at this moment. Then He knows every motive, every thought, every purpose. Then He knows the very worst of me.

Then it is impossible to deceive or conceal anything from him. Ought I not then to be very careful not to set up any idol in my heart, or encourage any thought or motive that I know to be displeasing to him? Ought I not to be very frank and full in my confessions of sin, especially of the sins of my heart? O Lord, cleanse my heart with the blood of your Son.

"O God, strengthen my hands!" Nehemiah 6:9

A sense of weakness is often a great blessing. As painful as it is, it has prevented many a fall, and procured many a blessing. We never pray so feelingly, so earnestly, or so successfully — as when we feel our weakness to be extreme.

When we have much work to do — and no strength to do it;

when we have many and great difficulties to overcome — and no strength to overcome them;

when we have many foes to subdue — and no strength to subdue them

— then we cry out in good earnest, "O God, strengthen my hands!"

"He shall save the humble person." Job 22:29

That is, God shall save the person who . . .

has low views of himself,

thinks himself to be unworthy of the least of the Lord's mercies,

and is willing to be, or to do, or to suffer, anything the Lord pleases.

We cannot be too low in our own eyes, or lay too low before the Lord's throne. Pride is our bane! Nothing makes us so unfruitful, so unhappy, or so disagreeable to others — as pride! If the Lord humbles us — then He will save us; yes, our humility is a part of our salvation. He will save the humble . . .

from every overwhelming trouble,

from every insulting foe, and

from eternal death!

"Happy is the man whom God corrects!" James 5:17

Happy, not that he needs correction — but that God so loves him as to correct him. Correction comes from a father — punishment from a judge. When we are corrected, God deals with us as

with sons; for what son is he whom his father chastens not?

How much correction we need! How often our Father has to use the rod! Sometimes He lays it on the body, sometimes on the soul, sometimes on the family, and sometimes on the property. What we prize most — He frequently smites first. But He never smites us without a reason.

"My grace is sufficient for you!" 2 Corinthians 12:9

Is your property gone?

Does your health decline?

Is old-age creeping on?

Are your friends proving fickle and false?

Does everything tend to depress, trouble, and cast you down?

Still, do not fear, for . . .

though Satan buffets you,

though the world frowns upon you,

though wealth flees from you,

though heart and flesh appear to fail you,

Jesus says, "My grace is sufficient for you!"

His grace is sufficient . . .

for every believer,

at all times, and

under all circumstances.

Sufficient to support,

sufficient to comfort,

sufficient to supply,

sufficient to deliver, and

sufficient to make you more than a conqueror!

"You shall know hereafter!" John 13:7

The Lord often seems to carry on His work in the dark. In providence and grace He works — but we cannot fathom His design.

Reason is baffled,

all our schemes are confounded,

and our faith seems to stagger.

The Lord says,

"Trust me — and you will find my Word true.

Wait my time — and you shall see that all is right.

Rely upon me — for I will never fail you.

Leave the matter to me — for I am wiser than you.

The matter shall be made plain, and you shall know, not only what I do — but why I do it, and shall praise and bless me for it!"

"I have called you friends!" John 15:15

If Jesus calls us 'friends' — He will treat us as such. We may, therefore, look to Him for information, correction, and consolation.

If Jesus calls us friends, He wishes us to treat Him as a friend, and as such, we should . . .

consult him,

confide in him,

be familiar with him,

and strive to please him.

If Jesus is my friend — then whom shall I fear?

If Jesus is my friend — then what good can I lack?

If Jesus is my friend — then why should I doubt?

To have Him who is God over all for my friend; to know that He possesses all things, and does as just as He desires — ought to make me happy and content!

"My soul thirsts for God!" Psalms 42:2

A sanctified soul centers in God; and have what it may, without God it cannot be happy. Health, wealth, or honor — are insufficient to satisfy it. There is still a thirsting for God. To realize His presence, to enjoy a sense of His favor, and to live in close fellowship and communion with him, will satisfy — but nothing else. Nor shall we enjoy perfect satisfaction — until free from sin, and filled with holiness — we gaze on His glories, walk in His light, and drink of the river of His pleasures! My soul, let nothing satisfy you but God!

"Do you love Me?" John 21:17

My soul, Jesus asks you, "Do you love Me?"

Do you love Me . . .

more than sin,

more than the world,
more than self,
more than money,
more than pleasure,
more than everything?

Let my conduct reply to the question. Not my conduct judged by too partial self — but judged by the impartial, all-knowing, unerring God!

Does love to Jesus . . .

regulate my desires,
guide my choices,
direct my actions?

Love to Jesus is always "influential". It led the New Testament Christians to give up all things for Jesus. It led the martyrs to give their bodies to be burned for Jesus.

"The election of grace!" Romans 11:5

God had His elect people. In the exercise of His sovereign favor, God chose His people, appointed them to holiness here — and to happiness in Heaven.

He gave them to Jesus,
He calls them by His Spirit,
He guides them by His counsel, and
afterwards He receives them to glory.

All our present happiness and all our future prospects, are founded in God's election, and flow from it. God elected me to be His child; and when He gives me grace, then I elect Him to be my God.

If He had not chosen me — I never would have chosen Him!

"The gospel of the grace of God!" Acts 20:34

God's grace, is His gracious disposition and readiness to confer great and invaluable blessings upon vile and unworthy creatures. The grace of God is revealed in the gospel, and appears in . . .

our election to eternal life,
our redemption from eternal death,
our regeneration by the Holy Spirit,
our justification in the righteousness of Christ,

and in our preservation to eternal glory!

All the difference between what we once were — and now are, as also of what we shall be — is to be ascribed to the sovereign grace of God!

"Cleave unto the Lord!" Acts 11:23

You should cleave unto the Lord. You will be tempted to draw back, or become lukewarm, or indifferent, or cold. Beware of this. Jesus is worthy of your strongest confidence. Jesus deserves your warmest love. Think of what He did and suffered for you; of what He is now doing in Heaven; and what He intends to do for you when He comes again.

If you would be happy in your soul,
if you would adorn your profession,
if you would conquer Satan,
if you would overcome the world,
if you would be happy in death
— then cleave unto the Lord.

"Are you asleep?" Mark 14:37

Those who are the most ready to promise — are often the first to fail. From those whom we expect the most — we often receive the least. Who were so forward to promise what he would do — as Peter? And yet Peter falls asleep! After all that the Lord had done for him, after all the loving cautions He had given him — Peter could not watch with his Master for one hour!

Can we cast a stone at Peter? Are we better than he? Have we not slept — when we ought to have watched, or to have been working for Jesus? Perhaps even now we are in that frame of mind that the Master may well ask, "Are you asleep?"

"Rooted in Him!" Colossians 2:7

Christ is the believer's all. Separate him from Christ — and he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. What the soil is to the plant — Jesus is to the soul. We must abide in him, draw all our nourishment from him, be rooted in Him — or we shall neither be ornamental nor fruitful.

Every day, and all day long, we must be drawing our supplies from Christ. There is enough in Him to meet all our needs, and there will always be enough in him. Let us, then, look to Christ for all — and expect to derive our life, strength, peace, comfort, and holiness, from Christ.

"Why do you not believe Me?" John 8:46

O my soul, Jesus asks you, "Why do you not believe me?" Is He not worthy of your confidence? Is not His Word true? Has He ever been found unfaithful? Is He not the ever-living, ever-loving, ever-faithful Savior?

Do you say, "I do believe him!" From whence, then, those doubts and fears? Why that dissatisfaction, and those complaints? Has He not promised to be ever with you, to manage all your affairs for you, and make all things work together for good to you? Oh, trust in him, and cast all your cares on him!

"I will cry unto God Most High!" Psalms 57:2

David was in deep trouble, in great danger, and full of fears — but this was His purpose, "I will cry unto God Most High!" We cannot do better than imitate him.

Our God is at hand,

He is able to deliver,

He is disposed to deliver,

He is ready to help.

We may cry unto Him — for He permits us.

We should cry unto Him — for He bids us.

We must cry unto Him — for no one else can deliver us.

Let us cry in simplicity — as a child to its father;

let us cry in faith — as a believer to his God;

let us cry with fervency — as one who expects divine intervention.

"I have found a ransom!" Job 33:24

It is God himself who speaks in this verse — and tells us that He has found a ransom for guilty man! That ransom price was the heart's blood of His dear Son! What a price to pay for the sinner's release! What a price to pay for the sinner's salvation!

I am the Lord's. Why? Because He bought me with the blood of His Son! Jesus has made the atonement, and now God and we are one. We are reconciled. We are at peace. God would have us for himself — cost whatever it may. God would have us reconciled unto him; and by the blood of His Son, and by the operation of His Spirit — He has effected it — to the praise of His grace!

"My father's house!" John 14:2

What a sweet view of Heaven! Who could have given such a representation, but Jesus? He has gone there himself. He is employed there in preparing places for His people. He is waiting there to receive His people as death leads them to him. I suppose a moment never passes, but Jesus receives the spirit of some loved one, who has escaped from the toils and troubles of earth. Soon, perhaps very, soon — He will receive me! How shall I feel when I enter "my Father's house?" What shall I see in the house of God, the family mansion of the saints, the dwelling-place of Jesus?

"He knows the way that I take!" Job 23:10

While the believer wishes to stand well with his fellow-men, his principal desire is to stand well with God. To be accepted by God in Christ, and to be approved by God in his conduct — are his special objects. And it is often a great comfort to him to reflect, that while men may mistake him and misjudge him — the Lord knows his motives, his aims, and his course. Yes, blessed be God, we can appeal to him, as knowing the way we take, and why we take it; and if He approves — it is more than the approbation of all the world!

"O God, strengthen my hands!" Nehemiah 6:9

A sense of weakness is often a great blessing. As painful as it is, it has prevented many a fall, and procured many a blessing. We never pray so feelingly, so earnestly, or so successfully — as when we feel our weakness to be extreme.

When we have much work to do — and no strength to do it;

when we have many and great difficulties to overcome — and no strength to overcome them;

when we have many foes to subdue — and no strength to subdue them

— then we cry out in good earnest, "O God, strengthen my hands!"

"You killed the prince of life!" Acts 3:15

What a glorious title — the "Prince of life!"

What a horrid deed — to kill the Prince of life!

The Jews did this, and so did I. This was the greatest sin I ever committed. All my other sins are as nothing to this. Oh, the hardness of my heart to do such a deed! Oh, the cruelty of my disposition — to put to death, and such a cruel death — the lovely Lamb of God! O my God, lay not this sin to my charge — but let the blood shed, wash out the guilt I contracted in shedding it. Precious Lord Jesus, you forgive and love me!

"God comforts those who are cast down!" 2 Corinthians 7:6

By the works of His providence,

by the truths of His Word, and

by His Spirit's work in the heart —

God comforts His sorrowful people.

He has made full provision for our comfort in His Son. The way to be happy is . . .

to look to Jesus — for all that we need,

to look to Jesus — away from all that we fear, and

to look to Jesus — as taking a deep, intense, and constant interest in us.

My soul, whenever you are cast down — look to Jesus, and ask your God to comfort you. As the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort — He comforts those who are cast down.

"For to me, to live is Christ!" Php 1:21

Christ was the object, aim, and end of Paul's life. He lived . . .

to know Christ,

to enjoy Christ,

to preach Christ,

to suffer for Christ, and

in every possible way to glorify Christ.

He began his Christian course with Christ,

he went on with Christ, and

he died with Christ.

He never once turned aside out of the way, or took his eye off the mark.

My soul, is Jesus your life? Are you living . . .

to learn him,

to love him,

to enjoy him,

to publish His fame,

to suffer for him, and

in every way to glorify him?

"The Spirit of God dwells in you!" 1 Corinthians 3:16

The Spirit's home — is the believer's heart. He dwells in us . . .

as a light — revealing our true state and condition;

as a spring of living water — producing holy desires, earnest prayers, and ardent longings to be like Christ, and with Christ forever;

as our true friend — helping our infirmities, teaching us to pray, and administering choice consolation.

A prince in a peasant's hovel is not a fit comparison to represent the humility of the Spirit as dwelling in a believer's heart. As sure as the Spirit dwells in us — we shall dwell with Christ.

"Overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21

This is a difficult lesson for a proud heart! Pride always stands upon its rights, and resents everything that calls for the exercise of patience, forbearance, and love. The leading grace of Christianity is LOVE. Love is all-subduing. Love is a fire which . . .

melts — but never burns;

subdues — but never injures;

overcomes — but never boasts.

I know of nothing that is so much needed in God's Church and among God's people, as Love. This will bring together, and then keep together, the scattered members of Christ's flock. O for all-subduing love!

"He was a good man!" Acts 11:24

Then he was a godly man — -devoted to God, bearing the image of God, and breathing the spirit of God.

Then he was a Christ-like man — having the temper and disposition of Christ, and imitating the example of Christ, who went about doing good.

A good man is not only just — but generous;

he is not only honest — but kind;

he is not only faithful — but gentle;

he is not only truthful — but merciful.

A good man has a good temper — or daily mourns over a bad one;

he does good — or grieves that he does not;

he wishes to make all good — and prays for their everlasting welfare!

"Philip preached Jesus unto him." Acts 8:35

Jesus must be preached . . .

to sinners, that they may be saved;

to seekers, that they may be made happy; and

to believers, that they may be sanctified and devoted to God.

Preaching Jesus is God's ordinance for the saving of souls, and it is the instrument by which the Spirit works in our consolation, dedication, and sanctification. No matter what we preach, if we do not preach Jesus, God will not work by it; sinners will not be made happy, nor will saints be made useful and holy. Christ should be preached by all who know him.

"Full of grace and truth!" John 1:14

Jesus is full of grace, and the grace He has — He has for His people. My soul, Jesus has grace for you! Go to Him this day, and seek grace from Him . . .

to subdue your corruptions;

to spiritualize your affections;

to govern your temper;

to rule your tongue;

to enable you in all things to copy His bright and beautiful example.

Jesus is full of truth. All the shadows of the law find their substance in him. All the promises of the Bible are confirmed in him. All the grand truths of the gospel center in him, and in Him alone.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God!" Psalms 51:10

Love to holiness, and hatred to sin — prove that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, for no person ever did so by nature. When our prayers are the echo of God's promises — it is evident that we are like-minded with God. Now, as God promises a new heart and a right spirit, if we heartily desire, and earnestly pray for them — it is because we are taught of God — and such prayers are sure to be answered. If you long and pray for a clean heart — you shall have one. But in cleansing it — do not be surprised if God shows you more of its filthiness than you have ever seen as yet.

"Good tidings!" Isaiah 40:9

Who send these good tidings? Our heavenly Father!

What are they? He is pacified towards us, and at peace with us, for He has laid on His beloved Son the iniquity of us all.

Jesus has forever put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. God has justly forgiven us all trespasses. He is now all love towards His redeemed people — pure, perfect, eternal love. He loves us with all the strength of His infinite nature! Everything that He does — is in love; and all that He permits — is the effect of His love. He watches over us, listens to us, and is ever ready to do us good. At this moment His loving heart is set upon us!

"Jesus wept!" John 11:35

Weeping is not uncommon on earth — yet these were uncommon tears. They were the tears of a sinless One — the tears of the Son of God. Jesus wept for others. Jesus wept in company with others. His tears bespeak the depth of His sympathy, and the tenderness of His love. He wept because His friends suffered, and yet He knew that their sufferings were for their good. Jesus is the same now as He was then. His love is as tender — and His sympathy is as deep. He loves you, believer, as He did Mary and Martha. He sympathizes with you as He did with them.

"You are my hiding-place!" Psalms 32:7

If God undertakes to hide — then who shall find? But all who fly for refuge to Him are hidden by him; and so hidden, as to be safe from . . .

the officers of justice,

the claims of the violated law, and

all the penal consequences of sin.

God never refuses to receive the soul that flees to him, or to screen and shelter the soul that trusts in him. Jesus is the hiding-place of the sinner. To him, therefore, will I flee . . .

from all my own imperfect works,

from all my foes and fears,

from all within and all without me —

assured that He will receive me, and hide me!

Smith, James - God, the Portion of His People

God, the Portion of His People By James Smith OUR FATHER

"I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:18

Tried Christian, you are not an orphan! You have a Father! God, in all the glory of his nature and perfections, is your Father! He has adopted you for his own. He has regenerated you by his Spirit. He has called you out of the world, and has promised to do a father's part unto you. He says, "I will be a Father unto you." Do you need advice? Consult your Father. Do you need supplies? Ask them of your Father. Are you tormented with cares? Cast them on your Father. Are you alarmed at foes? Cry unto your Father. Do your difficulties appear insurmountable? Appeal to your Father.

God is not merely a Father in name; he has a Father's nature. He not only calls us his sons and daughters, but wishes us to act towards him as such. We should exercise confidence in his love; we should trust in his word; we should appeal to his paternal heart; we should look for our supplies from his hand. In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we should let our requests be made known unto God. He loves to see us confide in his care, rely on his word, expect his communications, and acquiesce in his will.

Believer, whatever trials may befall you, whatever troubles may come upon you, whatever enemies may rise up against you, whatever changes may take place in your circumstances, one thing can never befall you—you can never be fatherless; therefore you can never be friendless. You are God's child, however poor your circumstances, or trying your path. What an unspeakable mercy!

"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ!" Romans 8:16-17 OUR ELDER BROTHER
"For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven—is my brother and sister and mother." Matthew 12:50

Every relation in which Jesus stands to his people, is precious. But there are some peculiarly so, especially under certain peculiar circumstances. He is not only our Savior—but our brother. He is bone of our bones, and flesh of our flesh. Possessing our nature, being part of the same family, he watches over us with a brother's eye, and loves us with a brother's love.

Jesus is the "brother born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17. He takes the deepest interest in all our affairs, and watches over us to do us good. We may go to him in all our troubles, and open our hearts to him without the least reserve. We cannot go to one who loves us more, or one who is more able or willing to help us. He laid down his life for us, thereby proving the intensity of his love to us.

He is gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us. My tried Christian friend, the eye of Jesus is upon you in your trial; the ear of Jesus is open, to listen to your cries; the heart

of Jesus is affected with your griefs and woes; and the tongue of Jesus is employed to intercede with his Father for you!

Sweet thought! We have a brother in heaven! a brother who knows all we suffer, and who will frustrate the designs of our foes, sanctify to us our troubles and trials, and eventually make all things work together for our good! His strong arm will defend us, his merciful hand will supply us, and his tender heart will ever sympathize with us. He will guide us through life and death by his counsel, and afterwards receive, us to glory! Let us, therefore, go to him in every trouble, plead with him to supply our needs, trust him in every dark and dreary hour, and expect him to show a brother's love.

"Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers." Hebrews 2:11 THE COMFORTER

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth." John 14:16-17 The sorrows of the Lord's people are sometimes so deep, that human comforters are vain. They do but aggravate our woe and increase our distress. Jesus knew this; and therefore, having comforted his disciples himself for the space of three years, and being now about to leave them, he promises to send the Holy Spirit, to be the abiding Comforter of his people. The Holy Spirit is a divine person. He can search the heart, pierce the clouds, penetrate all recesses, and ascertain the true cause of all our sorrows. His tenderness and love are infinite, therefore he can administer consolation in the most suitable and efficient manner. The whole fullness of Jesus is open to him, and he will select and apply the most appropriate remedy in every case of sorrow. He applies the promises; he unveils our Father's loving countenance; he reveals the suitability and sufficiency of Jesus; he witnesses to our adoption, and cries "Abba, Father!" in our hearts. To him we are indebted for every bright ray, every cheering hope, every pleasant prospect, and every refreshing consolation. It is his work to comfort; it is his delight to comfort. Let us therefore look to him for comfort under all our trials, troubles, temptations, and distresses! Our earthly friends may fail us, or prove miserable comforters to us; but the holy and ever blessed Spirit can and will comfort us to the end.

Blessed Jesus, send the Comforter into my heart, to comfort me with the assurances of your love and the joys of your salvation! O to realize the presence and power of the Comforter in my soul, unfolding truth, revealing Jesus, and sealing me unto the day of redemption!

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." John 16:13-14 THE APPOINTMENT

"No one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this." 1 Thessalonians 3:3

Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. Affliction does not come not forth of the dust, neither does trouble spring out of the ground. Trouble is the natural consequence of sin, and all trouble springs from this bitter root. But God makes our trouble—our medicine, and uses it for our present and everlasting welfare. Our troubles are not the inflictions of an angry God—but the chastisements of a loving Father. He foresaw what we should be, and what would be necessary

for us—and consequently appointed the number, nature, and length of our troubles.

He sometimes sends trials directly from himself: then we see his hand, and find it comparatively easy to submit to his will. But at other times he allows us to involve ourselves in trouble: then we cannot trace his hand, and therefore yield to temptation, depression, and grief. But every Christian has his cup of trials—it is mixed by his Father's wisdom, and put into his hand by his Father's providence. He should therefore take it, endeavor to acquiesce in it, and say with Jesus, "The cup that my heavenly Father gives me, shall I not drink it?" Every trouble comes from God's appointment, is intended to do us good, and will be overruled for our real welfare! Every trial is labeled "Love,"—if only we could but read the writing! And in every affliction God calls to us, saying, "Come near unto me, my son—that I may bless you."

Let us, then, draw near unto God, and show our trouble to him. Let us entreat him to sanctify it to us, that it may wean us from earth, consecrate us to Jesus, and fit us for heaven. All is love—which comes from the God of love!

"But He is unchangeable; who can oppose Him? He does what He desires.

He will certainly accomplish what He has decreed for me, and He has many more things like these in mind." Job 23:13-14 THE LIMIT

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials." 1 Peter 1:6

Trials, and are intended to test our principles, try our profession, and prove the strength of our graces. The trials of the believer are manifold. They come from various quarters, they affect us in various ways; but they are all 'limited'. They are but for a season:

"In the day of adversity consider."

"The hour of temptation."

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment."

"For a small moment have I forsaken you."

Thus they are limited sometimes to "a day," "an hour," "a moment," "a small moment."

God fixes the limit of every trial; and however long that limit may be, it is confined to the present time. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us!" Beloved, however severe the trial may be—it cannot be long! However heavy the burden—you have not far to carry it! We shall soon lay down our cross—and ascend to receive our crown. If our Father frowns upon us now—he will smile again soon. "His anger endures but for a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night—but joy comes in the morning." Your present trouble is but for a season, and that season will soon close! Therefore bear it patiently, prayerfully, and hopefully. Yield not to despondency, listen not to Satan; but hope in God, for you shall yet praise him, for the help of his countenance. The darkness of night will soon be chased away by the rosy light of morning; the limit of your trouble will soon be reached; and then joy, everlasting joy, will be upon your head, and all sorrow and sighing will flee away forever!

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast!" 1 Peter 5:10 THE LEGACY

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid!" John 14:27

Jesus knows from experience what his people need. His life on earth was a life of trial, trouble, and grief. He was the "Man of Sorrows—and acquainted with grief." Yet, in the midst of all, he enjoyed peace. His spirit was generally at rest. His faith was in lively exercise, and his repose on his Father's love was perfect. When all was confusion and strife without—he had full peace within. And when he departed out of this world to go unto his Father, he left us this as a legacy, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." Our souls may be peaceful, let our outward circumstances be whatever they may. By the exercise of faith in Jesus, by staying the mind on Jesus, and by acquiescing in the will of Jesus—we shall have peace. So it is written: "You will keep him in perfect peace—whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." My soul, I charge you to cast every care on Jesus. Submit to his will, nay, prefer his will to your own. Let the word of Jesus be your rule and comfort, let the glory of Jesus be your aim and object, and let the legacy of Jesus be taken to the throne of grace, that it may be paid you by his heavenly Father! Pray, pray for holy tranquility of mind, amidst all the storms of time—and expect an inward calm of heart both in life and death. Believe, and the legacy is yours. Pray in faith—and the legacy will be paid you. Your Savior, who left you this legacy on earth, lives in heaven to see it paid to all applicants. Therefore, present it in confidence, expect to receive it—and you shall soon enjoy it. We who believe do enter into rest.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Php 4:6-7 THE SOLACE "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble." Psalms 46:1 God is whatever his people need. All that he is—he is to them. Are they in danger? He is their refuge. Here they are safe from the avenger of blood, the justice of God, and the threatenings of a violated law. Are they weak? He is their strength. He will strengthen them for conflict with the foe, strengthen them while in the engagement, and bring them off more than conquerors. Are they in trouble? He is a help, a very present help in trouble. He will help them to bear trouble; he will help them to improve trouble; he will help them out of trouble. He will deliver them in six troubles, and in seven shall no evil touch them. Christian, in every danger run to your Father, God. His arms are open to receive you; his heart is a refuge for you. He will screen you; he will shelter you; he will defend you. He will be your protection in adversity and prosperity, in life and death. In all your weakness, go to him for strength; in all your infirmities, repair to him for grace. He is the strength of the poor, and the strength of the needy in his distress. He has strengthened thousands of poor feeble ones—and he will strengthen you! In all your troubles go to him for solace and support. He will help you. Hear his own precious words, addressed to his people when in deep trouble and distress: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with My righteous right hand!" Isaiah 41:10

He is your shield in danger, and your very present help in trouble. He is always at hand, always ready to help, always willing to bless you.

"Therefore let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time!" Hebrews 4:16 THE COMMON LOT "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers him out of them all." Psalms 34:19 The Lord's people are all righteous. To them the glorious righteousness of Jesus is imputed. In them the righteous work of the Holy Spirit is wrought. By them the righteous precepts of God's Word are observed. The obedience of Jesus is their title to heaven. The work of the Holy Spirit prepares them for glory. Their practical conformity to the moral requirements of the gospel, proves them to be justified before God, and sanctified by his grace.

All the righteous are afflicted: some more, some less; but none are exempt. Nor have they merely one source of affliction; for "MANY are the afflictions of the righteous." There has been more than one Job, or one Lazarus, in God's family; though all suffer not as severely as they did. Every son is scourged. But however numerous, however great their afflictions may be—they are more than a match for them. As their day—so is their strength; and they ever find that the grace of Jesus is sufficient for them. "The Lord delivers him out of them all."

God has undertaken to sustain us in, to bring us through, and deliver us out of—all our troubles. God's deliverances are always perfect. He delivers every one of his children; and he delivers every one completely and forever. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: they shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." No believer ever perished in his affliction. No Christian ever found his burden greater than his strength. We have often doubted, often feared, often questioned our safety; but we, even we, can testify that God is faithful, that his promise is true, and therefore we have persevered until now!

"You have allowed me to suffer much hardship, but you will restore me to life again and lift me up from the depths of the earth." Psalms 71:20

THE FOOTPRINTS

"These are those who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!" Revelation 7:14

Nothing is more common than for the Lord's people to be tempted to think that their troubles and trials are peculiar. But a careful perusal of God's Word, and communion with the Lord's people, will soon convince them that this is a mistake. All the Lord's family have gone home to heaven by the same road, and have all experienced more or less the same trials. All have to experience a conflict within—and a rough road without.

Look at the prophets; theirs was a most trying path. Hence says the apostle, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." Just so the Corinthians. They imagined that their trials were singular, therefore Paul wrote them: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." Just so the Master also: "He was in all points tempted like as we are;" and "in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able also to

support them that are tempted.'

Tried Christian, you are in the footsteps of the flock; look attentively at your road, and you will discern the footprints of the great Shepherd, and also of his little flock. It is of the path of trial that Jesus says, "This is the way—walk in it." Cheer up, then, for present troubles—lead to future glory. The weary way will sweeten the rest at the end. The horrors of the wilderness—will make Canaan appear more lovely and pleasant. Press on, for home is just before you!

"Knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world." 1 Peter 5:9 RELATIONSHIP PROVED

"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons." Hebrews 12:7-8

Afflictions are often divine chastisements. They flow from a Father's love, and are intended to correct us for our faults. Consequently when brought into trouble, we should ask, "Is there not a cause?" and say with the prophet, "Let us search, and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."

All the Lord's children need correction—and all are corrected. If allowed to sin without stripes, or to become conformed to the world without chastisement, our sonship is at best very questionable. But when our consciences are made and kept tender, when our follies are followed with trials, troubles, or painful convictions—our sonship is proved.

God will not allow his children to wander from him far—or to wander from him long. "The rod and reproof give wisdom;" and we shall be smitten and reproof often—if we go astray from the right ways of the Lord. If I cannot sin without remorse, if I cannot rest until I confess it to the Lord, if I cannot be happy until I receive a renewed sense of his pardoning love—then there can be no reasonable doubt of my relationship.

God is my Father; and however fickle, feeble, wayward, and unworthy—I am his child. He uses the rod of a father, that he may not use the sword of a judge. I will therefore arise, and go to my Father. I will plead with him for grace, that I may approve the discipline, kiss the rod, and bless the hand that strikes me.

O my Father, let your child lay his aching head on your bosom; soothe me with one of your sweet words, assure me of your love, and enable me lovingly to accept of your correction! O Lord, correct me; but in mercy, not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing!

"As many as I love—I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent." Revelation 3:19 THE GRACIOUS DIRECTION

"Cast your burden upon the Lord—and he shall sustain you. He shall never allow the righteous to be moved." Psalms 55:22

Troubles in the flesh—are often heavy burdens to the spirit. Nor have we a friend, a relative, or foe—but sometime or other lays a burden upon us. We cannot always prevent burdens being laid upon us—but we may refuse to carry them. Indeed, we ought not to carry any burdens; for it is not befitting in the King's children to act like porters!

We have a great Burden-bearer—one who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows—one who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Now he bore our sins—the guilt and the punishment of them—that we may never bear them. He sighed—that we may sing. He sunk under the weight of our sorrows—that we may rise and taste his sweetest joys. And now, when he sees us burdened with care, grief, anxiety, or worldly trouble—he sweetly says, "Let me take your burden and carry it for you. My strength is greater than yours. Bring it to me. Cast it on me. Leave it with me."

O Christian, what a Savior you have! He so cares for you, that he desires you not to care; and he so loves to see you happy, that he proposes, yes, asks, to be allowed to carry your burden for you. More than this, he will not only carry your burden—but he will carry you! He will place his everlasting arms beneath you, lift you up out of every difficulty, and set you before his face for ever!

Take your present burden to Jesus—and let him bear it for you. If you do not, you will find it too much for your patience, and you will soon begin to think that the Lord deals hardly with you. But if you take it to Jesus, he will not only bear it for you—but endear himself to you by doing so.

"Call on Me in a day of trouble; I will rescue you, and you will honor Me!" Psalms 50:15 THE GROANING "For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened." 2 Corinthians 5:4 The body is a poor residence for the soul. It was at first a noble structure; but it is now like a poor canvas tent, affording few accommodations, and letting in all kinds of annoyances. It is the seat of pain, the medium of temptation, and often a great hindrance to us in our spiritual course! We groan in this tent, because of what we feel we need, as well as from what we positively suffer. Nor will our groaning cease—but with our breathing. We shall have to groan over our carnality, worldliness, lust, dullness, deadness, darkness, and unbelief. We shall groan for liberty, holiness, and perfect, uninterrupted peace.

We do groan now, as some of us have for years; and we shall groan until mortality is swallowed up of life. We shall go down to the grave groaning; but from thence the ransomed of the Lord shall return with singing, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads! They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. My brother, is your poor body the seat of disease, of strong pain? Do you feel fettered by it, and pent up in it? Are you groaning as a poor prisoner for freedom? Lift up your head—for your redemption draws near! The resurrection morning will soon break on this groaning world, and then the last groan of God's Church will be lost in everlasting songs. Jesus is coming; and when he comes, then will come the world's jubilee. Every fetter will then be knocked off, every prison-door will be opened, every sufferer will enjoy freedom from pain, and every form of disease will flee away. The poor tent will—become a building of God, a glorious residence, a magnificent mansion for the soul.

"Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." Romans 8:23 THE COMPLAINT "O What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death!" Romans 7:24 As Christians, we have not only troubles without—but we have trials within; and soul troubles are the greatest troubles. Every believer feels, that when he would do good—evil is present with him; that he has a law in his members warring against the law of his mind; that, like the Roman criminal, he has a dead body fastened to him! The old man of sin and the new man of grace inhabit the same soul; and between them there is a perpetual warfare. From the one proceed evil thoughts, vile

lusts, carnal desires, corrupt inclinations—and a number of evils too vile to enumerate! From the other flow holy aspirations, spiritual desires, heavenly affections, and earnest pantings for perfect holiness. The flesh works, and mars our very best performances. The Spirit works, and prevents our yielding to its base inclinations.

We would do good, only good; but evil, powerful evil, is present with us! The body of death hinders us in duty, and often spoils our enjoyment of our privileges. Thus, like the Shulamite, we have in us two armies; and these armies are perpetually at war; and if at any time there seems to be an truce, then is the time of our greatest danger.

Oh, for grace to crucify the old man with his deeds; and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness! But, blessed be God, the warfare will soon be over, the conflict will soon cease. We shall soon be perfectly holy—and then we shall be perfectly happy. The old man must die—he is under the sentence of death now; and the new man must reign, and rule one whole person without a rival. Oh, glorious prospect of eternal freedom from all sin!

"For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want." Galatians 5:17 THE PRAYER "Have mercy upon me, O Lord—for I am in trouble!" Psalms 31:9

Prayer is always a privilege—but it is a special privilege in the times of trouble. What would we have done sometimes—but for prayer? When the heart was overcharged with grief, when the body was reduced by disease, when property melted like snow, and the grave closed over our loved ones—what would we have done, but for prayer! Then we poured out our hearts before the Lord, then we appealed to the almighty Ruler, then we cried to the Disposer of all events, then we sought fellowship with the Resurrection and the Life! And in prayer we were comforted, and in answer to prayer made a match for our troubles.

Christian, in your trouble appeal to your God, appeal to his mercy. Mercy always sympathizes with misery, and feels for the distressed. The mercy of your God is as vast as infinity, and tenderer than the tenderest mother's heart! He will listen to you, sympathize with you, appear for you, and bring you to bless him for the very trouble that now makes you groan!

How often is it repeated in his Word, "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble—and he delivered them out of their distresses!" Pray on therefore, though the more you pray, the more your troubles may seem to increase—for this is sometimes the case; yet prayer, if it is the prayer of the heart, will certainly prevail. God cannot refuse to hear the cries of his afflicted ones, or to answer the prayers of his children in trouble! His word is passed—and cannot be recalled. His heart is love, and cannot be unaffected. His resources are infinite—and cannot be exhausted. He will therefore be very gracious unto you at the voice of your cry. When he shall hear you—he will answer you.

"For the glory of your name, O Lord, preserve my life. Because of your faithfulness, bring me out of this distress." Psalms 143:11 AN ANTIDOTE "None of us lives to himself." Romans 14:7 The tried Christian should never dwell on his troubles. Trouble comes to furnish him with a message to the Lord, and to drive him out of his present state and condition; therefore many of the Lord's people have found great relief in trouble—by actively engaging in the Lord's service. My tried friend, go, if you can, to the chamber of the sick, and speak of Jesus to them. Go to the desolate home of the

widow, listen to her tale of sorrow, and endeavor to dry her tears. Take her fatherless children by the hand, and speak loving words to them of a Father in heaven. Go to the poor laborer's cottage, where there are many needs and few comforts, and represent Jesus there, speaking of him and acting for him. Look at the sufferings of others, and try to relieve them. Look at the needs of others, and try to supply them. Look at the ignorance of others, and endeavor to instruct them. It is by doing good—that we get good. Be active for your Savior, and you shall be comforted by your Savior. The way to increase sorrow—is to dwell upon it; and the way to obtain relief from sorrow is to act for Jesus notwithstanding it. The action of fresh air on the nerves, the action of God's truth on the mind, and the action of another's sorrow on your heart—will relieve, reanimate, and restore to comfort those who go forth as messengers of mercy; while those who confine themselves at home, dwelling on their griefs and woes—will continue depressed and sad. While, therefore, you rely on the Lord's promise, be active in the Lord's service, and energetic in the Lord's cause. "The hand of the diligent makes rich; but the slothful soul shall suffer hunger." This is as true in spirituals as in temporals.

"We should not henceforth live unto ourselves—but unto him who died for us, and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:15

DIVINE SYMPATHY

"In all their distress—He too was distressed, and the Angel of His Presence saved them. He redeemed them because of His love and compassion; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of the past." Isaiah 63:9

How sweet is sympathy! Yet human sympathy is very often feeble—it may soothe—but cannot help. The kind visit, the loving word, is at times precious; but they do not reach our case—they bring us no permanent relief. Human love is often without power to assist the beloved object. Not so when God loves; for then His loving heart moves an omnipotent arm, and opens His infinite resources. But there is something astounding in the thought, that the afflictions of a worm—a sinful worm—should afflict the heart of the Infinite—the heart of God! Yet such is the testimony of his own Word. What an expression of love is that! "They put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." What exquisite tenderness is manifested when the God of the universe declares, "He that touches you—touches the apple of his eye!"

Tried fellow-traveler, when your road is rough, when your strength is small, when your heart is pained, when your sighs are heavy—God sympathizes with you. His eye sees, his ear hears, and his heart feels! For "as a father pities his children—so the Lord pities those who fear him; for he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust." Believe this—and be sad if you can! Believe this—and complain if you dare! Believe this rather—and go on your way rejoicing! What more can you desire? God your father—God, as a father, pitying you—pitying you as his beloved child! The sympathy of God should be your solace, your comfort, and your joy!

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are!" Hebrews 4:15 THE PERSUASION "Though I walk in the midst of trouble—You revive my life!" Psalms 138:7

Some of the Lord's family are peculiarly tried. Trouble seems to come upon them from every quarter. They appear to be surrounded by it. They have trouble in the world—business tries them. They have trouble in the family— children try them. They have trouble in the Church—fellow-members try them. They have trouble in their own souls—for Satan, doubts, fears, and inward corruption try them! They must go forward—but they walk in the midst of trouble! Onlookers wonder how they bear up, how they persevere. But there is a secret, which observers cannot see. The Lord preserves his tried ones. Sometimes some precious portion of his Word falls on the heart—like the dew upon the grass. At other times the Holy Spirit breathes on the soul—like the breezes from the everlasting hills. Now Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, breaks out and shines on them—like nature's sun on the stormy day. Then in prayer the soul is drawn out, and mounts upward, and holds such communion with God—as resembles bathing in the river of pleasure. The ordinances of God's house are really means of grace; and reading God's Word is like walking with unfallen Adam in his paradise.

These revivals are precious. They cause faith to fasten on the promise afresh, hope looks forward to the rest that remains anew, and love ascends and finds its center and its solace in the perfections of the Most High. O for more of these reviving seasons! My God, you have said, "I will be as the dew unto Israel, and he shall revive as the corn." Fulfill this precious promise daily in my soul.

"He will come to us like the rain—like the latter and former rain to the earth!" Hosea 6:3 THE DESIGN

"Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness." Hebrews 12:9-10

Believer, are you afflicted? Are you severely tried? Does trouble after trouble roll over you? What is the cause? There must be one. What is the design? Have you inquired? If not, inquire now.

Why does God try me so? Does he hate me? No. Is he wrathful? No—he has sworn that he will not be wrathful with you.

Why then is it? God intends to make you holy—to make you like himself! He is weaning you from the creature. He is weaning you of earth. He intends to raise your thoughts, desires, and hopes—to heaven. He is detaching and separating you from what pollutes and defiles—that he may polish and brighten you, to catch and reflect the rays of his glory in his presence forever.

You have prayed to be made holy. God has heard your prayer. He approved of it—and he is answering it. By his present dealings, which he will sanctify by the power of his Holy Spirit—he will prepare you to glorify him on earth, and make you fit to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. His design is most gracious, every way worthy of himself; and you will see by-and-by, that divine love and wisdom appointed and arranged every trial you are now passing through. Submit yourself, therefore, unto God; accept his corrections, nor ever complain of his dealings. He treats you as his child. He corrects you for your good. He prepares you—for what he has prepared for you. He will make you a vessel of mercy, prepared unto glory. In eternity you will bless him for the discipline of time.

"He stays his rough wind—in the day of the east wind. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin." Isaiah 27:8-9 THE CALCULATION

"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time—are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18 The sufferings of the Lord's people are often severe and protracted. But, however severe, however protracted that the sufferings of the believer may at present be—there is no comparison between them and the glories which await him. He is now under training. He is a child preparing to take possession of a glorious inheritance. The discipline he is now under is painful—but the result will be seen in the future. He is being educated for eternity. There is a hope laid up for him in heaven. There is a weight of glory in reserve for him! "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love him."

There is a glory for the body—like that which shone forth in the body of Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. There is a glory for the soul—which will very much consist in perfect knowledge, perfect holiness, exact conformity to the soul of Jesus, and the beatific vision of God. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." But words are lacking, thoughts fail, when our attention is directed to the glory that shall be revealed in us. Even John knew not what was comprised in it. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is!" Let this calm your mind and quiet your spirit—that glory is prepared for you, and will be revealed in you; and that there is no comparison between what you are suffering now—and what you will enjoy then!

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear—then shall you also appear with him in glory." Colossians 3:4 GOD'S DETERMINATION "My counsel shall stand—and I will do all my good pleasure." Isaiah 46:10

God never acts at random. His plan is drawn. His purposes are fixed. He steadily pursues his end. Resistance is vain—it is sin! It brings punishment on the sinner, and correction on the saint. Submission is at all times a duty. Resignation ought ever to characterize us. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." His omnipotence is engaged to carry out His designs; and "He does according to His will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: no one can stay His hand, or say unto him, What are you doing?"

Believer, the Lord takes pleasure in your person, and in your spiritual prosperity. He is pleased with whatever advances your spirituality, perfects your character, increases your real happiness, and adds splendor to your crown. Hence said the apostle, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

You wondered at the afflictions of the saints; do you wonder now? They are to add weight and brilliance to their crowns. Sanctified afflictions are among our choicest blessings. Let us, therefore, pray that our afflictions may be sanctified; and to be kept from striving with our Maker, reflecting upon His wisdom, and grieving His love. In our best moments we can thank God for the immutability of His counsel, and the changeless nature of His decrees. A God of love can only pass loving decrees respecting His children; and such are all God's purposes respecting you. O

Lord, fulfill in us all the good pleasure of Your goodness, and the work of faith with power!

"The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Psalms 33:11
THE DESIRE "May Your will be done in earth—as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10

God's will must be wise and holy, therefore God's will should rule. God wills nothing for us but what is consistent with his love to us and concern for us. Nor are we at a loss to know the turn that God's will takes towards us: "For this is the will of God—even your sanctification." God wills, first—his own glory; and in subordination to that—our present and everlasting welfare. It is therefore our wisdom to pray that God's will may always, everywhere and in everything, be done. And it is our happiness to acquiesce always, and in everything, in God's will.

Indeed we can never be happy if our wills run contrary to God's will, or if they run beside it. We must be little children. We must endeavor to ascertain what is our Father's will, and be pleased with that. If God wills me poverty or plenty, health or sickness, pleasure or pain, publicity or obscurity, life or death—I should be satisfied with it; I should approve of it; more, I should be pleased with it—so pleased with it, that if the turning of a straw would make the least difference in it, I should refuse to turn that straw. This would be to treat God as God, and to act just as a simple, ignorant, inexperienced child should act. Lord Jesus, send the blessed Comforter, to direct my will into the channel of God's will, and to keep it there. I can never be happy while my will crosses your will: teach me, therefore, to give up my will; and bring me into that state, that I may not have a wish—but just to be, to do, to enjoy, or to suffer—just as God wills. O for that depth of holiness, that I may ever cry with you, "Not my will—but your be done!"

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will—but as you will." Matthew 26:39 AN EXAMPLE "He endured—as seeing him who is invisible." Hebrews 11:27

Moses had much to suffer; and who has not, if loved and honored by God? Satan and the world are leagued against God's children. In Egypt, they are persecuted and ruled by their carnal neighbors. In the desert, they are tried by a variety of vexing dispensations. And in Canaan, or the Church of God, they often meet with enough to make them weary of life. But Moses endured; he bore his trials patiently. He pressed on, notwithstanding difficulties; he courageously faced a proud and angry monarch at God's bidding. How was this? He realized the presence of an invisible God. He kept his eye fixed on the Most High God. He feared his frown; he dreaded his displeasure; he sought his favor; he prized his blessing. If God is with us—all will be well. But God is with us—though unseen. Let us, therefore, endeavor to suffer, with the eye of faith fixed on God as our heavenly Father, who will support us; on Jesus, as our great pattern, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame; and on the Holy Spirit, as our present, perpetual, and powerful Comforter.

Troubled Christian, God is with you—only your natural eye cannot see him. He is supporting you at this moment. He has promised never, never to leave you, nor forsake you. He is faithful to his Word, therefore patiently endure until he set you free. It will not be long before he will appear for you, set you on high from affliction, and make you full of joy with his countenance. The present is your worst condition. Once over the Jordan of death—and all will be peace, prosperity, and pleasure!

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him!" James 1:12 A PRESCRIPTION

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us—and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus!" Hebrews 12:1-2 The world is a race-course, life is a race, and every one of us are racers! A mark is set up, at which we are to aim, and a prize is promised to every overcomer. But there are many difficulties in the way, and we have many weights hanging about us. Those difficulties must be mastered, and those weights must be laid aside.

We must run with patience the race set before us, keeping our eye on Jesus. Jesus is our example—we must copy him. Jesus is our leader—we must follow him. Jesus is our sovereign—we must submit to him. Jesus is our Savior—and we must confide alone in him. We must look to his blood for pardon, to his righteousness for justification, to his Spirit for strength, and to his fullness for all our supplies. We must make use of Jesus every day, every hour, every minute.

Christian, look to Jesus! When discouraged—it will animate you; when timid—it will embolden you; when feeble—it will strengthen you; when weary—it will stimulate you; and when dying—for it will give you the victory. Let your last look—be a look at Jesus!

He says, "Look unto me—and be saved, all you ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." No one ever looked to him in vain; but as every one was healed who looked to the brazen serpent, so is every one saved, sanctified, and sustained, who looks to Jesus. Look to him for all you need, and from all you fear. Keep your eye fixed on Jesus; doing so, you will conquer the world, overcome Satan, reach the mark, and obtain the prize!

"Those who look to Him for help will be radiant with joy." Psalms 34:5 THE SANCTUARY

"In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock!" Psalms 27:5

Times of trouble—are times of danger. But when the child is in danger, the parent is most watchful and concerned. So, believer, your heavenly Father pays special attention to you in the time of your trouble. He will not only keep his eye on you—but he will hide you! Where will he hide you? In some house, or fortress, or granite rock? No! but in his pavilion. The pavilion is the royal tent, and is placed in the center of the army, surrounded by the strongest and most courageous soldiers. Here the king dwells, and here, if anywhere, safety is to be found. Sweet thought this for you, poor tried one—God will take you to his own tent! He will make you as safe as himself! In the pavilion of your God, you will find supplies for your wants, balm for your wounds, and solace for your sorrows.

Many a Christian has seen more of God, and enjoyed more of the presence of God, in one week's affliction—than in years beside. In his pavilion God communes with His troubled ones; He opens His heart to them, he lifts up the light of his countenance upon them, and he gives them peace.

Blessed Lord, in all times of my trouble bring me into your pavilion, hide me in the secret of your tabernacle; that I may know the blessedness of having my life hid with Christ in God. My soul, in every time of trouble or of trial—repair to your God, plead with him, and let this be your prayer:

"Keep me as the apple of the eye! Hide me under the shadow of your wings!" Then you will have to exclaim with joy, "How priceless is your unfailing love! May I find refuge in the shadow of your wings!"

"Lord, You have been our refuge in every generation!" Psalms 90:1 THE BEST COMPANION

"When he calls out to Me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble. I will rescue him and give him honor." Psalms 91:15

Believers sometimes imagine themselves to be alone in their troubles, and they feel sad and solitary. Christian friends forget or neglect to call on them, and this grieves them. And if this page meet the eye of such an one, I would say—"My friend, grieve not; refreshing as the presence and spiritual communications of a fellow Christian may be, you can do without them. For surely the presence of the Master is far better than the visits of the servant; and he has said of every tried believer, "I will be with him in trouble."

Precious words! But mistake not—the Lord's presence can only be realized by faith. The benefit of his presence is received—even when the pleasure of his presence is not enjoyed for the want of faith. He never fails to fulfill his promise, though for want of faith we may fail to enjoy it. His presence supports us—even when it does not comfort us; and keeps us back from evil—even when it does not fill us with joy.

Blessed Lord, you have ever been with your people in all their trials and troubles, and you are with every tried believer now; and not only so—but you will deliver them in six troubles, and in seven you will not forsake them! We find that your grace is sufficient for us; and as our day—so is our strength. Be especially with us in our present troubles; and not only so—but let us realize and enjoy your presence. We want to feel your love, to enjoy the light of your countenance; and, as the result, to glorify you in the fires. O Jesus, as you were with the Hebrews in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace—so be with us in every fiery trial!

"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior!" Isaiah 43:1-3

PRESENT REPOSE "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you: because he trusts in you." Isaiah 26:3

Confidence in God will keep the mind steady in the wildest storm, and under the heaviest trials. God's covenant character is the repose of the soul; in that we are to trust—on that we are to stay ourselves. And he who believes that God is gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and in truth, and that he intends to display and illustrate these glorious perfections in his experience—will find his mind calm, and his soul enjoying repose, under all the changing circumstances of time.

Taking the eye off creatures, circumstances, and SELF, and fixing it intently upon God as revealed in Jesus, and as working all things after the counsel of his own will, will bring rest to the soul, and preserve the mind in peace. Let the spirit be but stayed on God as love, and let the heart trust in God's truth, faithfulness, and immutability—and there will be "peace, peace." But the moment it is

taken off the Lord, there will be agitation, fear, and painful perplexity!

Like Peter on the water, so long as he kept his eye on Jesus, he was safe—he could tread the waves under his feet; but the moment he began to listen to the winds, and look at the billows—that moment he began to sink. Just so it is with us; let us therefore seek grace, to trust in the Lord at all times, and stay ourselves upon our God.

Gracious Savior, you stretched forth your hand to catch sinking Peter; let your hand hold us, and let your loving voice cheer and refresh us under all our changing frames and sinking feelings! Underneath us, place your everlasting arms.

"My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest." Isaiah 32:18 THE LOVING LOOK "Surely the Lord has looked upon my affliction!" Genesis 29:32 So said Leah, when the Lord granted her a son. Barrenness had been her trial; but now the Lord looked upon her—and blessed her. The Lord's look performs wonders. It filled the Egyptians with perplexity and distress—but it brought Israel relief and comfort. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."

Sufferer, the eye of God is upon you! He knows where you are, what you are suffering from, and the degree of your pain and sorrow. "He never takes his eyes off the righteous." Job 36:7. You cannot be concealed from him. The eye of his mercy lingers over you—until the hand of his power is stretched out to deliver you. His eye affects his heart, therefore he sympathizes with you. He is looking upon your affliction now, and only waits the fittest time to appear for your rescue. Look up to him—as he is looking down upon you, and let the eye of your faith—meet the eye of his mercy! Look up through your tears, for there is eloquence in the tears of his children; and as you look, cry, with David, "Look upon me, and be gracious unto me, as you always do to those who love your name." Psalms 119:132.

Think how Jesus looked on backsliding Peter, until he looked him into penitence and prayer; and how he looked on dying Stephen, until he looked him into meekness and courage. The look of Jesus will strengthen your faith, animate your hope, inflame your love, brighten your graces, and increase your courage.

O Jesus, let me daily realize that your eye is upon me, that you are watching over me to do me good, and that your loving eye will preserve me from hidden evils and crafty foes!

"So God looked on the Israelites—and was concerned about them." Exodus 2:25 CHANGELESS FRIENDSHIP "From six troubles He will rescue you; in seven no harm will befall you!" Job 5:19

Friend, has not the Lord often delivered you? Aged believer, you can bear your testimony to the fact that "the righteous cry, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles." Past deliverances insure future interpositions. Your troubles will be successive—but God's deliverances will be successive too. Seven is the number of perfection, and is designed to teach us that the Lord will deliver us, until deliverance is no longer needed. Having delivered us when dead in trespasses and sins, having brought us into an experimental acquaintance with himself, and having set us apart for his glory and praise—is it not ungrateful, is it not very sinful, especially as we have his positive promise to the opposite, if we doubt that he will yet deliver us? With our God there can be no difficulty; for infinite wisdom and omnipotent power prevent it. With our God there

can be no lack of love; for his love is from everlasting to everlasting, without variation or change. With our God there can be no reason why he should not deliver us; for he has made us his children, and bound up his own glory with our present and everlasting welfare. The Psalmist points us to one case, as a sample of the whole: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." So will it be with every praying soul—there will be a last trouble and a final deliverance. At death, the soul will be delivered from sin, Satan, and the world; and at the first resurrection, the body will be delivered from corruption. And so shall we be ever with the Lord!

"He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us!" 2 Corinthians 1:10 THE CERTAIN RESULT

"We know that all things work together for good—to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

What a blessed assurance is this! All things, whether painful or pleasant, spiritual or temporal, all things are overruled and directed to do us good. They work together. They are connected as the links in a chain. As different ingredients in one medicine, they mutually act upon and assist each other. For our good—our present and everlasting welfare: to prevent sin, and deepen our sanctification; to wean from earth, and qualify us for heaven; to exercise our graces, and mortify our lusts; to employ our gifts, and extend our usefulness.

Trials lead to triumphs; and conflicts to conquests! The good Lord purposed to call us by his grace, and according to his purpose he did so. He has shed abroad his love in our hearts by his Holy Spirit, and we love him in return. Now, as his beloved and loving children, his heart is set upon our best interests. And he so works, by his providence, his Word, and his Spirit, as not only to prevent our being injured—but that we shall be really benefitted, by all that happens to us. So that, in reference to every trial, exercise, pain, pleasure, loss, or acquirement, we may say, "This shall work for my good; this will fit me for heaven, and fit me to glorify God more and more!" My soul, never forget, in the dark night of sorrow, desertion, sickness, and pain—that all things are working together for your good, even when you are suffering most! The present is connected with the future; time runs into eternity; and your present sufferings in Christ's cause work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Say to the righteous, that it shall be well with them!"

"I also know that it will go well with God-fearing people, for they are reverent before Him." Ecclesiastes 8:12

ENDLESS REST "There remains therefore a rest to the people of God." Hebrews 4:9

How sweet is rest to the weary! Yet how little rest do some of the Lord's people enjoy here! But the troubled spirit shall rest in the presence and enjoyment of its God; and the poor, wearied, and diseased body shall find rest in the grave. Weariness is limited to time—but our rest will be lasting as eternity. There are no weary heads, or weary limbs, or weary hearts—on the other side Jordan. The rest of heaven will be the sweeter for the toils of earth; the value of eternal rest—will be enhanced by the troubles of time. Jesus now allows us to rest on his bosom—he will soon bring us to rest in his Father's house. His rest will be glorious—a rest from sin, a rest from suffering, a rest from conflict, a rest from toil, a rest from sorrow—the very rest that Jesus himself enjoys. We shall not only rest with him, we shall rest like him. How many of earth's wearied ones are resting in his

glorious presence now!

It will be undisturbed rest. Here the rest of the body is disturbed by dreams, and sometimes by alarms; but there are no troublesome dreams or alarming occurrences there. Thanks be unto God for the rest we now enjoy in Christ! Ten thousand thanks to God for the rest we shall soon enjoy with Christ! Wearied one, look away from the cause of your present suffering, and remember there is a rest remaining for you. A little while—and you shall enter into rest! A little while—and you shall see Jesus as he is, be filled with his love, and enjoy uninterrupted rest in his presence! Weariness, languor, and pain are for time; rest, peace, and pleasure are your eternal portion!

"You have not yet reached the resting place and the inheritance the Lord your God is giving you!"
Deuteronomy 12:9

PREPARATION "All of you be ready!" Joshua 8:4 The Christian should be ready for every event. Provision is made for him, promises are given to him, examples are set before him, and exhortations are delivered to him. The Master's word is, "Be ready!" Be ready to meet, endure, and derive benefit from your troubles; ready to meet your foes, especially the last enemy. Death will come—but we know not when, where, nor how; therefore we should be always prepared, having our accounts settled, our work forward, and our affections set on heavenly things.

We should be ready for the coming of Jesus. He will come in like manner as he went into heaven. We must meet him, face him, and be presented to him. The appearing of Jesus should be the object of our liveliest hopes, warmest desires, and sweetest anticipations. We should look for the coming of Jesus as the wandering traveler for his path; as the Eastern watchman for the morning; as the bride for the expected bridegroom; and as the slave for the morning of emancipation. My brother, let me at parting say to you, "Be ready!" Jesus is coming. Soon, very soon, the cry may be heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes, go out to meet him!" Oh, to have our loins girt, our lamps burning, and our hearts crying out, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" In this state we are prepared for labor or for rest, for life or for death, to remain here or depart to be forever with the Lord. Holy Spirit, daily anoint your people; that they, experiencing your renewings, may look, long, watch, and pray for the coming of their Lord! Thrice blessed event! may the Lord hasten it, for my soul longs to share in it!

"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected!" Matthew 24:44 THE EXCEPTION "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued as other men." Psalms 73:5 The tried Christian sometimes looks around upon the ungodly, and wonders at God's dealings with them. Judging by sense, he stumbles, until, like Asaph, he repairs to the sanctuary, or the Word. Yes, how often it is the case: that the saint is poor—and the sinner rich; the saint is sickly—and the sinner healthy; the saint is deformed—and the sinner is well shaped; the saint struggles but cannot succeed in temporal things—while the sinner seems to get wealth without difficulty!

How is this? Is there not a divine providence? Does not God love his people? Yes! But God deals with saints in time—in reference to eternity. The present—is preparatory to the future. Do not envy the sinner, and choose none of his ways. The present is all the pleasant he will have. He has his good things now—and the believer has his evil things. He may write after every day's sinful pleasure, after carnal amusement, and after acquisition of property, "But after this—then the

judgment!" The rich man died, and was buried—and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment! The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

Contrast their ends, and their eternal portions—and then you will bless God if he has put you among his poor, tried, and afflicted people.

Dwell not on present appearances—but remember that the wicked stand on slippery places, and will soon be cast down into destruction. Sinner! your prosperity is your snare! You have your best now; and dying outside of Christ, all that remains for you is an eternity of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth! Flee, oh, flee to Jesus for life and peace!

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Smith, James - The Great Comforter

The Great Comforter; Or,

The Work of the Holy Spirit By James Smith, 1858 The Holy Spirit, a DIVINE PERSON

"Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? You have not lied unto men — but unto God." Acts 5:3-4.

Everything that characterizes a person is ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. He is said to be sent, to come, to act. He teaches, leads, and guides. He speaks, reveals, and witnesses. He is vexed, grieved, and resisted.

He is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son — in power, majesty, and glory. He is associated with the Father and the Son in the ordinance of baptism; for we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He is associated also with the Father and the Son in the apostolic benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you." Is the Father a person? so is the Holy Spirit. Is the Father divine? so is the Holy Spirit.

All the attributes of Godhead are ascribed to him; and he is entitled to the worship, glory, and honor of the Church, equally with the Father and the Son. Every personal pronoun is used when speaking of him in the Word, and every personal act is ascribed to him.

Distinct from the Father and the Son — he is one with the Father and the Son, and possesses in himself the fullness of the divine nature, being naturally, essentially, and eternally God. O Holy Spirit, give us clear views of your distinct personality, divine nature, and essential glory! let us see you in your Word, feel you in our hearts, and enjoy sweet communion with you day by day!

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?" 1 Corinthians 6:19 The Holy Spirit, a COMFORTER

"If I do not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16:7 The Lord's people need a Comforter; for, O how much have they to render them unhappy! What, with sin within them, the world without them, and Satan constantly trying to distress and cast them down — they have enough to dishearten and distress them! Then, there are . . .

the cares of business,

the trials of the family,

the oppression of the great,

the sufferings of the poor, and

the languishing state of the Church —

all combining to fill them with grief and sorrow. Under these circumstances, human comforters are feeble and inefficient. God alone can impart the consolation needed. In order to meet the case, the Holy Spirit has condescended to assume the office of Comforter.

He is entrusted with all the fullness of Jesus; he knows all the thoughts of the Father; he has examined all the stores of grace, and is perfectly acquainted with all the riches of glory — and with these he is to comfort the Lord's people. He knows every saint — and every circumstance. He knows every foe — and every temptation. He can gain access to the heart, and he can impart the comfort we require.

He turns the eye to Jesus.

He excites in us confidence in God.

He begets lively hopes of glory.

He applies the promises.

He sprinkles the atoning blood.

He whispers peace.

He teaches our hands to war, and our fingers to fight.

Yes, he comforts us in all our tribulations; and so comforts us as to . . .

embitter sin,

endear the Savior, and

produce greater love to holiness.

O Holy Spirit, may we never quench your influences, grieve your love, or slight your intimations; but may we be led by you, be taught of you, and possess you as the pledge of our inheritance.

"As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted." Isaiah 66:13.
The ABIDING of the Comforter

"I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16-17.

Jesus came to comfort his people for a time, and to lay a firm foundation for their everlasting consolation. Jesus is the great source of comfort — and all spiritual comfort is based on his perfect work. It was necessary for him to return to his Father, that in the presence of God he may ever make intercession for us. But he sent the Spirit to abide with the Church forever. That Spirit, who came at Pentecost, has never left the Church, and he never will. He represents Jesus in the Church. He acts for Jesus. He glorifies Jesus. Much has been done calculated to drive him away; but in faithful love, he still abides with us. Just so, when he once takes possession of the believer in the name of Jesus — he transforms him into a temple, consecrates him to the Savior's praise,

and retains possession of him forever.

He is often grieved by us. He often reproves us. He withholds his comforting influences from us. He refuses to shine on our evidences, or witness to our adoption. But he never leaves us, he never forsakes us. He abides with us forever. Blessed, soul-comforting truth this!

Oh, if it were possible for the Holy Spirit to abandon his temples, to give up his charge, or to discard his disobedient scholars — then I would have been discarded long ago! But still he strives, still he works, still he conquers; and with weeping and with supplication we return to the Lord, from whom we have so deeply revolted.

Oh, blessed Spirit, I praise you for the constancy and forbearance of your love! Still abide with me, reveal Jesus more clearly to me, and fill me with all joy and peace in believing on him.

"Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14. The Comforter, OMNIPRESENT

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens — you are there; if I make my bed in the depths — you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea — even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast!" Psalms 139:7-10 The presence of a friend is always cheering; but to have a bosom friend, who feels the deepest interest in us, and in all that concerns us, and to have that friend always with us — what a comfort is this! The Holy Spirit is such a friend — and he is ever with us. As God, he can be everywhere present; and as a covenant God, he has promised to be ever present and always present, with believers in Jesus. Nor is he merely present — but he is present to . . .

instruct our minds,

correct our faults,

reprove our follies,

revive our graces,

bring truth to our remembrance,

brighten our evidences,

sanctify our souls, and

comfort us under all our trials.

He will never leave us nor forsake us. Grieved by us, he may refuse to comfort us, or witness to our adoption, or cry, "Abba, Father," within us. But he will still work, in . . .

producing conviction,

awakening distress,

filling us with sorrow, and

piercing us with remorse,
in order to recover and bring us back.

He will never forsake the work of his own hands. He will never quite give us up. Let us, therefore, endeavor to realize always, and everywhere, "The Holy Spirit is with me; he observes my ways, marks my motives, listens to my words, and is either pleased or grieved by my conduct." This would preserve us from sowing to the flesh, from which we can only reap corruption; and would lead us to sow to the Spirit, from which we shall reap life everlasting.

O my soul, remember that the Holy Spirit is ever with you, ready to bless you, and to unfold the truth to you. He is your daily teacher, your constant monitor, and your faithful friend; therefore aim so to walk as always and in all things to please him!

"The Spirit searches all things; yes, the deep things of God." 1 Corinthians 2:10. The POWER of the Spirit "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Romans 15:19

All the wondrous miracles wrought by the apostles, and the glorious work of grace wrought in the hearts of primitive believers, are ascribed to the power of the Spirit of God. There can be no real religion without power, and no power is efficient to produce real religion but the power of the Spirit. The apostles were commanded to wait at Jerusalem, after they were commissioned to preach the gospel, until they were endued with power from on high. The Spirit, to represent his power and manner of working, is compared to the three most powerful elements — wind, fire, and water. His power . . .

subdues the sinner's corruptions,
wins his heart for Christ,
transforms him into the likeness of Christ, and
makes him, though but a worm, victorious over all his foes.

Through the indwelling of the Spirit, we have . . .

power with God,
power over Satan,
power with sinners,
and power with saints.

We can do all things, and bear all sufferings, through the power of the Spirit of God. This power is just what the Church of God needs, in order to her increase, union among her members, and deeper sanctification. And this is just what individual Christians need, to . . .

fill them with joy,
separate them from the world, and
enable them to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things. But we do not realize our need of the power of the Spirit as we should — and therefore we do not seek it as we ought. Yet we

must have it, if any real good is to be done, and we have no right to expect it without earnest pleading for it.

Spirit of God, as the Spirit of power, dwell in my heart, subduing my lusts, purifying my affections, and conforming me to the Lord Jesus in all things!

"God has not given us the spirit of fear — but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7. The SOVEREIGNTY of the Spirit

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines." 1 Corinthians 12:11. The gifts, operations, and communications of the Spirit, in the primitive Church, were numerous and various — and they were sovereignly bestowed. No one had any claim anything — nor had anyone cause to complain. Just so now. The Holy Spirit being God, is invested with, and continually exercises, a divine sovereignty. In the calling of the saints, he exercises sovereignty as to the time, the means, and the manner of calling them. Just so as to the qualifications of the saints for usefulness — he gives just what kind and what number of gifts he pleases. In blessing the Word, too, the Holy Spirit works as he will; he convinces one, reproves another, and comforts a third. He always . . .

humbles the sinner,

exalts the Savior, and

magnifies the free grace of God. But in so doing, he exercises his adorable sovereignty. Yet this sovereignty of the Spirit is so exercised as not to interfere with man's responsibility, or accountability. Nor does it render the use of means unnecessary — but rather the more necessary, as it is by means, and whatever means he pleases — that he works and makes his communications.

He presides in the Church, he works in every part of the Church, he manages all the concerns of the Church; and he does all in the name of Jesus, and for his honor and glory. As Divine — he can do all things; as Sovereign — he does what he will; but being Love — whatever he does is for our present and everlasting good.

Blessed Spirit, work in me to will and to do of your own good pleasure! Work in me, that I may work out my own salvation with fear and trembling; and work in the Lord's vineyard, for the Lord's glory.

"God also testified by signs and wonders, various miracles, and gifts from the Holy Spirit according to His will." Hebrews 2:4. The Spirit, NEW-CREATING

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you: You must be born again." John 3:6-7

Like begets its like. Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image. By nature we are all carnal, corrupt, and depraved, bearing the image of the earthly Adam. In this state we cannot perceive the nature, or enter into the enjoyment of the privileges, of God's kingdom: "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." This renders the Spirit's work absolutely

necessary: "Except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Holy Spirit generates a new nature, and we become new creatures. In consequence of which, we perceive . .

the spirituality of God's law,

our entirely fallen and totally depraved condition,

the impossibility of salvation except it be of grace,

the exact suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ, and

the great importance of an interest in him. From this new creation, proceeds a thirsting, desiring, and longing for Christ; then the heart goes out after Christ; then the soul closes with Christ; and at length the man becomes one with Christ. Resting alone on Christ, and living in fellowship with Christ — the believer becomes conformed to Christ, and reflects the image of Christ; so that all around perceive the change. The man no longer lives for the lusts of the flesh — but to the will of God. The life that he lives in the flesh is by the faith in the Son of God, and he is manifestly declared to be an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

"They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." Romans 8:5. The Spirit Convincing of SIN "He will reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me." John 16:8-9. To "reprove" is to convince, and so to convince as to reprove and condemn. The law convinces of sin in general, and condemns for it. Here the Spirit is said to convince of sin in general — but more particularly of the sin of unbelief. You may convince a man that he is a sinner, because he has broken the law — but can you convince him he is a sinner because he does not believe in Christ? The Holy Spirit places before the mind the facts:

that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;

that he is able and willing to save any sinner;

that he wishes sinners to come to him and be saved. And then the Spirit convinces the man that he has not believed and acted on the Word of Christ, and this is his sin.

We ought to believe on Christ, for God commands it: "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." To this end the New Testament was written: "These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through his name." Salvation is promised to believing: "The one who believes in the Son has eternal life." Damnation is the penalty of disbelieving: "He who believes not shall be damned." Every man either . . .

receives Christ — or rejects him;

believes on Christ — or treats him with contempt.

Unbelief treats Christ with the greatest possible contempt, and is therefore the sin that seals our condemnation, and leaves us without hope. O to see that disbelieving God's testimony is a great

sin, that we may believe in Jesus to the saving of the soul!

Spirit of faith, work faith in my heart, that I may not only believe to the saving of my soul — but to the glory and praise of God!

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because deeds were evil." John 3:19. The Spirit Convicting of RIGHTEOUSNESS "He will reprove the world of righteousness, because I go to my Father." John 16:8; John 16:10 The Spirit shall convince us that the claims of Jesus were just, that the character of Jesus was perfect, and that his obedience to the law was complete; so that under his teaching, we shall believe that Jesus was innocent of every charge brought against him, that he was the Son of God, and that he wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness, by which every believer is justified before God.

He shows us . . .

that we have no righteousness of our own,

that we must have one or miserably perish,

that Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes,

and that whoever believes in him is justified from all things.

We see that God must be righteous, and therefore he cannot justify any person without a righteousness; that we have no righteousness of our own, and therefore we cannot be justified in the sight of God. Then he shows us that Jesus has wrought out a perfect righteousness, and that this is imputed to, or placed to the account of, and conferred on — every one that believes, and in this righteousness we are justified.

Now the sinner renounces himself, and all his own works entirely, and is right glad to receive Jesus to be his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The Holy Spirit works faith in the heart, which faith embraces Christ as he is revealed in the gospel; and from that moment, Christ becomes our all and in all. Thus, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

O Jesus, I adore you as the just one, and rejoice in you as having wrought out and brought in a righteousness for the justification of my soul! Holy Spirit, exalt Christ before me more and more!

"To declare at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus." Romans 3:26. The Spirit Convicting of JUDGMENT "He will reprove the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16:8; John 16:11. The Spirit shows that God is just, and has prepared his throne for judgment; that he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, has appointed his own Son to be the judge, and has decided to judge every one according to his works. The great proof produced is, that even the prince of this world has been judged and condemned in the death of Christ, and is now awaiting the full execution of the tremendous sentence passed on him. In addition to this, a bar of equity is erected in the sinner's conscience. Before this he is obliged to appear, his sins are placed in array before him, his mouth is stopped, he is brought in guilty, and sentence of death is recorded against him.

He gives himself up for lost; for he sees that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified. Then the gospel is unfolded to his mind, the way of escape is pointed out, and he flees for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him. He betakes himself to Jesus, receives the Scripture testimony concerning Christ, and ventures on him alone for salvation. He pleads his blood for pardon, his obedience for justification, and his Word that the Spirit of grace may sanctify his nature and make him fit for heaven.

He is convinced of judgment; for he has experienced it on a small scale in his own soul, and he has no doubt but all must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. He commits his soul to Jesus, and, from a personal knowledge of him, is persuaded that he is able to keep that which he has entrusted to his care. He walks wisely in the world, cautiously in the family, and prudently in the Church, knowing that every one of us must give account of himself to God.

"He has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained." Acts 17:31. The TEACHING of the Spirit

"As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit — just as it has taught you, remain in him." 1 John 2:27. This anointing is the communication of the Holy Spirit to the believer. Jesus gives the Comforter. The Comforter consecrates the believer, and he becomes a king and a priest unto God. The Holy Spirit becomes his teacher. With the Word of God in his hand, and the Holy Spirit in his heart — he needs no new revelation. He has the truth, the whole truth; which truth the Holy Spirit will gradually unfold to his understanding and apply to his heart; so that it will become in him the engrafted Word, which is able to save the soul. For all that we know of ourselves, for all that we know of Jesus, and for all that we know of God as our heavenly Father — we are indebted to the Holy Spirit. He is the great teacher of God's family. He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. The teaching of the Holy Spirit runs through the whole of a Christian's life. By the dispensations of divine providence,

especially by our various afflictions and trials,

as well as by the inspired Word —

He teaches us more and more . . .

of our own sinfulness,

of the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus,

of the infinite love of our heavenly Father,

of the emptiness of the present world, and

of the superiority of the glory that is to be revealed in us.

O infinitely blessed Spirit of God, be our teacher! May we find that, as the holy anointing, you abide in us, revealing Christ more and more unto us, and opening up daily the blessed Word of your grace unto us. O! to know more of Jesus, in his glorious person, perfect work, infinite merits, tender love, and constant care! O to confide in Jesus more, to love Jesus more, and to imitate

Jesus more! O may Jesus be our all in all!

"The Spirit will take from what is Mine — and make it known to you." John 16:15 "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth." 1 John 2:20. The LEADING of the Spirit "As many as are led by the Spirit of God — they are the sons of God." Romans 8:14

Man, left to himself, wanders into sin, disgrace, and danger; therefore the Lord gives his Holy Spirit to lead and guide all his children. The Spirit always leads us . . .

out of ourselves — to Christ,

away from our own works — to the work of Christ,

to the cross for pardon,

to the open fountain for cleansing,

to the ordinances for food and refreshment, and

to the throne of grace for communion with God, and for help in time of need.

He never allows a man to admire his own works, or supposed excellencies, nor even to rest on His own work in the heart; but leads him to admire the beauties of Christ, and to rest on the finished work of Jesus alone for life and peace. The Spirit always humbles the creature and exalts the Savior. If we have much of his presence and grace — Jesus will be exalted, extolled, and set on high by us. He leads . . .

from sin to holiness,

from the world to the Church,

from things temporal to things spiritual.

He leads to self-examination and self-communion; and thus saves from self-deception, and many mistakes.

He leads from the law to the gospel — from Moses to Christ.

He leads us . . .

rationally, as men;

lovingly, as children; and

constantly, as his care and charge.

Holy and ever blessed Spirit, lead us evermore by your counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory! Lead us into a deeper knowledge of Jesus, into closer communion with God; and especially, lead us to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. Lead, O lead us in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that we may inherit substance, adorn our profession, and scatter blessings all around us! Lead us to Jesus on his cross, and also to Jesus on his throne!

"If you are led of the Spirit — you are not under the law." Galatians 5:18. The SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit "God has chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit." 2 Thessalonians 2:13 To sanctify, is to separate and set apart for holy purposes and holy uses. The Lord has separated his people, by choosing them in Christ to be holy; and he sanctifies them now for himself, by the power, operation, and indwelling, of the Holy Spirit. In sanctification we are taken possession of for Christ, we are new-created in Christ, and a work is commenced which is to make us exactly like Christ. A sanctified person has . . .

his heart changed,

his will renewed,

his understanding enlightened,

his conscience purified, and

his affections spiritualized.

Sanctification is commenced in regeneration; but it is not completed then. It is the good work which God begins in us, and which will be completed in the day of Christ. It extends to the whole man, soul and body; and is carried on through the Word, ordinances, and providence of God.

Indeed, all things are rendered subservient to it. At first there is the blade, then the ear, and at length the full corn in the ear. We are first babes, then children, then young men, and at length fathers, in Christ. United to Christ, we receive from Christ, are influenced by the Spirit of Christ, and bring forth fruit like Christ.

Holiness has its seat in the heart; but it regulates the whole man, and appears in his conduct in every-day life. If a man experiences the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit . . .

sin grieves him,

Satan tries him,

the world troubles him,

and heaven attracts him.

Spirit of Jesus, sanctify us deeply, thoroughly, that we may be just like Jesus! Sanctify us by every trial, by every ordinance, by every privilege, by every comfort! Sanctify us as you did Jesus, that we may resemble him!

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The WITNESS of the Spirit "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16 The Spirit knows all of God's children. He witnessed the registering of their names in the book of life; he created them anew in Christ Jesus; he dwells in their hearts; and he bears witness to the glorious fact that they are the children of God. This witness he bears in us, when he produces the filial nature, sheds abroad the Father's love, and generates filial and holy confidence in God's paternal character. Sometimes he shines on a promise, brings it home, applies it with power, and gives the inward persuasion that it is ours. Sometimes he enables us so

to trace out his own blessed work within us — that we can no more doubt our adoption than we can doubt our creation. Sometimes he softens the heart, fires the affections, soothes the conscience, and whispers "Abba" within the soul; so that we feel impelled to look up and cry, "Doubtless you are our Father." At other times, he so shines upon the representations given of the Lord's people in the Word, and then upon his own work in our hearts — that we see clearly that we have all one Father, and compose but one family. And at other times, under an experimental ministry, he enables his servants so to describe character, and point out the marks of the children of God — that they see and recognize their own likeness. And this is accompanied with a sweet persuasive influence, so that to doubt our sonship at such times seems all but impossible.

Sacred Spirit, teach my own spirit to trace out and prove its adoption, and then bear your witness with my spirit that I am a child of God! O scatter doubts, dissipate fears, and fill me with holy confidence! Let the knowledge of my adoption, and the enjoyment of my sonship, be my daily privilege!

"He who believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself." 1 John 5:10 The SEALING of the Spirit

"When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit." Ephesians 1:13 The gift of the Spirit sealed or confirmed the claims, promises, and perfection of the work of Christ. It proved that Jesus was the Messiah, that his work was completed, and that his atonement was sufficient. The gift of the Spirit to us, as a witness, indwelling comforter, and abiding intercessor — is a seal which confirms our adoption, our acceptance with God, and our right to all the privileges of the gospel. The Spirit is the Father's seal, which he gives to assure us of his favor, approbation, and love to us. He is also the Son's seal, assuring us that . . .

his blood has availed for our pardon,

his righteousness has availed for our justification, and

his intercession has availed for our final salvation. But the Spirit himself seals us. His seal is the truth — the Word of the truth of the gospel He makes the impression upon our hearts, which he softens with his love, and then brings down the seal upon them with his own invincible power — and the impression is made. The truth reveals Jesus to us — and when applied to us, it leaves the likeness of Jesus stamped upon our hearts; and when the likeness of Jesus is stamped upon our hearts — it is manifested by . . .

deep hatred to sin,

powerful longings for holiness, and

an all-controlling desire to honor Christ, be like Christ, and at length to be forever with Christ. The sealing of the Spirit produces a sense of our acceptance in Christ, our union to Christ, and the lively hope of being perfectly like Christ.

Spirit of Jesus, seal my heart, and be yourself the seal within me that grace and glory are mine!

O my soul, I charge you that you grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption; but sow to the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and live in the Spirit.

"Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us — because he has given us of his Spirit." 1 John 4:13 The PLEDGE of the Spirit "God has sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Corinthians 1:22.

God has promised us, as believers in Jesus, a great and glorious inheritance. But we have to wait for it; and while waiting, we are liable to be exercised with many temptations, doubts, and fears. Therefore, as he gives us his Spirit as a seal, to assure us of his approbation — so also he gives us the Spirit as a pledge of our inheritance. The Holy Spirit within us is God's pledge which ratifies his promise, and assures us of a full possession.

It is a part of the inheritance itself. If we have the Spirit, we must have the kingdom. He has come to prepare us for it, assure us of it, and give us some sweet foretastes of its pleasures and joys. The peace that the Holy Spirit produces within us, the joy he imparts to us, and the liberty he confers upon us — are the same in kind as the peace, joy, and liberty, which form so prominent a part of the inheritance of the saints in light. They only differ in degree. The Spirit does not now waft us up to heaven — but he often brings down some sweet foretastes of heaven into our hearts. He is God's pledge; and so sure as God has given the pledge — he will give possession of the kingdom.

Therefore said Jesus, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And Paul has added, speaking of the Comforter, "He is the pledge of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." O for more of those sweet foretastes and pure joys, which the blessed Spirit at times confers upon us! O for those ravishing views of Jesus, those sweet pleasures, and holy foretastes of heaven, which raise us above the present world!

"Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." 2 Corinthians 5:5 The INTERCESSION of the Spirit

"And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." Romans 8:27. The believer does not, cannot, utter all that he feels within. He has . . .

such sorrow for sin,

such desires for holiness,

such longings for Christ, and

such pantings for glory —

that he cannot express them!

These are produced by the Spirit, and prove his presence and his power. They are his intercessions within us, and are an echo of the intercession of Christ for us.

Jesus intercedes for us in heaven — that we may be kept, sanctified, and at length glorified. The Spirit sets our hearts upon the same things, and draws out our whole souls in desires and prayers for them. And the Father knows what our secret, unuttered prayers mean, for he searches our hearts. Our sighs, groans, perplexities, distresses, and strong desires, are full of meaning; and the Searcher of Hearts takes the meaning of them, and accepts them as prayers. God knows what the mind of the Spirit is — what he wills, what he dictates to our hearts, what he inspires us to aim at and seek. The Spirit's intercession, is according to the will of God; he never helps us when we seek what is wrong in itself, or what would be injurious to us. He knows what God wills, what we need, and what we ought to set our hearts upon and seek; and when we do so, we follow his dictation, we yield to his influence, and we secure his assistance.

O Holy Spirit, intercede in my heart! Be my advocate within, as Jesus is my advocate above. Help, O help my infirmities, and teach me for what, and how to pray as I ought! Daily show me . . .

my needs,

my Savior's fullness,

my Father's loving heart, and

my free welcome to all the blessings of grace and glory — and then stir me up to seek them.

"Lord, you have heard the desire of the humble: you will prepare their heart, you will cause your ear to hear." Psalms 10:17. The Spirit HELPING us

"Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Romans 8:26.

We are compassed with infirmities. Our weakness and ignorance are great. Sometimes we feel that we have no power to pray, and sometimes we know not what to say when we attempt to pray. We are dependent on the Holy Spirit both for power and wisdom.

He teaches us our need of divine things;

he unfolds to us the fullness of Jesus;

he puts the promise into the hand of faith as our warrant to expect;

he excites stronger desires;

he produces most powerful emotions. In response, we sigh deeply and groan inwardly. At times, he furnishes us with suitable words, and we wonder at our own fluency; always, when he thus helps us, we feel deeply our need of the blessing, and cannot give up seeking until we obtain it.

All real prayer is produced in the soul by the blessed Spirit.

All our help in prayer we receive from him. And our success in prayer depends on his presence and assistance; for we never pray in faith but when, as a Spirit of faith — he secretly assists us.

Sometimes he opens to us the loving heart of God;

sometimes he unfolds some precious, precious promise;

sometimes he directs the eye to the ever prevailing intercession of Jesus, and then prompts us to go alone, fall on our knees before God, and sweetly assists us in pouring out our hearts before God.

O how blessed the privilege of prayer — when the Spirit helps our infirmities! But how dull and dry we are — when his sacred influence is withheld!

Lord Jesus, daily send the Comforter into my soul, that he may . . .

help me to do your will,

bow to your sovereignty,

seek the advancement of your cause, and

the glory of your thrice blessed name.

Help, Lord, help daily!

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 1 Corinthians 12:9. The Spirit QUICKENING "It is the Spirit who quickens; the flesh profits nothing." John 6:63. That man is dead in trespasses and sins — the Scriptures constantly affirm; that being dead — he has no moral power; and having no moral power without the Holy Spirit — he can do nothing morally or spiritually good. It is therefore the office and work of the Holy Spirit to quicken and raise the dead in sin.

All real religion begins with the quickening of the Spirit. When we experience this . . .

we begin to breathe after spiritual things;

we open our eyes in a new world;

we hunger and thirst after righteousness;

and at length taste that the Lord is gracious.

We have . . .

new thoughts,

new desires,

new hopes,

new fears,

new joys, and

new sorrows. The eye fixes on Christ,

the heart goes out to Christ, and

the chief desire of the soul is to be like Christ. The Spirit not only quickens us at first, so that we pass from death unto life — but all through life we need and are dependent on the Spirit's quickening. He quickens us to pray, and he quickens us in prayer. It is His quickening which puts .

..

life into our graces,

energy into our prayers,

confidence into our expectations, and

enables us to resist Satan, steadfast in the faith.

If his quickening power is withheld — we soon grow dull, cold, lifeless, and inactive! We have no power in prayer, no enjoyment in ordinances, no liberty in speaking to the saints, nor profit in reading God's Word. Every duty becomes a task, every privilege becomes a burden, and every cross appears insupportable.

While under the quickening operation of the Spirit — we can do all things; but without his quickening — we can do nothing. Often, very often, have we to cry out from bitter experience, "My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken me according unto your Word!" Psalms 119:25 Quickening Spirit, daily quicken my soul!

"The letter kills — but the Spirit quickens, (or gives life)." 2 Corinthians 3:6. The Spirit TRANSFORMING us

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord — are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18 The gospel is the mirror that reflects the likeness of Christ, and Jesus is the mirror that reflects the likeness and glory of the Father. He stands before us — not as Moses did before the Jews, with a veil on his face — but unveiled; and in his unveiled face we behold the glory of God. The Holy Spirit . . .

enlightens the mind,

directs the eye to Jesus,

points out the excellencies of Jesus,

and keeps the eye fixed on Jesus. And as the face of Moses caught and reflected some rays of the glory of God on the Mount — so we are changed into the likeness of God in Christ. We are changed into the image of his holiness, love, truthfulness, mercy, justice, and compassion. We become spiritual and God-like, and all who observe us — perceive that there is a great and growing change in us. Our humility deepens, our patience strengthens, and our benevolence becomes more pure and expansive.

Every man is more or less assimilated to the likeness of his 'god'; and the Christian, the more he has to do with God, the more communion he holds with God, the more the eye of his mind is fixed on God, the more he resembles God.

Man by nature, is altogether unlike God.

Man by grace, is being gradually conformed to the image of God.

Man in glory, will exactly resemble God.

We shall then be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The sight of Christ makes us like him.

O Holy Spirit, fix my eye on God in Jesus! Daily may I behold his glory; and may all who know me bear witness for me, that I am changed into the image of God! O change me from glory to glory, until I am all glorious within and without, for Jesus' sake!

"And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven." 1 Corinthians 15:49 ACCESS to God by the Spirit "Through him, we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Ephesians 2:18

Jesus opened a way for sinners to the Father by his death; he pointed out that way by his teaching; and he emboldens us to approach in that way by his intercession. This way is intended for both Jews and Gentiles. By this way, we can . . .

have access to God,

come into his presence,

and draw near to him. But it is the Spirit who now . . .

unfolds the way to us,

excites the desire to approach God through it,

and enables us to come to God by it.

He gently leads us.

He kindly teaches us.

He secretly enables us.

Without the Spirit, we would stop short of God, rest in forms, and be strangers to heart-affecting fellowship with the Most High God. But the Comforter will not allow the Lord's people to be satisfied without . . .

nearness to God,

fellowship with God, and

frequent communications from God.

Real religion is having to do with God, having to do with God through Jesus, and under the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit.

We come to God as a Father,

we plead with God as a Father,

we confide in God as a Father,

we confess our sins to God as a Father,

we obtain pardon from God as a Father, and

we receive gifts and grace from God as a Father. The Holy Spirit reveals the relationship, testifies to our adoption, and gives us boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Jesus.

Blessed Comforter! let us enjoy access to God, fellowship with God, and joy in God, through your gracious influence, teaching, and work. Never, never let us rest in forms, services, or even our highest privileges; but let us be able daily to say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ." Nearer to God, nearer to God, we cry!

"But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 1:20-21.

WALKING in the Spirit "If we live in the Spirit — let us also walk in the Spirit." Galatians 5:25 The Spirit of God lives in us — as the source of our sanctification; and we are to LIVE in the Spirit — as if he were . . .

the atmosphere we breathed,

the temple in which we worshiped,

or the habitation in which we dwelt. To live in the Spirit, is to live . . .

under his influence,

according to his Word,

recognizing his presence with us always.

So, to WALK in the Spirit, is to walk as influenced, directed, and assisted by him; looking to him for . . .

wisdom to guide us,

grace to help us, and

power to preserve us. To walk in the Spirit, is to live as a man . . .

delivered from the law,

rescued from the present evil world,

freed from the dominion of sin, and

set apart for God's glory and praise. The Spirit is our teacher, leader, and comforter. We yield ourselves to him, and seek to please and honor him. We are careful not to grieve him, or resist him, or quench his holy influences. To walk in the Spirit, is to breathe the spirit of Christ, and exhibit the temper and disposition of Christ in the midst of opposition, persecution, irritation, and many self mortifying duties. To walk in the Spirit, is to walk as Jesus walked, taking him for our pattern; and seeking grace from the Comforter, to think, feel, and act — just as Jesus thought, felt,

and acted.

Blessed Comforter! Teach us to live in the Spirit in the present day — and to walk in the Spirit as we walk through the wilderness of this world.

Oh! to walk as Jesus walked, to live as Jesus lived, constantly presenting ourselves to God, for his service and praise! May we render our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service; and not be conformed to this world — but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. O to be unearthly! O to be deeply spiritual!

"Walk in the Spirit — and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Galatians 5:16 The Spirit TESTIFYING of Christ

"When the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father — he will testify about me." John 15:26 A principal part of the Spirit's work is to testify of Christ. He has done this in the Word — every part of which has direct or indirect reference to Christ. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit, or soul of prophecy; prophecies without Christ, are like a body without a soul. The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. The types and shadows of the law,

the predictions of the prophetic page,

the psalms and songs of the Bible

— are all impregnated with Christ! But in the New Testament especially, the Spirit has testified of Christ; there he bears witness to his birth, baptism, miracles, claims, sufferings, death, resurrection, and triumphant ascension to glory. He testifies still in the Word and ordinances, by the voice of the preacher, and by his power in the conscience.

He bears witness for Christ, and testifies of Christ — in the believer's heart. He testifies to his divinity, and to the glory of his person, as God and man, the one all-glorious Mediator. He testifies of . . .

the merit of his blood,

the perfection of his righteousness,

the love of his heart, and

his readiness to save sinners, even the very chief.

He testifies of the exact suitability of Christ to meet every case, suit every tried saint and troubled sinner — and to be the eternal Savior of all those who obey him.

Let us then recognize, realize, and reverence the Holy Spirit — as the almighty testifier to the glory, worth, and excellency of the Lord Jesus.

Spirit of God, testify in our hearts, and to our consciences, of the glorious person and perfect work of Jesus! O for the testimony within, corresponding to, and confirming the testimony of the written Word!

"By one offering he has perfected forever, those who are sanctified; whereof the Holy Spirit is a witness to us." Hebrews 10:14-15. The Spirit GLORIFYING Christ

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes — he shall glorify me; by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." John 16:13-14 If Christ is exalted — then the sinner must be abased.

If Jesus is set on high — the creature must be laid in the dust.

We therefore find that in proportion as a man is taught by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit — he has very low and humbling views of himself. And the more abasing views he has of himself — the more honorable and exalted views he has of Christ. The Spirit always glorifies Christ, in his person, work, Word, offices, relations, and love. When we have much of the Spirit . . .

we think much of Christ,

we commune much with Christ,

we speak much of Christ,

we sing the praises of Christ,

we feel that we cannot honor Christ enough. When the Spirit shows us . . .

his infinite and unchanging love,

his spotless and glorious righteousness,

his perfect and all-sufficient atonement,

his deep and tender sympathy,

his constant and prevalent intercession;

or leads our minds forward to his final manifestation, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all those who believe — then . . .

our hearts overflow with love to him,

we exercise strong confidence in him,

we praise and bless him,

we consecrate ourselves and all we have to him,

and we long to be with him and see him as he is! His glory eclipses all other! He is to us, the altogether lovely One, and we take him for our all in all. No words can represent our views of his worth, nor do we conceive it possible to speak in exaggerating descriptions of his dignity, glory, and beauty. We long for a seraph's fire, for an angel's harp — that we may exalt him, extol him, and set him on high! Eternity appears most glorious to us — because it is to be spent in praising, blessing, and glorifying his precious name!

"Unto you therefore who believe — he is precious!" 1 Peter 2:7 The Spirit of GRACE

"I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem — a spirit of grace and supplication." Zechariah 12:10 The Holy Spirit is gracious in his nature, and his office in the economy of redemption is, to convey grace . . .

from the Father,

through the Son,

into the sinner's heart. Our heavenly Father is the God of all grace;

this grace flows into Jesus, and he is full of grace and truth;

and this grace is by the Holy Spirit directed into our hearts, so that out of his fullness we receive grace upon grace. The grace we receive from Jesus — conforms us to Jesus; for grace is that which purifies and elevates our nature, and sanctifies us to the Lord's glory and praise. Grace is . . .

the spring of all real prayer,

the source of all good works, and

the root of all spiritual excellency.

If we would serve God acceptably — we must receive grace to do so.

If we would live as befits the gospel of Christ — it must be by grace received from God.

If we would patiently endure afflictions, and cheerfully carry our cross — we must come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

All our graces are wrought in us by the Spirit.

All our graces are preserved and kept alive by the Spirit.

All our graces are excited and drawn forth by the Spirit. Nor is the plant in nature more dependent on the moisture of the soil, the rays of the sun, the dews of heaven, and the air of the atmosphere — than our graces are dependent on the Spirit of grace. We can do anything through grace — but we can do nothing correctly, or as it ought to be done, without grace.

O Spirit of grace, fill us with grace from Jesus, and teach us to make use of all our grace for Jesus, and at length may grace ripen into glory to the honor of Jesus!

"Restore unto me the joy of your salvation; and uphold me with your free Spirit." Psalms 51:12.
The Spirit of ADOPTION

"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption. And by him we cry: Abba, Father." Romans 8:15 The spirit of bondage is the spirit generated by the law — which leads us to . . .

dread God's majesty,

fear his wrath, and

tremble in his presence. The Jews before their conversion had this. But the Spirit of adoption is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, which is given to us through the gospel. We do not receive this Spirit by the works of the law — but through the hearing of faith.

We are made the sons of God by adoption — an act outside of us.

We receive the nature of the sons of God by regeneration — a work within us. Then we receive the Spirit of adoption, a favor conferred upon us. The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of adoption . . .

reveals God's paternal character,

sheds abroad his love in our hearts,

gives us soul-captivating views of him in the person of Jesus,

then secretly and sweetly whispers, "Abba, Abba!"

and almost before we are aware of it — we look up and call God, Father! This is accompanied with a sweet sense of our saving interest in him, and a soul-transforming enjoyment of his presence; as the effect of which — all dread, fear, and bondage depart, and we have boldness and access with confidence into God's presence, by faith in Jesus.

Now we know Paul's meaning when he said, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1-2

Spirit of adoption, take up your permanent residence in my heart! Lead me from all legal and soul-straitening views, and allow me to enjoy my new covenant relationship, to the praise and glory of free grace.

"Because you are sons — God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father!" Galatians 4:6. The Spirit of LIBERTY "Where the Spirit of the Lord is — there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17. When the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of Christ, takes possession of the soul — he finds it . . .

in bondage under the law,

the slave of sin and

the captive of Satan.

There is no real liberty — nor even the desire for any! The sinner loves his bondage — until quickened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit having imparted life, throws open the prison windows of the soul, and the man discovers his dreadful state of vassalage and woe! Now he sighs for freedom, and longs to walk at liberty. He prays for deliverance from his thralldom — and the blessed Comforter . . .

breaks off his fetters,

casts away his chains, and

brings him from under the yoke of slavery.

He is delivered from the power and tyranny of sin,

his conscience is cleansed from guilt, and

his heart is freed from slavish fears.

He is brought from under the law, which requires perfection of him, threatens and galls him — and comes under the gospel, which speaks peace, presents him with every needed blessing, and tells him of God's most free and everlasting love!

Sin cannot now have dominion over him, as he is not under the law — but under grace. Satan is cast out, and though he may harass, solicit, and endeavor to lead astray — he has lost his power and authority, and can no longer lead us captive at his will. We have liberty to approach God with confidence, to confide in Jesus with comfort, and to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.

We are free indeed — and free forever. The jubilee of the soul is come, and the year of release has arrived. We are no more slaves — but sons; and being sons, we are heirs of God through Christ. The Son having made us free, we are free indeed!

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death!"
Romans 8:2. The Spirit the REMEMBRANCER

"The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name — will teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance everything I have said to you!" John 14:26 The memory of the believer is depraved and treacherous; he can remember the evil — but he forgets the good. Often, when he is in darkness or trouble, if bowed down, under the inward cross — the promises intended to cheer, animate, and comfort him — are forgotten by him. But it is a part of the work of the ever Blessed Spirit — to bring home God's Word to the mind. This he does sometimes, by fixing the eye on the promise in the Book, sometimes by using a fellow Christian to point it out, and sometimes by directly suggesting it to the mind.

How many precious truths, sweet promises, and pleasant remembrances of the Lord's work in us and for us, in times past, come to the mind so opportunely — that we cannot account for it — when we forget this part of the Spirit's work.

He directs the preacher to address us as if he knew the most secret thoughts of our hearts. Or some Christian speaks to us as if he had been listening at our closet door. Or some sweet portion of the Word, perhaps never noticed before, flows into the soul, filling us with joy and peace. This is the Spirit's work as a remembrancer! At times, when we are in prayer, portions of Scripture present themselves — just what we needed to plead. Or sweet views of Jesus are given us — just what we needed to encourage us. Or portions we had heard, read, or enjoyed, years before — come back upon us with force and energy, clothed with new power, and impregnated with new sweetness! All this is to be ascribed to the presence, love, and operation of the Holy Comforter.

Blessed Spirit, remind me of Jesus daily, and bring home his sweet words with power to my soul!

"When Jesus was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them." John 2:22 The FILLING of the Spirit "Be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18 That which is our greatest privilege — is here spoken of as if it were our duty. Indeed, privileges always imply duties — and duties suppose privileges. Every believer possesses the Spirit — but we have not that measure, that fullness of the Spirit — which we may desire. There is a fullness — and we may receive more; there is abundance — and we are invited to come and obtain freely. The parties to whom Paul wrote had the Spirit, and were sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption; and yet to them he says, "Be filled with the Spirit." An increase is possible — desirable — certain. It would be a preservative from a multitude of evils; keeping . . .

the soul holy,

the body chaste,

the person fit for Christ's service,

and prepared for heaven.

It would qualify us for all other duties — influencing the views, thoughts, motives, words, and actions.

It would . . .

rule our wills,

control our passions,

direct our energies,

employ our talents,

honor our profession,

and increase our happiness!

It is therefore a duty, to which we ought immediately to attend. We have the promise, the invitation, the examples, the inducements, and the exhortation, placed before us in God's Word. Shall we despise or neglect all these?

Let us ask our consciences: Was I ever filled with the Spirit? Do I feel that I ought to be? Do I heartily desire the blessing? Do I daily and energetically seek it? Can I be happy without it? All we need to make us holy, active, useful, liberal, and happy — is to be filled with the Spirit. And nothing but being filled with the Spirit will make us so. O Spirit of God, come and fill my soul. Let me be filled with your light, your life, your love, your power, your holiness, yourself! O to be full of God!

"He was a good man, and, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." Acts 11:24. Have You Received the Holy Spirit?

"Have you received the Holy Spirit?" Acts 19:2

There can be no spiritual religion without the Holy Spirit — for he is its author, source, and spring. The religion that is not spiritual — is not the religion of Christ. If you have received the Holy Spirit

— you must know it. You may not know the exact time when you received the Spirit, nor be able to describe the manner or immediate effects of his entrance into your heart; but if you have received the Spirit, you may know it by the following marks:

1. You know that you had not the Spirit once — but were sensual, having not the Spirit.
2. You have high and honorable thoughts of Christ — and low and humbling views of yourself.
3. You reverence God's law, as holy, just, and good; and you prize Christ's gospel, as glorious good news, and the glad tidings of a full, free, and finished salvation.
4. You dread deception, and would rather suffer anything now than find yourself deceived at last; and you seek by all means in your power to know the certainty of your interest in Christ.
5. You hate sin — sin within you, sin without you, sin everywhere — but especially in yourself. And you long, pray, pant, and strive for holiness — holiness of heart and life.
6. You wish to be useful to your fellow-men, and to honor Jesus in your day and generation, in your body, soul, and spirit, which are his.
7. You are ruled by God's Word, and habitually deny SELF that you may honor Christ and glorify God. Where these marks are — there is the Holy Spirit; but if we have none of these — there is every reason to question whether we have received the Holy Spirit.

Examine me, O Lord; search my heart, and discover to me my real state. Never let me be satisfied with a religion without the Holy Spirit, or, having the Spirit, dishonor him by denying it!

"If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ — he does not belong to Christ." Romans 8:9 The Holy Spirit Given MORE FULLY "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" Acts 19:2

God gives the Spirit at first, to convince us of our need of Christ, lead us to Christ, and enable us to find salvation in Christ. Afterwards the Holy Spirit is given more fully . . .

to reveal Christ,

to lead us into closer fellowship with Christ,

and to make us happy in Christ.

He takes up his dwelling in us as the joy-inspiring, peace-imparting, confidence-producing, Spirit. He brings us from under the law, and places us under the gospel. He shows us that there is a fullness of joy in Jesus — and that it is there for us; that it is our privilege to be happy — happy under all circumstances, as it is written, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice!" He sets up God's kingdom in our hearts, which is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Those who received this blessing, are said to be "full of joy and of the Holy Spirit." The "fruit of the Spirit is joy." And of believers, though persecuted, tried, and tempted, it is written, "Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "After you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

Heavenly Father, give us the Comforter in fullness and power!

Blessed Spirit, take full possession of us, dwell in us, act in us, and raise us above our sins, doubts, fears, and sorrows, and fill us with joy and peace in believing.

Holy Jesus, give the Spirit anew to all your believing people, that they may be . . .

strong in faith,

active in duty,

patient in tribulation,

peaceful in trouble,

courageous in the prospect of death, and

may anticipate your glorious advent with unspeakable delight!

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13 Having NOT the Spirit "These be sensual, having not the Spirit." Jude 1:19 A man may have many things, and yet the one thing be lacking. He may have an office in the Church, a reputation among Christians, a sure hope, unquestioned confidence, clear knowledge, useful gifts, and correct morals — and yet not have the Spirit! Without the Spirit — there is . . .

no true faith,

no spiritual repentance,

no genuine love,

no enlightened zeal,

no deep conviction of sin,

no right, heart-affecting view of Christ,

no self-renunciation. The consequences of such a state are, now: we can have no title to Church privileges, no fitness for the Lord's service, no enjoyment of fellowship with God, no consecration to the Lord's glory. Hereafter they will be still more fearful, for we shall be . . .

disowned of Jesus,

shut out from the marriage supper of the Lamb,

exposed to the fiery wrath of God, and

be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power!

It is of little consequence what religion a man has, if he has not the Spirit. No substitute can be found for this; therefore we should carefully examine, and make sure work on this point. Lest we should be deceived — let us not be satisfied with anything less than the fullness of the Spirit.

Dear reader, have you received the Holy Spirit? Do you live in the Spirit? Do you walk in the Spirit?

Take heed . . .

lest you resist the Holy Spirit;

lest you quench the Spirit;

lest you grieve the Spirit;

or God may say, "My Spirit shall no more strive with him — let him alone!" And then all is lost — and you are undone — undone forever. Many have resisted the the Spirit — until God has given them up; and then Satan has taken full possession — and the case has become desperate.

Flee! O flee to Jesus, and it can never be your case!

"If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." Luke 11:13.

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