

# WRITINGS OF WILLIAM DYER

by William Dyer

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*A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by William Dyer, compiled for study and devotional reading.*

13 Chapters

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## **01.00. CHRIST'S FAMOUS TITLES**

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CHRIST'S FAMOUS TITLES by William Dyer

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

## 01.01. Section 1

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(Section 1)

My dearest friends, whom I love dearly, remember daily, long for greatly, pray for earnestly, and praise God heartily; to whom I could write with my purest blood—I send these lines from my inward affections.

Though I cannot say I am as transported with affection and zeal as Paul—as to wish myself accursed from Christ for your sakes; yet I am persuaded, I could be contented with Jonah, to be cast into the sea, to the pacifying of God’s wrath for you; that I may be free from the blood of all men; and by the power of God, to deal plainly and sincerely with all my fellow-creatures, not valuing the smiles, nor fearing the frowns of wicked men. It is better to lose their smiles—than it is to lose their precious souls. Though there are many who are enemies to me—yet I am an enemy to none, a hater of no man’s person, but a lover of their souls. He who loved me when I was an enemy, commands me to love my enemies. Dear Christians, cleave to the Lord, and follow after him fully! Neglect no duty, though you know there is danger in doing it. Fear God and sin—more than men and suffering. Let your souls bear up with Christ, bear off from the world, bear down your corruptions, and bear forth your testimony. Respect all, and reject none of God’s commandments; and take patiently and thankfully, the hardest dealings of God. The heaviest afflictions you meet with on earth, are but light in comparison with Christ’s sufferings, or the punishment of the wicked in hell. When God’s people are humble, and the wicked high enough, and the Lord’s appointed time has come—then the godly may expect deliverance, and not before. You should not envy the patience of God towards your enemies, for it is nothing in companion of what love he shows to you; be you diligent at your work, and leave God at his. The Lord will soon turn from his wrath—if men were turned from their wickedness. Look closely to your hearts, tongues and ways. I never trusted God—but I found him faithful. I never trusted my own heart—but I found it false.

Take heed friends, that you be not always wooing Christ, and yet never married to him; therefore do not leave, until you have put the great question out of all doubt. Look upon Christ without—and then search for him within you. He who will clearly see with the eye of faith—shall shut the eye of reason. It is the will of God, that saints should rejoice more in what Christ has done for them, than in what they have done for him. Oh, lay up for Christ, make haste and do your work—and God will give you eternal wages.

Dear brethren, I beseech you to consider well these following things, for they are precious, weighty, and necessary truths.

I shall add no more, but promise you my prayers for a blessing upon this treatise—that it may bring to glory God, and grace to you—which is all that is aimed at by him, who is, Your soul’s servant,

William Dyer

To the Christian Reader

It is the great unhappiness of our age, that the greatest part of men busy themselves most, in that which concerns them least. Look among rich and poor, high and low, young and old—and see whether it appears by the whole scope of their lives, that they set their hearts more on the world, than Christ and his salvation. Just so that they may have but some of the earth in their hands—they care for nothing of heaven in their hearts! But gold can no more fill their hearts—than grace their purses!

Most people are like that silly woman, that when her house was on fire, so minded the saving of her goods, that she left her child roaring in the flames! At last remembering it, she cries out, "Oh! my child, my child!" Just so, there are many who drop into perdition, merely for a little wealth!

There are many who are temporally miserable—who are eternally happy! And there are many who are temporally happy—who shall be eternally miserable! Oh! there is a great vanity—in all worldly excellencies! The world is big in our hopes—but little in our hands. It cannot satisfy the senses of men—much less their precious souls!

Dear Christians, according to my talents received, I have endeavored to set forth the riches, the loveliness, the preciousness and excellencies that are in Christ—to draw your heart after him, and to make you desire and love him. Oh! Jesus Christ is a fountain of life, light, love, grace, glory, comfort, joy, goodness and sweetness; always full and flowing, yes, overflowing! Paul was so much captivated by Christ—that he was ever in his thoughts, ever near his heart, and ever upon his tongue! Oh! that our hearts and thoughts were thus busied about, and taken up with Christ, and those treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in him. The design of this piece is not the ostentation of the author—but the edification of the reader. Though the author is contemptible—yet the matter is comfortable. I hope none will blow out such a candle, by the light of which they may see the way to heaven. If God had given more spiritual matter to me—I would have given more out to you. If God may have glory, and the Church edification by these labors of mine—I shall have my end. Now my prayer for you is, that the gracious God may bring your heart more and more in love with Christ, who is altogether lovely—that shortly you may enjoy endless felicity in his loving bosom! Your Servant in Christ,

William Dyer "He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16

Out of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, comes better and sweeter honey, than out of Sampson's lion! That is the sweetest honey—which we suck out of Christ's hive—for the face of none is so lovely in a saint's eye, as the face of Christ; and the voice of none is so pleasant in a saint's ear—as the voice of Christ. Oh Christian! the God whom you serve is so excellent, that no good can be added to him; and he is so infinite, that no good can be diminished in him. He makes others happy—and yet is not the less happy; he shows mercy to the full—and yet remains full of mercy. Oh come eat and drink abundantly! Oh beloved, there is no fear of excess here, though one drop of Christ is sweet—yet the deeper, the sweeter. The wine that Christ draws, is the best wine that a Christian drinks! The whole book of Canticles is bespangled with the praises of Jesus Christ; the subject matter of this book is a declaration of the mutual fellowship of love and affection between Christ and his church; what spiritual entertainment is given on both sides, with the sweet contentment they have in each other's beauty! Here you may see the King in his glory—and the spouse in her beauty! Here you may see Christ giving her sweet promises, adoring her with many excellencies, communicating his love, and commending her graces! Here you may also see the church even

ravished with the consideration and contemplation of Christ's love and beauty! His beauty is breath-taking, his love is ravishing, his voice is pleasing, his goodness is drawing, his manifestations are enticing! He is the beloved Son—and the Son of love; he is nothing but love—to those who are his love. But I shall no longer entertain you with a crumb at the door—but carry you to the chapter out of which my text is taken—and so lead you to the cabinet where the jewel lies!

Brethren and beloved, you have a glorious description of Christ in this chapter, and that from Song of Solomon 5:10-16. where the spouse is setting forth the riches, the dignity, the excellency, the beauty, the majesty, the glory, the preciousness, and loveliness of Jesus Christ. "My Beloved is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven. His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels. His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh. His arms are rods of gold set with chrysolite. His body is like polished ivory decorated with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars. His mouth is sweetness itself! He is altogether lovely! This is my Beloved, this my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." And thus she sets forth her beloved, and at last winds up all with this rare expression, "He is altogether lovely!" This text is a sacred cabinet, which contains in it:

First, The Jewel Christ, in this word, HE.

Secondly, The value of the Jewel, ALTOGETHER LOVELY. The observation, or doctrine, is this, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. He is the most amazing and delightful object. The very name of Jesus Christ, is as precious ointment poured forth. It is said, that the letters of his name were found engraved upon Ignatius' heart. Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart, and nothing can do better there; for "he is altogether lovely!" That Jesus Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear in four kinds of ways:

First, by titles.

Secondly, by types.

Thirdly, by resemblance.

Fourthly, by demonstrations.

I shall only speak to the first of these—his TITLES. Our Lord Jesus has seven famous and lovely titles, which are as so many jewels of his crown.

First, The Desire of all Nations.

Secondly, The King of kings.

Thirdly, The Mighty God.

Fourthly, The Everlasting Father.

Fifthly, The Prince of Peace.

Sixthly, The Precious Elect one.

Seventhly, Wonderful.

We will begin with the first of these famous titles, namely, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS This title you have in Haggai 2:7 : "And the Desire of all Nations shall come." But you shall say, "How is Christ the Desire of all Nations? Do not all the nations abhor him and say, We will not have this man to rule over us!" "The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One," Psalms 2:2. The kings of the earth are afraid—lest Christ's government should un-king them. The rulers are jealous—lest he will depose them from their noble places; they are jealous, lest Jesus will encroach upon their power and privileges. Kings are afraid of him, and think themselves but half kings, where Christ sets up his power and discipline. Merchants are afraid of him—lest he should take away their gain. Lawyers are afraid of him—lest the laws of Christ should overtop the unrighteous laws of the land. The people are afraid of him—lest he should compel them to subjection to the law and way which their souls abhor. Oh, how long has the world rebelled against Jesus Christ, and his government! But tell me, Have the people gained anything by resisting Christ, his gospel and government? by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy ways? I shall leave you to judge of this.

But, beloved, for all this, Jesus Christ is the Desire of all Nations. And that I shall show in five particulars. Though Jesus Christ is not actively desired by all nations—yet he is rightly called, the Desire of all Nations.

First, Because he is most desirable in himself, and all things that are desirable are in him. Beauty is in Christ, bounty is in Christ, riches and honor are in Christ. Jesus Christ is the treasure hidden in the gospel, the pearl of great price; he is the sun in the firmament of the Scriptures, whom to know is everlasting life; he is a spring full of the water of life, a hive of sweetness, a storehouse of riches, a river of pleasures, wherein you may bathe your souls to all eternity!

Oh! he is fullness and sweetness. "He is the chief among ten thousand," Song of Solomon 5:10. "He is more precious than rubies; and all the things you can desire are not to be compared to him," Proverbs 3:15.

Alas! what are all the crowns and kingdoms of the world, all the thrones and scepters of kings, compared to Christ! I say what are the treasures of the east, the gold of the west, the spices of the south, and the pearls of the north, compared to him? These, or whatever you imagine, are not to be compared unto the blessed Jesus! Beloved, the glories and excellencies of Christ excel all others. As all waters meet in the sea, and as all the lights meet in the sun; so all the perfections and excellencies of all the saints and angels meet in Christ! Nay, sirs, Christ has not only the holiness of angels, the loveliness of saints, and the treasure of heaven—but also the fullness of the Godhead; the riches of the Deity are in him! Colossians 1:19. "For it has pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell," fullness of grace, fullness of knowledge, fullness of love, fullness of glory. He is lovely to the Father, lovely to the angels, lovely to the saints, and lovely to the soul. And therefore he may well be called the Desire of all Nations, for all desirable things are in him.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because his desire is after all nations, though he has no need of them; he has thousands of angels before him, and ten thousand daily minister unto him; yet such infinite love does he bear to the sons of men in whom there is no

loveliness, that he himself says, "My delight is with the sons of men," Proverbs 8:31. That our Lord Jesus has a strong desire after the nations to convert them, and save the nations, will appear by three things:

First, By what he did before he came into the world.

Second, By what he did when he was in the world.

Third, By what he does now that he has left the world.

First, Our Lord Jesus had a great desire after the poor nations before he came into the world—or else he would never have left his crown, his royal court, his Father's bosom, his glorious robes, to come into this world—to be spit upon by men, and to be murdered by men! Nay, he did not only become a laughing-stock to men—but a gazing-stock to angels. Now, beloved, do you not think that Jesus Christ had a great desire after the nations' good, that he would leave all his glory, and greatness, and pomp, and riches—to come into this world, to be poor, to be hungry, to be weary, to be tempted, to be betrayed, to die? But you may perhaps say, that Christ little thought his own countrymen would have shed his blood, and that one of his own friends would betray him.

Why, beloved, do you think he did not know it? yes, he knew it before he came into the world, how he would be abused in the world, that the Jews would crucify him, and that Judas would betray him, John 6:1-71. He knew it from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who would betray him. Christ knew it before he came from heaven, what cruel treatment he would have upon earth. Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me, had not Jesus Christ a desire after us before he came to us, that he would uncrown himself—to crown us; and put off his robes—to put on our rags; and come out of heaven—to keep us out of hell? He fasted forty days—that he might feast us to all eternity. He came from heaven to earth—that he might send us from earth to heaven! The Son of God became the Son of man; that we, the sons of men, might become the sons of God; and all this he did to save the nations!

Secondly, He had a longing desire after the nations when he was in the world. Oh! Christ would gladly have saved the nations, and healed them, and enlightened them; therefore he sends forth his apostles, Matthew 28:19. and bids them, "Go and teach all nations." The people were in his eyes, and upon his heart; and so in Matthew 22:1-46, Christ sends forth his servants, once, twice, thrice, as if he would take no denial—but they would not come. Nay, beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ did not only send others to poor souls, to beseech them, to entreat them to come in, to repent, and to believe in their Savior, that their souls might be saved; but he went himself and desired them. Nay, that is not all, beloved, he cried to them, and said, "If any man thirsts—let him come unto me and drink!" John 7:37.

Oh! how earnest was Jesus Christ with poor souls to come to him. "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matthew 10:28. So in Luke 14:23. "Go to the highways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be full." Do you see this—what vehement desires Jesus Christ had after the nations and souls of men, that he might ever make them happy, when he was in the world; and he has the same desire still. How often would Jesus Christ have healed the Jews, that poor nation, as he himself speaks in Matthew 23:37. "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers in her young ones, and you would not." Nay when he has done all this, he does not leave them—but weeps over them; his eyes were

wet—because their eyes were dry. So this is clear from what Christ did when he was in the world, that he desired much the healing and converting of nations.

First, In his bearing with them.

Secondly, In his offers unto them.

Thirdly, He has a great desire after the nations, now he has left the world—and though he has gone to heaven, and entered into glory, and there sits at the right hand of the Father; yet, I say, his desires are as much after poor souls as ever. This will appear by two things:

Firstly, In his forbearance and long-sufferance. Oh! how long has Christ borne with the sinful nations, and yet he bears with them still, notwithstanding they have broke his laws, and despised his gospel, and scorned his ordinances, and shed his saints' blood, and grieved his Spirit, and abused his mercies! This and much more have they done, and yet he spared them that he might be gracious to them, Isaiah 30:18. "Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion."

Now, beloved, do you think that Jesus Christ would take all this at the nations' hands—but that he is unwilling to destroy them, and most willing to save them.

Secondly, His love appears, not only by his bearing with them—but by his offers to them. Oh beloved, how does God stand day after day, month after month, and year after year, offering himself, his Son, his mercy, his love, his grace, and his glory—to poor souls!

Many have the space of repentance, who have not the grace of repentance.

Now my brethren, by these things you may see that Jesus Christ has a great desire after the nations.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because it is he alone, who can make any person, family, or nation, truly desirable.

Oh! beloved, what is the reason that the Lord Almighty prefers his people before all the sons of men? The Lord prefers his little remnant before all the world besides, Exodus 19:5, "You will be my treasured possession!" "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor," Proverbs 12:26. Though his neighbor is a king, or emperor, or a pope—yet if he is righteous, he is more excellent than them; they are but base born. Believers be these worthies, of whom the world was not worthy, Hebrews 11:38. "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, God's holy nation, his very own possession!" 1 Peter 2:8. Believers are not only diligent Christians—but excellent Christians.

Now, what is the reason, beloved, that the saints are thus excellent above all others? Is it for their birth, breeding, or learning, or riches, or greatness, or honor? No, no! It is for none of these; but if you would know the reason, it is because Christ is formed in them, and married to them; they have the new name, the new nature, the new heart, the new spirit! Oh, this is the reason! If there were anything beside Christ that would make any nation, or family, or person truly desirable, it must be either birth, or greatness, or learning, or riches, or beauty, or wisdom, or strength; now all these do not make any one desirable, for if they did, then those who reign over the nations would be the

most desirable people under heaven, because they have the most of these.

"He has made us to be kings and priests unto our God." Revelation 1:5. Oh! Christ has made every believer a king! It is Christ's beauty that makes us beautiful; it is his riches that makes us rich; it is his righteousness that makes us righteous! He alone makes us truly honorable, and desirable. Well may Christ be called the Desire of all Nations—for it is he who can make a nation desirable.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is called "the Desire of all Nations," because all nations stand in need of him; Nay, not only all nations—but all people, young and old, rich and poor, high and low. He who will be saved—must have a Savior to save him, or else he can never be saved. The apostle tells us, Acts 4:12, "Neither is their salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved." And Christ says, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6. So that not only all nations—but all people stand in need of him.

You may go to heaven without health, without wealth, without honor, without pleasure, without friends, without learning—but you can never go to heaven without Christ.

What will you do, if you begin to die naturally—before you begin to live spiritually? If the tabernacle of nature be taken down—before the temple of God be raised up in your soul; if your paradise be laid waste—before the tree of life be set up in it; if you give up the spirit—before you ever receive the Holy Spirit; if the sun of your life be set within you—before the Sun of Righteousness shines upon you; if the body is fit to be turned into the earth—before the soul is fit to be taken to heaven? If the second birth has no place in you—the second death shall have power over you!

Though the nations need nothing more than Christ—yet they slight nothing more than Christ.

Tell me how you will live when you die—who are dead while you live.

Oh, beloved, is it not sad that the nations should resist Christ, his gospel and government as they do!

Indeed, if men might be their own judges, then Christ had no enemies, we are all his friends. If the Jews might so have been their own judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified—but an enemy to Caesar. It was not Paul as a saint whom they persecuted—but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow; some men will say now, they do not persecute the saints of God—but seditious lunatics; but God will shortly take off the veil of hypocrisy from their faces!

Oh grieve for them, that cannot grieve for themselves! And thus you see that all nations stand in need of Christ, who is the Desire of all Nations.

Fifthly, Our Lord Jesus is called the Desire of all Nations, because when he sets up himself in anyone as their desire—then they run after him, and count nothing too dear for him! So the church of God, Isaiah 26:8-9. "The desire of our soul is to your name; with my soul have I desired you in the night; yes, with my spirit within me will I seek you early."

Oh! when the Desire of all Nations once sets up himself in the soul—then he becomes the desire of the soul. When he had thus endeared himself to their souls, they count nothing too dear for

him—all shall be at his command: their gold, their silver, their strength, their lives. Revelation 12:12, "They did not love their lives in the face of death." So that, beloved, let men be enemies to Jesus Christ—yet as soon as Christ sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him!

Now, sirs, put all these together, and it will fully prove Christ to be the Desire of all Nations.

I shall make but a short application of it, and so conclude. Is it so, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Desire of all Nations, and that all things desirable are in him? Oh then, let me beg of you, oh let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, and for your soul's sake—make Christ Jesus the desire of your souls!

He is the Desire of all Nations—and shall he not be the desire of your soul? Whom will you love, if not the KING of saints? Whom will you long for, if not for the Desire of all Nations? Whom will you prize, if not the Prince of Peace? He is the Son of God, before whom angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven bow. He is the glory of glories, the crown of crowns, the heaven of heavens! He is a light in darkness, joy in sadness, riches in poverty, life in death! It is he who can resolve all your doubts, secure you in danger, save your souls, and bring you to glory, where all joys are enjoyed! Oh therefore, give all glory to him, and yourselves to Him. So much, or so little for this time.

Doctrine: That Jesus Christ, is infinitely and superlatively lovely. "Yes, he is altogether lovely! This is my beloved, and this is my friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16 I now proceed to the second title, which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is King of kings. THE KING OF KINGS "On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS!" Revelation 19:16 Beloved, Jesus Christ is a threefold king:

First, His enemies King.

Secondly, His saints King.

Thirdly, His Father's King. The first, he rules over. The second, he rules in. The third, he rules for.

I shall begin with the first, and take them in order.

First, Christ is his ENEMIES King. That is, he is King over his enemies. Christ is a King above all kings, and over all kings, and therefore the Scripture calls HIM, "King of kings!" as you have it in 1 Timothy 6:15. Christ is a King above all kings; for if he were not a King above all kings—he could not be a King over all kings. Two Scriptures prove that Jesus is a King above all kings. God the Father says, "I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth." Psalms 89:27. Now, who is the first-born? Why, it is Jesus Christ; as he is elsewhere called, "the first-born of every creature." "Now," says God, "I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth: higher in glory, higher in power, higher in majesty!" So in Revelation 1:5—there Christ is called, "the Ruler of the kings of the earth."

Alas! alas! what are all the mighty men, the great, the honorable men of the earth—compared to Jesus Christ! They are but like a little bubble on the water; for if all the nations, in comparison to God, be but as the drop of the bucket, or the dust of the balance, as the prophet speaks in Isaiah 40:15— Oh how little then must be the kings of the earth!

Nay, beloved, Christ Jesus is not only above the kings of the earth, and higher than kings—but he is higher than the angels. Yes, he is the head of angels; and therefore all the angels in heaven are commanded to worship him! Colossians 2:12, "He is the head of all principalities and powers," which includes angels. And in Hebrews 1:6. "Let all the angels of God worship him." God will have the angels worship Christ—as well as men.

Oh, sirs, Christ is a King, before whom angels veil their faces, and kings of the earth cast down their crowns!

Again, as he is a King above all kings—so he is a King over all kings too. Jesus Christ is an universal King. He is the King over all kingdoms, over all nations, over all governments, over all powers, over all people! Daniel 7:14, "He was given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed." You here see that Christ is not only King of saints—but King of nations too! Therefore you find in Psalms 2:8, "Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth Your possession!" The very heathen are given to Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. As the Lord Jesus Christ has all the kingdoms of the earth given to him—so likewise he has all power given to him. If this were otherwise, he would have no ability to rule his kingdoms. Matthew 28:18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Oh, here is a text that should revive the hearts of saints! So that it is he who binds kings in chains, and princes in fetters of iron! It is he who allows no man to do them wrong; yes, he reproves kings for their sakes, and breaks mighty kings in pieces for the saints' sake! And therefore it is he who over-rules kings, and overcomes the kings of the earth that make war with the saints!

Revelation 17:14, "These will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them," and why? "Because he was King of kings, and Lord of lords!" This is the first, Jesus Christ is his enemies King, that is, he is a King above their kings, and over their kings. As Jesus Christ is his enemies King—so he is his saints King.

Secondly, Christ is his SAINTS King. I will give you two Scriptures to prove it: Revelation 15:3. There Jesus Christ is called the saints' King, "O King of saints." So also in Matthew 21:5, "Look, your King is coming to you. He is humble, riding on a donkey—even on a donkey's colt." So that by these two Scriptures, you see Jesus Christ is King of saints.

Now, beloved, I beseech you here to listen carefully. Jesus Christ you see, is King of the wicked, and of the godly; but as for the wicked, he rules over them by his power and might; but the saints, he rules in them by his Spirit and graces. Now to this the Scripture witnesses, that Jesus Christ rules in the saints, and is the King of the saints; and therefore it tells them, Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you the hope of glory," and elsewhere, "Know you not that Christ is in you." Mark, Christ must be in you, "Christ in you the hope of glory." So in Psalms 24:7, "Lift up your heads, O you gates, and be you lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." Here Christ is called the King of glory; and the psalmist calls upon men to open their hearts that the King of glory may come in. So in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

Oh this is Christ's spiritual kingdom, and here he rules in the hearts of his people, here he rules over their consciences, over their wills, over their affections, over their judgments and understandings; and therefore he is called the King of saints. It is true, other kings may bear rule over the estates of men; but as for the soul—that only belongs to Christ! Therefore believers are said to be all glorious within. "The king's daughter is all glorious within," Psalms 45:13. The King of glory rules there, and dwells there! God dwells in the highest heavens—and in the humble hearts. Christ is not only the King of nations—but King of saints; the one he rules over, the other he rules in.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is his FATHER'S King. So his Father calls him in Psalms 2:6, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." Well may he be our King—when he is God's King. But you may say, How is Christ the Father's King? Because he rules for his Father. There is a twofold kingdom of God committed to Jesus Christ:

First, A spiritual kingdom, by which he rules in the hearts of his people, and so is King of saints.

Secondly, A providential kingdom, by which he rules the affairs of this world, and so he is King of nations. Now, beloved, the Scripture says, "That the Father has put all things in Christ's hands." And the apostle tells us, "God has put all things under his feet." The Father judges no man—but has committed all judgment to the Son, and he has appointed him over his own house. Now, as Christ has all, so he does all, and rules all for his Father; and therefore the Father calls him his servant. Isaiah 41:2, "Behold my servant." He rules for his Father, and does his Father's will. So that, beloved, in these respects, Christ is a King.

Now I shall lay down some things wherein the Lord Jesus infinitely excels all other kings of the earth.

First, Jesus is a King, who, in a spiritual sense, makes all his subjects kings. "He has made us kings and priests to our God!" Revelation 5:10. He has a crown of glory for every subject. Oh, what a glorious King is this!

Oh, sirs, it is better to be a poor member of Christ—than the head of a nation! Oh, how infinitely happy are all Christ's subjects! They are all kings, all heirs, all favorites, all sons! The true believer is the only happy man. Alas! where is there such a king to be found—who makes all his subjects kings? There are many kings that undo their subjects—but Christ makes his subjects kings! There are many kings who make their subjects beggars—but Christ makes his subjects kings! There are many kings who put their subjects to death—but Christ died that his subjects might live! There are many kings who give their subjects titles—but Christ gives all his subjects heaven!

Sirs, in a word, this is the greatest nobility, to be the servant of the great God; he is nobly descended, who is born from above. Oh, how many lords has that man—who has not Christ for his Lord! every sin is his lord, and every lust lords it over him. Now where Jesus Christ comes to be King, he makes them kings to his Father, and kings over their lusts. Now, beloved, here is the excellence and happiness of our King—he makes us all kings, and gives all crowns of glory!

Secondly, Jesus Christ is the most just and RIGHTEOUS King. He reigns in righteousness, he brings peace by righteousness. He makes us righteous, and therefore he is called, "The LORD our righteousness," Jeremiah 23:6. Now, beloved, other kings often deal unjustly, they bear the sword

to execute wrath upon the innocent, and strengthen the hands of evildoers! They justify the wicked—and condemn the godly! They break oaths, and falsify their treaties! Many times they oppress their subjects, and wrong their people! And therefore the Scripture says, "When the wicked rule—the people groan!" Proverbs 29:2. But now, beloved, Jesus Christ, as he is a righteous King—so he rules in righteousness, and you shall have nothing but righteous dealing from him; mind this text of Scripture, which infinitely speaks out Christ's righteous dealing with poor souls, in Revelation 15:3. "Just and true are your ways." Mark who is just and true here. Why, it is the King of saints! "Just and true are your ways, O King of saints." Justice and truth well befits the King of saints. In Proverbs 3:17 it is said, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" speaking of wisdom, which is meant of Christ. Oh, what a golden King is here! What a glorious King is here! He is just and true, and all His ways are pleasantness, and all His paths are peace. Oh, sirs, this is the excellency of Christ, He oppresses nobody, He wrongs nobody! He infinitely excels all the kings of the earth in righteousness, for all His ways are just and true.

Thirdly, Christ is a King who lives forever, and reigns FOREVER! Other kings they are but of yesterday, they are soon dead and gone. What is become of all those great and mighty kings that we read of? Why, they are gone like a tale—like a dream! But it is not so with the King of saints—he is King forever, he reigns forever! And therefore the apostle calls him the immortal and eternal King, because he lives forever. 1 Timothy 1:17. So in Hebrews 7:25, speaking of Christ, "He lives forever to make intercession for us." Now, beloved, here is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ—he lives forever! Other kings die, and their subjects may do what they will—but Jesus lives forever!

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is a King that has a perfect KNOWLEDGE of all His subjects! Oh, sirs, earthly kings and princes do not know all their subjects; nay, they know very few. Alas! they do not know a quarter of them! They are not acquainted with all the wrongs, and needs, and miseries, that their poor subjects lie under. The Lord Jesus infinitely excels all other kings—in that He has a perfect knowledge of all His subjects! He knows them all by name. He knows—all their thoughts, all their needs, all their ways, all their conditions. So say I to you, sirs, Your King knows—all your necessities, all your sufferings, all your troubles, all your fears!

Yes, and "My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Php 4:19. Oh, this is a sweet Scripture! Oh, poor souls, Christ knows everything about you! This is our great happiness, that we have a King who knows us so well. Oh, here is the excellency of our King!

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is an ENTHRONED King! But, beloved, this is not all; Christ does not only sit there Himself—but He has promised that all who overcome, shall sit down with Him upon His throne! "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne!" Revelation 3:21. Mark sirs, Christ promises all His subjects—that they should sit upon the throne with Him!

Now, I wonder where there is any king but Christ, who will allow his subjects to sit upon his throne with him. Alas! this would be treason for a man to attempt it!

I have read of a king, whose crown fell off his head and into the water, while passing over a river. One of his poor servants, out of love to the king, leaped in and fetched it up out of the river, and

put it back on the king's head. And for this—the poor man had his head cut off! So arrogant was this king! Yes—but sirs, the Lord Jesus is not so, he is no such proud King! He did not only uncrown himself—to crown us; and wear the crown of thorns—that we might wear the crown of glory—but he brings his subjects to sit upon the throne with him! "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne!" Oh, what a glorious King is this! Every one of his poor subjects shall sit upon the throne with him! So in Revelation 21:7, "He who overcomes shall inherit all things." One would think this very promise would draw the whole world after Christ! Oh, what a glorious King is this! Every one of His poor subjects shall sit upon the throne with Him! One would think this very promise would draw the whole world after Christ! Oh! what great offers, and privileges, and honors Christ bestows upon all His poor followers! He not only makes them kings—but He brings them to sit upon His very throne with Him!

O believer, you say that it would be an honor indeed, if could you but look into heaven, and merely to see Christ sit upon His throne! But this honor have all His saints; yes, much more—He makes them all kings, and grants to them to sit upon the throne with Him!

Sixthly, Jesus Christ is a King who LOVES all his subjects—and all his subjects love him! And I am sure that this cannot be said of any king under heaven—but it may be said of the Lord Christ. There are nine or ten particulars wherein the love of Christ to his subjects does appear, and is wonderfully manifested.

First, His love to his subjects is a PRIMARY love. It was not man's loveliness that engaged God to love and save men! Says the apostle, "We love him," and why? "because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19 His love is the cause preceding—our love is the effect following. If he had not first fired our hearts with the flames of his love—we would never have bestowed one spark of spiritual love upon Christ. He must draw us—before we can run after him. And therefore says the church, "Draw me—and WE will run after you." Song of Solomon 1:4. Sirs, we cannot run after Jesus—without him first drawing us. And when he draws us—we run!

Oh! sirs, since God loved us when we were ungodly—we should strive to be like him who thus loved us! Nothing can engage a saint to love God so much as this—that God loved him so much. A Christian once weeping at the table, and being asked the reason of it, answered, "Because I love Christ no more!" Indeed, friends, this should grieve us who are so much beloved—that we love Jesus so little!

You have a famous saying of Augustine, "He loves not Christ at all—who loves him not above all!" This is the first love with which God loves his people it is a primary love.

Secondly, Christ is a King that loves his subjects with a DISTINGUISHING love, and a separating love. The general love of Christ is scattered and branched out to all the creatures in the world. But his special love, his exceeding great and rich love, is only settled upon his redeemed people. Now, if you ask me what Christ's distinguishing love is—I shall but enumerate it to you:

1. It is Pardoning love.
2. It is Redeeming love.
3. It is Calling love.

4. It is Justifying love.

5. It is Adopting love.

6. It is Sanctifying love.

7. It is Glorifying love. This I say, is a particular love; Christ's love is not only sweeter than wine—but better than life! He is most lovely, he is altogether lovely! Christ is nothing but love to those who are his love.

Thirdly, Christ loves his saints with a PROTECTING love. "Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack compassion for the child of her womb? Though she may forget—yet I will not forget you!" Isaiah 49:15 Can a woman forget her nursing child? Is it possible a woman should be so inhumane, to forget her tender infant, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? "Yes!" says the Lord, "Though she may forget—yet I will not forget you!" God may as soon cease to be God—as cease to be good! He may as soon cease to live—as cease to love his people! No, no! He cannot forget them! Did he forget Israel in Egypt, or his church in Babylon, or Daniel in the lions' den? Did he forget the three Hebrew children in the furnace, or Jeremiah in the dungeon, or Jonah in the whale's belly, or Peter in the prison? Did he forget them? The wicked say indeed, that the Lord does forget, in Ezekiel 9:9, "They are saying—The Lord doesn't see it! The Lord has forsaken the land!" But they are much mistaken! There are three or four texts of Scripture, which I shall humbly offer to your serious consideration, that do wonderfully speak out God's protecting love to his people. The first is in Revelation 7:3. You find there an angel has power given him to harm the earth and the sea. Now there comes another angel, and cries out, "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees!" Why? what is the reason? "Until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Do not pour out your judgments upon the earth—until we have secured the servants of God. Oh! how wonderfully does the Lord protect his people! So again, in Ezekiel 9:1-11. God had set certain men to destroy that wicked city, but first the Lord calls, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it." But for the rest, God says, "Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children—but do not touch anyone who has the mark!"

Oh! sirs, this does wonderfully set out God's protecting love to his people. So in Isaiah, the Lord bids the prophet tell them what dreadful judgments would come upon them, upon the kings, and princes, and great men, and soldiers. Now, says the Lord, say to the righteous, "it shall be well with them, none of this destruction shall come near them!" Oh! how wonderfully does this magnify God's protecting love.

Isaiah 26:20, "Come my people, enter into your rooms, shut the door, and hide yourselves for a little while." Why so, O Lord? "Until the Lord's anger against your enemies has passed by!" "Come," says God, "I am resolved to execute my judgments on wicked men; therefore hide yourselves for a while!" And therefore, I say, let no man's heart fail him—it is but for a moment—and then your miseries shall end. Beloved, when our miseries are at the greatest—his help is at the nearest! Man's extremity—is God's opportunity. When Mordecai is thoroughly humbled, the crude Haman shall be hanged! But then,

Fourthly, Christ loves his people with a most INTENSE love. He loves them with all his heart! More, they are the dearly beloved of his soul, as himself calls them in Jeremiah 12:7, "the dearly

beloved of my soul." Christ's love to his people is not a lip-love, from the teeth outwardly; but a real love from the heart inwardly. Christ loves his people as his Father loves him! And how is that? Can you fathom the Father's love for Jesus? No, all the men on earth, nor angels in heaven, cannot fathom the love that the Father bears to Christ! And yet as God loves Christ—so does Christ love his people. You have a full text for this, they are Christ's own words, "As the Father loves me—SO I have loved you."

Oh, sirs, how infinitely does the Father love the Son—and how infinitely does the Son love his people! Why, he loves them as much as the father loves him. Oh, Lord, what love is this! that the Savior should love the sinner; that Christ should love the miserable sinner! And thus it is! Oh! sirs, believers are like letters of gold engraved on the very heart of Christ! "Oh the breadth, the height, the length of the love of Christ," says the apostle, "it passes knowledge!" Ephesians 3:19. As if there were both lack of words, and lack in words, to set forth the love of Christ to his people. But certainly it must be very great; for as the Father loves him—so he loves them!

Alas! others love the saints—but how do they love them? Why, not with an intense love; they do not love them for their good—but for their goods; it is more for the money in their purses, than for the grace in their hearts. They love the saints, just as men do with their sun-dials, who never look on them but when the sun shines. Why so? The world never looks upon the saints but in the time of prosperity. When the Jews flourished and were in their glory, oh what great friends were the Samaritans to them! But when the poor Jews were under affliction, then they had no worse enemies than the Samaritans. But Christ is not so, he loves you when you are poor, as well as when you are rich; as well when you are in your rags, as when you are in your robes; when you are in adversity, as well as when you are in prosperity. Christ loves his saints as well upon a gallows—as though it were in a palace; for whom he loves, he loves unto the end.

Hebrews 13:5, "He is faithful, who has said, I will never leave you, nor ever forsake you!" I will never leave you in any condition, or any place. Oh, sirs, what a love is this! And therefore, we do not hanker for what the world can do for us, or for the world's love; it is like a Venice glass—soon broken! It smiles now—and quickly frowns! It cries "Hosanna!" today, and tomorrow "Crucify him!" But Christ's love is infinite—from his very heart.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ loves his people with a DEMONSTRATED love. "God so loved the world—that he gave his one and only Son!" John 3:16. Says Paul, "He loved me—and gave himself for me," Galatians 2:20. The Father gives the Son—and the Son gives himself. He loved me—and gave himself for me; all that Christ did and suffered—it is for me! All that Christ has—is mine. Christ's love is mine to pity me! Christ's mercy is mine to save me! Christ's graces are mine to beautify me! Christ's power is mine to protect me! Christ's wisdom is mine to counsel me! Christ's Spirit is mine to comfort me! Christ's Word is mine to teach me! Christ's glory is mine to crown me!

There are four attributes of God which are of great support to Christians:

1. His faithfulness.
2. His mightiness.
3. His goodness.

4. His wisdom. And therefore, sirs, it is your duty to live upon God promises, when his providences seem to run adverse!

Christ's love to you is free love! All that he has given you is free—his grace is free, his love is free, his salvation is free, and he himself is free. Therefore, a grain of saving grace in the heart—is better than a chain of gold around the neck! Now, beloved, all that Christ has bestowed upon you—it is free, and therefore it is a divine love.

Sixthly, Christ loves his people with a love of COMPASSION, sympathizing with them in all their sorrows and sufferings. Truly this is a great comfort indeed, "In all their afflictions," says the text, "he was afflicted," Isaiah 63:9. So says the apostle, "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses," Hebrews 4:15. That is, we have a high priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities—one who weeps in our tears, and sighs in our sighs, and sorrows in our sorrows, and suffers in our sufferings! And therefore, says Christ, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute ME?" Christ was first persecuted by Paul in his members, and afterward he was persecuted in Paul as one of his members. Oh, what a sweet love is this! a love of compassion, and sympathizing with us in all our sorrows and sufferings!

Now, beloved, Jesus Christ loves his subjects with a love of compassion, and therefore let your sufferings be what they will, Jesus Christ does only as it were, bear a share with you.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of DELIGHT. Speaking there of Christ the King, "The King shall greatly delight in your beauty," Psalms 40:11. The King shall greatly delight in your beauty—with great delight and joy. And therefore, beloved, Christ calls his church—his love, his dove, his beloved, his lovely one. Oh, how infinitely does Christ love his church! Certainly Christ bears a great love to his church; and hence it is you read, "Christ walks among the golden candlesticks, and he feeds among the lilies, and his delight is with the sons of men."

Although poor believers are 'ravens' in the world's eye—yet they are 'doves' in Christ's eye! They are very precious in his esteem! Though they are loathed by wicked men—yet they are dearly beloved by God—he delights in them. The King shall greatly delight in them.

Eighthly, Christ loves his people with an EVERLASTING love. He loves them with an undying love—a love that never fades, never waxes cold. Christ's love is like a fountain ever flowing, and never dried up! Whom he loves from all eternity—these he loves to all eternity! Now, sirs, is not this a great favor to be so loved by Christ? "Having loved His own who were in the world—He loved them to the end!" John 13:1. He did not love them for a day, a month, or a year—but even unto the end. And in Jeremiah 31:3, speaking there of his love, it is called an everlasting love; "I have loved you," says God, "with an everlasting love."

Oh, sirs, this is a love that shall bed and board with you—that shall lie down and rise up with you—that shall go to your death-bed with you—that shall go to the grave with you—that shall go to heaven with you! The saints shall put off the jewel of faith when they die—but not the jewel of Christ's love; for that shall remain with them to eternity. He loves his saints with an everlasting love!

Ninthly, Christ loves his people with a UNIVERSAL love. His love is universal to all his saints. Oh, Christ infinitely loves every true believer! He loved poor Lazarus—as well as rich Abraham! He

loved despised Job—as well as honorable David. He loves the poorest saints—as well as the richest. He loves them all alike—God is no respecter of persons. Oh, where is there such a king now, as Christ! They love their nobles, they are their favorites; but Christ loves all his subjects. Christ's love extends to all his saints; his love is like the beams of the sun, which reaches all ways, east, west, north, and south—so does Christ's love.

Tenthly, Christ loves his people with a **CORRECTING** love. "The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he scourges everyone he accepts as a son." Hebrews 12:6

Eleventhly, Christ loves his people with a **DIRECTING** love. He has promised to guide and direct his people in the way wherein they ought to walk.

Oh, put all these particulars together, and surely you must confess that Jesus Christ loves his subjects **INFINITELY**. As it was said of Lazarus, when Christ wept for him, they made this construction of it, "Oh, how he loves him!" Oh, how does Christ love you who are his people! He loves you infinitely, even beyond all measure!

Now, oh sirs, for the Lord's sake, consider of it, and let this draw forth your love to him.

I now come to show you the love of Christ's people—to Christ.

"Yes, he is altogether lovely! This is my beloved, and this is my friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16

"Oh, feed me with your love—your 'raisins' and your 'apples'—for I am utterly lovesick!" Song of Solomon 2:5 The Spouse indeed was love-sick! But Christ exceeded her love—for he died for his love! "While we were sinners, Christ died for us!" He loved us more than his own life! Yes, the very life of Christ to him was not too dear for us. The 'pelican' feeds her young ones with her own blood. Oh! sirs, Christ is our pelican, who has nourished and fed us with his own blood. "My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," says Christ, John 6:55. Christ's red blood—has taken away our red guilt! Scarlet-red sinners have become milk-white saints, when washed in his blood! All our precious mercies, come swimming to us in Christ's precious blood!

Christ bled love at every vein! His drops of blood—were drops of love! Yes, the more bloody he was—the more lovely! He was most lovely upon the cross—because then he showed most love to us! In the last section, I showed you the great love which Jesus Christ bears to all his subjects; and the sum of my discourse was this—that Jesus Christ loves his subjects with an everlasting and undying love. That which I am now to show to you is this—that all Christ's subjects love him; and what kind of love they have for Christ. The saints' love to Christ is **VEHEMENT** and **STRONG**. This will appear, if you consider to what the Scripture likens and compares the saints' love. Now it is compared to four things:

1. To sickness.
2. To death.
3. To the grave.
4. To fire. To these things is a believer's love compared in Scripture; I shall handle them in order.

First, SICKNESS. This is the first comparison which sets forth the strength of the believer's love; this is set down in two places of this book of Canticles. "Oh, feed me with your love—your 'raisins' and your 'apples'—for I am utterly lovesick!" Song of Solomon 2:5. And in Song of Solomon 5:8, "Make this promise to me, O women of Jerusalem! If you find my beloved one, tell him that I am sick with love!"

She is overwhelmed, she is overcome, and even ravished with his love and beauty. "Oh! I thirst, I faint, I pant, I long for him!" O! The Christian should be very sick, and ready to swoon with love to Jesus. Never was Ahab so sick for a vineyard, never was Sisera so desirous for milk, nor Samson for water, nor Rachel for a child, nor Amnon for his sister Tamar—as poor broken-hearted sinners are for Christ! When Christ gets into the heart, he draws all the affections to him.

I remember the speech of a gracious woman, I have borne, said she, nine children, with as much pain as other women, and yet I could with all my heart bear them over again; yes, bear them, and bear them all the days of my life, that I might be sure of a part in Christ.

Oh how infinitely do believers love Christ! David wonders at his own love in Psalms 119:97, "O, how love I your law!" He makes a wonder at it here; with what vehemency he loves God's Word. "O how love I your law!" Just so, the spouse here, she does not only love him—but she is utterly love-sick. Oh! sirs, here is a sickness not unto death—but unto life; it is a sickness that still brings blessedness and happiness with it, a sickness that shall be cured by him who is the great Physician of souls. This is the first kind of love; she compares her love to sickness.

Secondly, The next thing whereby she expresses the strength of her love to Christ, it is by DEATH. This you have in Song of Solomon 8:1-14. She there tells you, "her love is strong as death." Beloved, you know death is strong, it is the king of terrors, and the terror of kings; it subdues all sorts of people—high and low, rich and poor, old and young, good and bad. The greatest monarchs, kings, and emperors, have all been thrown down by death. Where did that man dwell—who was too strong for death? If strength could have resisted it—then Samson would have escaped it. Could greatness have overlooked it—then Nebuchadnezzar would have eluded it. Could beauty have outfaced it—then Absalom would have never met it. Could riches have bribed it—then Dives would have avoided it.

But, alas! none of these gallants were hardy enough for death—it trod on the necks of them all! And therefore, oh look upon death—as a thing you must reckon with! Look upon yourselves—as a thing you must part with.

Now, by this you may guess what love is—It is as strong as death; yes, strong indeed. Oh, how strong is death! Nay, believers' love to Christ is not as strong as death—but stronger than death—as some Scriptures make it appear. A believer's love to Christ is stronger than death, "I am persuaded," says Paul, "that neither life, nor death, principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39.

Death, though it may kill us—it cannot hurt us! Though death may send us to the pit of darkness—yet it cannot send us to the place of torments! Though it may take away our lives—yet it cannot take away our loves! Bloody tyrants have taken away the martyrs' lives for Christ—but they could never destroy their love to him. One of the primitive Christians, when he came to suffer,

said, "Oh, I shall die for my Savior but once—but I have no more lives to lay down! Oh, I could die a hundred times for him!" Oh! sirs, love is a thing that outlives all enemies, all persecutions, all dangers; nay, death itself!

Revelation 12:11 says, "They loved not their lives unto the death." And so says Job, "Though you slay me—yet will I trust in you;" as if he had said, "Oh, Lord, though you take away my possessions, my greatness, my health, my goodness, my children; yes, my life itself—you shall never take away my love! Though you kill me—yet will I trust in you!" Job 13:15. So love to Christ is not only as strong as death—but stronger than death; for love is the conqueror at the last.

Thirdly, Another thing whereby she expresses the strength of her love, and her strong affection to Christ, it is the GRAVE. This you have in chapter 8:6. Her "love is as unyielding as the grave." The grave is the bed of darkness, which is always craving, and never satisfied—but devours all that comes. Christ tells us in John 4:14. "He who drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more." What, thirst no more? No more thirst after the world, and worldly things; but more and more thirst after Christ and heaven.

"He who drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more." No more after those base poor things—but more and more after Christ.

"My soul thirsts for You!" Psalms 42:1. Why, David—how does your soul thirst for God? He tells you, "As the deer pants after the water brooks—so my soul pants after you, O God." Now mark, sirs, the poor deer which is hunted by dogs—it is, as it were, all in a burning heat, and then it pants, and thirsts, and is ready to die for water. Now, says David, "As the deer pants after the water brooks—so pants my soul after you, O God." Oh, the vehement fire of David's thirst! No hungry man ever longed for bread, nor a thirsty man long for water, nor a naked man long for clothes, nor a covetous man long for riches, nor a sick man long for health, nor a condemned man long for pardon—than truly gracious soul thirsts for Jesus!

David tells you elsewhere, "Whom have I in heaven but you, and there is none I desire on earth in comparison of you!" Psalms 73:23. David—do you not desire your wife, your children, your crown, your kingdom? "Yes, these be desired in their places—but these were nothing in comparison of God." I remember the saying of a martyr, to one that asked him if he did not love his wife and children, when they wept by him? "Love them! yes!" says he, "if all the world were gold, and mine to dispose of, I would give it all to live with them, though it were in a prison;" says he, " yet, in comparison with Jesus—I love them not." Oh! sirs, we must tread upon father, and run over mother—to come to Christ.

You know Peter, to come to Christ—he would go upon the bare water! Rather than sail, he went upon the sea to Christ! Truly it was a dangerous passage—but Peter bore up excellently well, while his faith bore up—but when his faith sank, then Peter began to sink too. In Scripture, the world is called a sea; and you must go upon these waters to Christ, and be sure to keep up faith, and then you will hold out; but if faith fails, you shall be sure to sink.

Oh! sirs, the believer's love is unsatisfied like the grave. "None but Christ, none but Christ!" says the martyr. Ad as Augustine says, "Oh Lord, take away all—only give me yourself!"

Fourthly, Love is compared to FIRE. Song of Solomon 8:6, "It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame!" Now, beloved, the saints' love to Christ, is not only compared to fire for its warming and heating—but for its kindling, and increasing, and flaming; "While I was musing," says David, "the fire burned," Psalms 39:3. What fire? Why, the fire in his heart—and not the fire on the hearth.

Now, beloved, as the saints' love is compared to fire in the Scripture, so you shall find afflictions, and persecutions, and dangers, and these cruel things that accompany the poor saints in the world, are called waters and floods. Revelation 17:15, "The waters which you saw, where the whore sat." Revelation 12:14, "Then the dragon tried to drown the woman with a flood of water that flowed from its mouth." Now, what is the flood here? Why, this flood is bloody persecutions, and devilish persecutions. Now, beloved, how long has the dragon been spewing out her water upon the church? And why is all this water thrown out? It is to quench the fire that I speak of; but can they do it? No, alas! they may spew until their eyes come out of their head, and to no purpose! Song of Solomon 8:7, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it!" All the bloody persecutions and afflictions cannot quench love; and therefore let wicked men send forth as many floods as they will—they cannot drown the saints' love.

All the water that Saul and his party threw upon David did not quench his love. No, says he, "Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death—yet will I fear no evil." Psalms 23:4. David is not afraid to go by death's door.

All the waters that Herod and the rulers threw upon the apostles, could never quench their love.

Now, beloved, you will find after the apostles were whipped soundly, that they went away rejoicing, and rejoicing in this very thing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Jesus Christ. "They took joyfully accepted the confiscation of their property." Hebrews 10:34

Says Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us!" Romans 8:35-37

Believe it, sirs, all these are trying things, and yet, says he, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" No, no, they cannot do it! There is nothing that shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ! The believer's love is not made of such metal, as to be quenched by this flood; the saints are all on fire for Christ. And so we find that great flood which Nero and Julian poured out upon the primitive Christians; what—did it quench the fire? I remember one of the martyrs said, "Had I ten heads—they should all suffer for Christ!" And another said, "If every hair of my head were a man—they should all suffer for Christ!" Alas! the poor Christians grasped their torments like so many crowns! For the Scripture tells you, that "many waters cannot quench love."

Now, beloved, put these four things together, and it is very clear, that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong. They will hang for him, they will burn for him, they will do anything for him, and suffer the greatest torments rather than he should lose the least grain of glory! But you will say, WHY do all God's subjects love Him with such great love? The reasons are two:

First, Because he deserves it.

Secondly, He commands it.

First, Christ deserves our love. Why do we love him? Because he deserves it at our hands, even if it were ten thousand times more than it is. Beloved, it was he who created us; it is he who sanctified us; it is he who redeemed us, and loved us; it was he who changed our natures, and pardons our sin! It was he who made our peace, and pacified his Father's wrath for us, and satisfied his Father's justice for us, and wrought everlasting righteousness for us! It is he who bore our cross—that we might wear his crown. He waded through a sea of sufferings for us—to bring pardon to our souls! And does not this Christ deserve our love? Oh infinitely, infinitely! And truly, sirs, the more Christ has done and suffered for us—the dearer shall he be unto us.

Secondly, As Christ deserves our love, so he commands it. Christ commands us to love him above life, above wife, above relations. Christ will have all—or none at all. Jesus Christ must weigh heavier than all relations in the balance of our affections; he commanded to love him above all.

## 01.01a. Section 1 contd

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APPLICATION. I now proceed to the application of all to ourselves, which is the third thing in order to be handled, and I shall make three uses of it.

1st, For Consolation.

2nd, For Examination.

3rd, For Exhortation.

First, for CONSOLATION. Is it so that Christ loves us with an everlasting and never-dying love? Why, then, here is comfort for you who are his people. I speak only now to such. "Comfort, comfort, comfort, my people," says God, Isaiah 40:1. And Christ says, "Let not your hearts be troubled." John 14:1. Christ would not have his poor saints troubled!

"Rejoice evermore!" says the apostle in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. "Rejoice evermore!" Alas! how can we rejoice? When men vilify us, when men reproach us, and abuse us, and persecute us—how can we rejoice? But harken what Christ says, "Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name's sake." Matthew 5:11. Mark, Blessedness goes in the first place, "Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you."

Oh sirs, it is a matter of blessedness, and therefore be not cast down. You know what was said of old, "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world!" John 16:33. Cheer up, Christian! this world is all the hell that you shall ever have! Here you have your bad things—your good things are yet to come! Here you have your bitter things—but your sweet things are yet to come! Here you have your prison—but your palace is yet to come! Here you have your rags—your royal robes are yet to come! Here you have your sorrow—your joy is yet to come! Here you have your hell, your heaven is yet to come! After the cup of affliction, comes the cup of salvation! The sweetness of the crown which shall be enjoyed—will make amends for the bitterness of the cross which was endured. "Then the King will say to those on His right—Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Matthew 25:34

One passing by a place where a cross lay on the ground, he lifted it up, and found much riches and treasure under it. Oh, sirs, under the greatest troubles—lie your greatest treasures! The seed of sorrow on earth—shall reap a golden crop of joy in heaven! Those who sow holiness in the seed-time of their lives—shall reap happiness in the harvest of eternity! Oh! sirs, never think to have an end of your sorrow—until there be an end of your sin! The apostle tells us, "Our light affliction, which is for a moment—works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!" A grain of affliction—to a weight of glory! Oh what a short moment of pain—to an eternity of pleasures! Therefore saints, be of good cheer! Here is comfort for you—your best days are yet to come! You are subjects of King Jesus, who loves you entirely and infinitely, with an undying love!

Use 2. For the use of EXAMINATION. Is it so—that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong? Why then, I beseech you examine, and try, and search yourselves—how does your pulse beat after Christ? Oh that you would examine yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and where you shall go when you die, and what will become of you to eternity! Oh sirs! Do you love Christ? Are you love-sick for Christ? For the Lord's sake, sirs, examine yourself, and see whether you have true love to Christ.

It is to be feared, there are but few in the world, who are sick with this disease. Many are love-sick for honors—which are but rattles to still men's ambitions! Many are love-sick for gold and silver, which is but a little shining dirt! Many men are love-sick for blood, who eat up the Lord's people like bread! God will lay on them the hand of vengeance, who lay on his saints the hand of violence! Many are love-sick with superstition, and the human traditions of men—which, instead of bringing their souls to heaven, will beguile them of heaven! Alas! many are sick of their sufferings! But who need to fear the cross—who are sure of the crown? But oh! how few are there that are love-sick for Christ! how many are therein this congregation that are love-sick for Christ? For the Lord's sake, do not deceive yourselves; you see the spouse was ready to swoon, and faint, and die for Christ!

Secondly, Her love was as strong as death; nay, stronger than death! Is your love so? Oh soul! can you endure a prison for Christ, burning for Christ, hanging for Christ, forsaking all for Christ? Will you venture on the waves for Christ, as Peter did? Oh, sirs, for the Lord's sake, look to yourselves! There are many who profess love to Christ in words—but more that deny him in their works! God was never more in men's mouths—and never less in men's lives! Beloved, is your love for Christ like the grave, never satisfied? Do you cry out more for Christ? "Oh, give me Christ—and let others have the world." Is this flame in your souls? For the Lord's sake try yourselves, deal cordially with your poor souls!

Now, beloved, I have given you a taste of sincere love to Christ. Blessed are they who cast their love into the sweet bosom of their Maker.

Use 3. I shall now close all with a word of EXHORTATION. Well, sirs, if I should preach here until tomorrow morning, what more can I say to make you to love Christ? He is most lovely, "he is altogether lovely!" Therefore, love Christ, love Christ! All springs of love are in him!

O, sirs, love Christ—for if you do not, there is a dreadful curse pronounced against you! "If anyone does not love the Lord—that person is cursed!" 1 Corinthians 16:22. There is no heaven, no happiness, no crown, without Christ! For in him does all fullness dwell; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, and the Father gives forth all his loving kindness through Christ. Beloved, is it not better swimming in the water-works of sincere repentance, than burning in the fire-works of divine vengeance! One of them you must experience! There is no coming to the fair haven of glory—without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance!

Plead what you will, unless you believe in your Savior, your souls will be miserable forever; and therefore consider what I have said, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Love Christ more than ever, more than all, and above all—and then you shall be happy forevermore!

Christ is a King, Priest, and Prophet.

He is a King for government and rule.

He is a Priest for sacrifice and intercession.

He is a Prophet for teaching and revealing the secrets of his Father's bosom.

Beloved, you know how far we proceeded in our last section—that Jesus Christ is the King of kings, and does surmount and excel all other kings. And it is as King of kings, that Jesus Christ loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him. And I showed you the wonderful love of Christ to his subjects, and his subjects' love to him in many particulars. I now proceed to other particulars, wherein Christ excels the kings of the earth.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ makes all his subjects—his subjects do not make him. "By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth," Colossians 1:19. By whom? By Jesus Christ—by Christ were all things created. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not, John 1:10. So in John 1:3, "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made." There was nothing made without Christ—all things were made by Christ. Beloved, Jesus Christ creates his subjects; he makes his subjects; and gives being to his subjects.

"In him we live, move, and have our being." He gives us a threefold being: our first being in the state of nature, our second being in the state of grace, and our third being in the state of glory. This is the seventh thing wherein Jesus Christ excels all other kings; he makes his subjects, which none else can do.

Eighthly, Christ is the richest of all kings.

O sirs, he is rich in love, he is rich in knowledge, rich in goodness, rich in wisdom, rich in grace, rich in glory! He is as rich as the Father himself; the riches of the Deity are in him! "In him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily," Colossians 2:9.

O sirs, in him there dwells all fullness. Of what? Why, of the Godhead! Alas! sirs, what are princes' single crowns, or the pope's triple crown—compared to Christ's many crowns? Christ has not one, or two, or three crowns—but many crowns upon his head! Revelation 19:12, "His eyes were bright like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns!"

Christ is richer than any king—nay, richer than all the kings in the world, "for he is heir of all things," Hebrews 1:2. He is the greatest heir in heaven and earth! The Spanish ambassador coming to see the treasure of the cathedral at Venice, which was so much cried up through the world for a famous treasury—he fell a groping into it, to find whether it had any bottom. And being asked the reason of it, said he, "My master's treasury differs from yours in this—his has no bottom as yours has!" alluding to the mines of the Indies. But alas! what is the proud Spaniard's treasure, compared to Christ's treasure? And what are his mines, compared to Christ's mines? What are all the jewels, and diamonds, and crowns, and the scepters of all the kings of the earth, compared to Christ's treasures?

"The whole Turkish empire, which is a great part of the world indeed," says Luther, "is but a crust that God throws to dogs—it is no more than a bone, a crust that God throws to dogs!" O! sirs, Christ's riches are so many—that they cannot be numbered! They are so precious—that they cannot be valued! They are so great—they cannot be measured! O the infinite riches of our King! Christ is a mine of gold, which we will dig into throughout all eternity!

Ninthly, Christ excels all other kings in this too—he is a king whose POWER is absolute over all nations, and people, and kindred, and tongues. Now, sirs—his will is law! No man's will in the world is sufficient to be a law—but the will of our King is sufficient.

Tenthly, Jesus Christ is a King who rules over the souls and consciences of men, over the wills and hearts of men! Other kings may rule over the estates of men, over the bodies of men—but not over their consciences! Now this is Christ's glory, which he will give to no other—Christ by his power is able to subdue the wills of men, and the hearts of men, though ever so stubborn and stout before. All the power of the world cannot do this! If all the kings, and princes, and emperors, of the world were put together—they would not be able to subdue the heart of one poor man! They may beat his body, afflict his body, torment his body—but as for his heart, I say—all the kings and potentates in the world, nay, all the angels in heaven, cannot subdue the heart of a poor man! And this is the glory of Christ—than he can do this. Heart work is God's work. The great heart-maker must be the great heart-breaker! None can do it but he.

Eleventhly, Christ is a King who has no need of any instruments. He makes use of them sometimes, but he needs none! Alas! sirs, what can the kings of the earth do without instruments? How can they govern their kingdoms without instruments? They must have this instrument here, and the other there—or else quick farewell crown and kingdom! But Jesus Christ has no need of any, he can simply do anything by his own power. By HIMSELF he destroyed Pharaoh and his great army in the Red sea, Exodus 14:1-31. By himself he overthrew Jericho, that great city, Joshua 6:1-27. By himself he smote the vast army of a million men—the greatest army that ever we read of, 2 Chronicles 14:1-15. By himself he overthrew Ammon and Moab, and the nations who warred against Judah. This now, he did by himself.

Secondly, See what he has done by WEAK means. He smote the kings about Sodom, even by Abraham and his poor family, Genesis 23:1-20. By weak means he overthrew that mighty army of the Midianites, by Gideon's 300 men, Judges 7:1-25. By weak means he destroyed the great Goliath—even by David; and the great warrior Sisera—by a woman. By weak means he destroyed a garrison of the Philistines, even by Jonathan and his armor-bearer, 1 Samuel 14:4. Now this he did by weak means—and much more!

Now, Thirdly, See what he did CONTRARY to means. Why, contrary to means—he delivered the three Hebrew children from being burned in the blazing fire! Contrary to means, he delivered Jonah from drowning in the sea. Contrary to means, he delivered Daniel from being devoured in the den of lions. Contrary to means, he kept the Israelites from being drowned, being in the sea. I say, this he did contrary to means. And I might show you what he has done by contrary means—but I pass by that. So that you see that our King has no need of instruments, and therefore he wonderfully excels all other kings.

Twelfthly, Christ is a King who will overcome and subdue all our enemies! Yes, ALL our enemies, both spiritual and temporal—he will utterly overthrow! Our enemies are very many, and very mighty! They are high in power, and high in pride—and we very weak! We may well speak in David's words, "I am weak this day—though anointed king." How David—weak today, and yet made a king today? Yes, says he, the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me! Why, believers, you are all kings in a spiritual sense—you are kings, elected kings in a disguise; but yet, poor hearts, you are weak, though you are kings elected; the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for you!

Why—but sirs, Jesus Christ is a King of kings, a King above all kings, and over all kings, and he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet, 1 Corinthians 15:25. Mark, "He must reign!" He must of necessity, for God has spoken it, until he has put all enemies under his feet, not only some—but all.

O! this is good news to saints, excellent news; what king can do this but Christ? What king can put all his enemies under his feet? What earthly king can subdue all his enemies? Alas! they cannot subdue their own; for the most flourishing kings that we read of, have fallen before their enemies for lack of strength. But Jesus Christ can subdue all his enemies; he has all power in heaven and in earth given to him, (Matthew 28:18). So that if he but speaks the word, all his enemies are overthrown, even in a moment! In the thirteenth place, Christ surmounts all other kings in this; he is a King that gives his subjects the richest and the best gifts of any other king! John 10:27-28. "My sheep," says he, "hear my voice, and they know me, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life." The wise God, that he may invite and encourage poor sinners to a holiness of life, sets before their eyes the recompense of reward; that if the equity of his precepts do not prevail—the excellency of his promises may; he would gladly catch men with a golden bait.

Abraham's servant gave jewels of silver, and jewels of gold to Rebekah, that he might win her heart over to Isaac, in Genesis 24:23. Oh! the jewels, the excellent jewels that Christ gives to poor souls to win their heart to him! Christ gives us richly all things to enjoy—what more can we desire!

Alas! the men of the earth give but poorly and scantily—but Christ gives richly! Christ gives freely—no man in the world gives so freely as Christ! Christ gives frequently, every day, every hour he scatters jewels to poor souls. The great king of Persia gave a gift two of his courtiers—to the one a golden cup, to the other a kiss, and he who had the cup complained to the king, that his fellow's kiss was better than his golden cup. Oh! sirs, Christ does not put off with a cup of gold—but he gives us his kiss! He gives best gifts to his beloved ones, he gives his best love, his best joy, his best peace, his best mercies. Oh! where is there a king like this King?

Alas! earthly kings may give great titles, or a place in the court, and the like. They may give a title today, and a halter tomorrow, as in the case of Haman. They may smile today—and frown tomorrow. They may kiss today—and kill tomorrow. But not so does Christ give; he gives the best of everything, the best of his love, his best blood, not the blood of his finger—but the blood of his heart.

Oh, sirs, how far does Christ excel all others in giving his subjects the best gifts! Oh, sirs, what a gift is heaven! what a gift is a pardon of sin! I wonder what earthly king can give his people such gifts; and herein the Lord Jesus excels all others. In the last place, Christ makes all his subjects free. There is not one subject that he has—but is a free man or woman. There are some things that Christ frees from—and some things that he makes us free of. Some things that he frees us from—and what are they? Why, that which if we were not freed from, would undo us to all eternity.

First, He frees us from the CURSE—the cursed curse! If Christ had not freed us from the curse—we would have lived cursedly, and died most cursedly, and been damned forever; but Jesus Christ has freed us. "Stand fast," says Paul, "in the liberty with which Christ has made you free." And in John 8:36, "If the Son makes you free—then are you free indeed!"

Again, he frees us from the GUILT of sin. Our pride would damn us, our covetousness would damn us, our unbelief would damn us, had he not freed us from the guilt of sin; but Christ frees his people from this.

Again, he has freed us from the power of the DEVIL, insomuch that the devil has nothing to do with us. And he frees us from the flames of HELL, from the pit of hell. Christ has freed us from hell and damnation. "He has freed us from the wrath to come," that is, Christ has freed us from the flames of hell.

Again, Christ has freed us from the yoke of bondage, in Galatians 5:1, "Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage." We are no longer strangers and foreigners—but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Ephesians 2:19. And Christ tells us himself, in Matthew 11:30, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Here on earth, we have burden upon burden, and yoke upon yoke; but says Christ, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Christ has delivered us from the slavery of the LAW. We are not under the law—but under grace. The above things we are free FROM. But there are other things that we are made free TO: to heaven, to all the promises, and to all the privileges of the saints.

Now, is not this a wonderful mercy that our King has done for us; he has freed us from all those miseries which would ruin us forever—and made us free to all the excellent privileges which poor souls can enjoy. Now, O! how far does Christ excel all other kings! The rulers of the earth, they may perhaps lay heavy burdens upon the consciences of men, and bodies of men, and estates of men—but Christ lays no such burdens upon us; no, Christ has made us free—and no people are so free, because Christ has freed us upon the cross. Christ bought our freedom dearly enough; it cost him his best blood, his noble blood.

I might name more particulars, wherein Christ excels all other kings; but I think these are very sufficient to demonstrate it.

I shall close upon this head with a word of APPLICATION, and so shall finish Christ's second title, "King of kings".

Use 1. Is it so that Christ is a threefold King, as I have showed you? And is he a King that does so far surpass all the kings of the earth? Oh! then, however the world goes with us—here is comfort for saints, that Christ is such a king! Oh! what a mercy is this! What a comfort is this to the Lord's people—that Christ is King above all kings, and over all kings, and must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet! All his enemies must be brought down and made his footstool.

Some earthly kings would do great matters—but they lack power. But Christ is omnipotent; for all power is in heaven and in earth is his! Now, sirs, did you really believe this, that all power is certainly given to Christ, certainly it would be a cordial to revive you in the worst times, and saddest of trials. He, who is our Savior, he who is our Head, our Brother, our Friend—is King of kings! Oh! sirs, this doctrine of Christ's kingly power, is a very sweet doctrine to the members of Christ! And, I beseech you, let these considerations which I have laid before you, bear up your spirits.

I have showed you how Christ loves his subjects with an entire love; that he is King of kings, and can do anything without instruments; that he needs none to help him to do his work; that he can, if he pleases, enable the most despicable creatures, as flies, and frogs, and caterpillars, and grasshoppers, to do his work; therefore let these considerations take impression upon your souls.

Now I have told you a relation of Christ's kingly power; and therefore let this quiet your spirits, "Be still," says the Lord, "and know that I am God," in Psalms 46:10. That is, "It is enough for you to know that I am God, and therefore be still, consider what I am."

Use 2. By way of exhortation, I have one word to say to the saints—and another to sinners.

First, To saints. If it is so, that Christ is King of kings, and King above all kings, and over all kings—oh! then you who are the people of God, you who are near and dear to him, upon whom, and in whom Christ is formed and stamped; oh, that you would give all the glory, and praise and honor, to Christ, and study to advance his fame!

He has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, says the apostle, to show forth his praise. Oh, sirs, this should be our great endeavor. Oh, that you who pretend friendship and love to Christ, would endeavor in your places to advance Christ.

Secondly, To sinners. A word or two to such as are not the subjects of Christ; let me exhort you to believe in Christ, embrace him, receive him, to lay hold upon him! Oh! you should give ten thousand worlds, if you had them to give, for a part in Christ. Alas! sinner, what is the reason that Christ is no more in your esteem? You will part with Christ—rather than part with your swearing, and drunkenness, and filthiness. Oh this is sad, for there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved. He is the Desire of all nations, and we can never be happy without him! And therefore, for the Lord's sake, sirs, as you love your own souls—lay hold on him, that he may be the Savior of your souls, the joy of your hearts, and your all in all. Oh that I could but tempt you to Christ! Oh that I could prevail with you to love Christ, and to have strong desires after him!

Alas! sirs, if you do not believe, and part with all your iniquities—you must part with Christ at last! Ah, what a sad parting will that be—to part with God, and Christ, and heaven! When you will come to know what you have lost by hugging your darling corruptions; oh what a sad condition will it be! And therefore I beseech you, think of it in time, and believe in the Savior—that your souls may be saved in the day of Christ! THE MIGHTY GOD "He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16 Doctrine—That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

I finished the second title which is given to Christ in Scripture, King of Kings. I now proceed to a third, and that is, Mighty God. One of Christ's titles is, the Mighty God.

Beloved, I have showed you from the second title, that Christ is a King, a King above all kings, and a King over all kings, and the King of kings, and that his laws are most equal, and his subjects most happy—having no other tax laid upon them than love and fear. But now this title holds him forth, not only as a great King—but as a GREAT GOD, before whom all kings and kingdoms are but as little drops, or as small dust, Isaiah 40:15. From this title, The Mighty God, I shall lay down this proposition, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. That is the point I shall insist upon.

There are two sorts of people in the world that deny my doctrine, who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ, who say the second Person of the Trinity is not God.

First, The unbelieving Jews; if Christ had come as the Jews dreamed, as a great monarch, treading upon nothing but crowns and scepters, and the necks of kings, and had all the potentates of the earth to attend his train; I say, had Christ come in this worldly glory, and pomp, and power—then it may be that the Jews would have believed on him; maybe then he would have been their God. But now, beloved, because Christ came poorly and lowly, and made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; therefore the Jews slighted him, and disowned him. The Turks mock us at this day with our "crucified God". Oh, say they, "you worship a crucified God!" And some of the heathen say they would not believe in a "hanged God". Oh blessed Jesus, thus are you reproached and despised by the unbelieving world, because you came and lived poorly, and died shamefully for our sins. Those who despise the death of the Lamb—shall surely feel the wrath of the Lamb! Those who turn away their ears from hearing Christ's voice now—Christ will turn away his ears from hearing their cries then!

Secondly, There are others who deny the Deity of Christ in this nation, who say that Christ is but a mere man, and that every saint is as much God as Christ. And others say, that to equal Christ with God is high blasphemy. Those who will not own Christ in his first coming—Christ will not own them at his second coming! Those who will not obey the truth of God revealed from heaven unto them—shall suffer the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them!

Express Scripture speaks it forth, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. Titus 2:13 says, "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of the great God." Mark, Christ is here not only called God—but the great God. Oh, saints, he who came from heaven to make us righteous—will also come from heaven to make us glorious! Not only so—but Christ is also called Mighty God; nay, not only Mighty God—but again, "God blessed forever." Romans 9:5. Christ is God blessed forever. Not only blessed forever—but the true God, 1 John 4:20. Jesus Christ is there called the true God; and not only the true God—but a God forever and ever, Hebrews 1:8. Mark there, "unto the Son he says, Your throne O God is forever and ever!" The Father himself calls the Son, God—and therefore well may we.

Thus you see the doctrine fully proved, that Jesus Christ is the true and perfect God. But, beloved, because the Deity of Christ is so much questioned at this day, and this being one of the serious and chief points in divinity, therefore I shall give you some considerations, or demonstrations, or arguments, to fortify you against this great error before named.

First, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God.

Jesus is for TIME, co-eternal with the Father.

Jesus is for NATURE, co-essential with the Father.

Jesus is for DIGNITY, co-equal with the Father.

First, Jesus is for TIME, co-eternal with the Father. John 17:5, "Oh Father, glorify me with yourself, with the glory which I had with you before the world was." You see here, sirs, Christ was before the world was, Christ was from everlasting, from the beginning, Proverbs 8:23, speaking concerning Christ, "I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began." And therefore

Christ is called the Everlasting Father in Isaiah 9:6. Revelation 1:8, Christ here, speaking of himself, says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty!"

Mark, sirs, Christ is the same in time, before time, and after time, "Who is, and who was, and who is to come."

Now, beloved, none can be eternal—but God. Christ is eternal, and therefore he is God, and co-eternal with his Father.

Second, Jesus is for NATURE, co-essential with the Father. "I and my Father are one," says Christ in John 10:30. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one." Mark here, they are one.

John 14:8, When Philip desires to see the Father, "Show us the Father—and it is enough;" says Christ, in John 14:9-10, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." How so? "For I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." So that you see Christ is more than mere man; he is one with the Father. Oh, sirs, he is God-man. If you make the Son mere man, you must make the Father mere man also.

Third, Jesus is for DIGNITY, co-equal with the Father. Php 2:6, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with the Father." Christ thought it no diminution of his Father's glory—to be equal with his Father in glory. And you shall further find that all the honor which belongs to God—the Father has commanded us to give it to the Son. "That all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" John 5:23.

Therefore it is clear to every eye, that Christ is for dignity, co-equal with the Father; for the Father has commanded us to give the same honor to Christ which is due to him. Therefore it is no blasphemy at all, certainly, to equal Christ with God; for in him are the riches of the Deity, and the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him; as you may see Colossians 2:9. This is the first argument. He is for time co-eternal, for nature co-essential, for dignity coequal with the Father.

Secondly, consider the work of CREATION. I shall lay down this argument to prove the Deity of Jesus Christ: surely he who made heaven and earth, must needs be a God; you will yield to this. So says the Lord himself, "These 'gods', who did not make the heavens and the earth—will perish from the earth and from under the heavens." Jeremiah 10:11. But now, beloved, Jesus Christ made the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, and therefore he is God! See a few Scriptures for this, John 1:3, "All things were made by him;" mark, this is by Christ! All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made, Colossians 1:16, "By him were all things created in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible; all things were by him, and for him." So again, John 1:10, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him." Now, beloved, had Christ been less than God, he could not have made heaven and earth, and therefore he is God of glory, the great God who now sits upon the throne; for he created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein.

Thirdly, That Christ is the true and perfect God, appears—if you consider the WORKS and MIRACLES which he did in the days of his flesh; here is another unanswerable argument to prove

the Godhead of Jesus Christ. The winds and the seas obey him, the devils came out of the possessed, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the sick were healed. Oh, who could do this but God? But you may say, the apostles did great miracles, and yet were not gods. Why, it is true they did great miracles; but in whose name did they do them? Was it in their own names—and by their own power? No, beloved! They themselves confess the contrary, Acts 4:10. They tell you, it is not in their own power—but in the name and power of Jesus Christ. Beloved, this is a strong argument to prove the Deity of Christ; they did great miracles in his name, and by his power! And with this argument, Jesus satisfied the disciples of John, "Go and tell what things you hear and see—how the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight."

Now, I say, these great miracles could be done by none but by a great God; and therefore Jesus Christ is not only the Son of man—but the Son of God, even God blessed forever.

But, Fourthly, Consider divine WORSHIP is due unto Christ. Worship only is proper to God alone. "Worship him who made heaven, and earth, and the sea," said the angel in Revelation 14:7.

Now, beloved, all the acts of worship that belong to God the Father, are given to the Son Jesus Christ; both angels and men are commanded to worship him. Hebrews 1:6, "Let all the angels of God worship him!" Php 2:10, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of all things in heaven, and on earth." Mark, sirs, things in heaven, as well as things on earth, must worship Christ; and Christ himself says in John 14:1, "You believe in God, believe also in me." Now, beloved, we are commanded to pray to Christ, to glorify Christ, to believe in Christ, to honor Christ, and worship Christ; and therefore the saints have prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," as Stephen did. So that you see worship is due to Christ, both from angels and men—and therefore he must needs be God.

Fifthly, There are clear promises of the coming of Christ under the Old Testament. No sooner was man fallen—but Christ was promised, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." All the prophets foretold of the Messiah, (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Daniel, Malachi, and the rest of them,) how falsely he would be accused, how basely he should be used, and this will be enough to condemn the unbelieving Jews, and make them speechless in the great day of accounts. I might give you the sayings of the same prophets—but you may find them yourselves; search the Old Testament, and you shall find them all speak more or less of Jesus Christ. Thus I have clearly proved, by express Scripture and undeniable arguments, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. I proceed to the USE and APPLICATION of it to ourselves. The First use shall be for INFORMATION. If it is so that Jesus is true and perfect God, then, though this is a strange truth to some—yet it is a sound truth; though the mystery is deep—yet the divinity is true, that he who made man became man, suffered by man, and for man, is Jesus, the true and perfect God. "Without controversy," says the apostle, "great is the mystery of godliness." What is the mystery? "God was manifested in the flesh!" 1 Timothy 3:16. Without controversy, without all doubt, a great mystery, says the apostle "God was manifested in the flesh!" And truly, sirs, it is a great mystery: for happiness—to become a curse; for him who made the angels—to become lower than the angels; for the Creator—to become a creature; for him who had the riches of all in himself—to become poor. Oh! this is a great mystery, that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain—that his glory should be enwrapped in the rags of flesh; that the great God should take

upon him a piece of earth; that he who hangs the earth upon nothing—should hang upon a cross between two thieves! Truly a great mystery; that he who rules the stars—should suck the breast; that he who thunders in the clouds—should be cradled in a manger. Oh! a great mystery, that Abraham's Lord—should become Abraham's son; that the God of Abraham should take upon him Abraham's seed; what a mystery is this! He was conceived in the womb of his mother, that he might be received into the bosom of his Father. "Therefore," says the apostle, "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." God's Son became man's son—that we poor man's sons might become God's sons.

But, Secondly, is Jesus Christ true and perfect God? My second inference is this—That Jesus is a precious God! He is honey in the mouth, beauty in the eye, joy in the heart, and music in the ear.

"Let all their money perish with them—who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ!" said a great Marquis, when he was tempted with money.

Oh! sirs, Christ's members are the happiest, Christ's comforts are the sweetest, Christ's reward is the highest, Christ's precepts are the purest, Christ's glory is the greatest, Christ's love is the truest, Christ's riches are the most precious! He is the glory of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of men. In Hebrews 1:3, he is called "the radiance of God's glory," he is the riches jewel in the cabinet of glory, he is the sparkling pearl; whoever has him cannot be poor—but whoever lacks him cannot be rich.

Thirdly, If Christ is the true and perfect God—then Christ's members are the greatest and happiest! If Christ is God Almighty's only Son, believers are God Almighty's only daughters. You read of God's daughters in Psalms 45:1-17. Christ is the King—and believers are his queen! Christ is the Bridegroom—and believers are his bride! Christ is the Lamb—and believers are his wife! Revelation 21:9.

What more shall I say? The angels in glory are in a very glorious state—but let me tell you, believers in Christ are higher than angels. They are servants, we are members. They are the friends of the Bridegroom, we are the bride. They have their personal glory, we have the same glory, for substance, with Jesus Christ! John 17:22, "The glory which you have given me," says Christ, "I have given them." Believers are nearer the throne than angels—this wonderfully speaks out that we are higher than the angels. Oh! beloved, how great are believers advanced! how high have we become, poor dust and ashes—to be above angels! and this is the greatest happiness, which we get by Christ's assuming our nature for the salvation of our souls.

Again, Christ's members be not only the greatest—but the happiest! Our renewed condition is as good in Christ—as it was bad in Adam. Oh, sirs, we were no more cursed out of Christ—than we were blessed in Christ! Christ is as full of life—as Adam was full of death! Christ is as full of sweetness to us—as Adam was of bitterness to us! Truly, soul, if you say Christ is yours—I will say, "Soul, you have that which is of more worth than a king's ransom! You have that which is more worth than all that which the devil promised Christ, when he showed him all the kingdoms of the world!" Oh! the happiness of poor believers! "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," says Paul in Romans 8:1. Therefore they are happy.

But, Fourthly, Christ Jesus is true and perfect God. Then we infer from hence, that God's love and goodwill to mankind was very great, that Jesus Christ should come from heaven to take our

nature—that we might be partakers of the divine nature. Christ took upon him our shame—that we might be partakers of his glory. One drop of his blood—is worth a sea of ours; and yet he died our death—that we might live his life; he suffered our hell—that we might enjoy his heaven. Oh! how infinitely did he love us! He endured the sorest pains—that we might enjoy the sweetest pleasures!

"The voice of my Beloved! Look! Here He comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills!" Song of Solomon 2:8. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus came leaping! He came with such love—that He came leaping! When a man goes leaping—you may know that it was with a great eagerness. Jesus came leaping—how so? He came leaping . . . from the throne to the womb, from the womb to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from thence to the throne again! This was His great leap! Oh! sirs, oh! sirs, how eagerly did Jesus suffer and die for poor believers! He was hanged upon the cross on mount Calvary—that we might sit on the throne with him on mount Zion!

Fifthly, by way of EXHORTATION. To unrepentant sinners, to unbelievers, to graceless people, I have a few words to say. "Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed." Romans 2:4-5

Oh! sirs, oh! sirs, methinks I can only do towards you, as Christ did once toward Jerusalem, when he came near the city—he wept over it! Truly, sinner, your state is a weeping state; your state is a miserable state! You lie open to all the wrath, to all the vengeance, to all the curses under heaven!

Oh poor miserable sinners—will you not pity yourselves? The Lord of heaven pities you! Did Jesus Christ come from heaven to you sinners—and will not you come out of your sin to come to Christ? Did Christ come from his Father's bosom, and leave his throne and crown, and all his glory—to come to a poor lost world, and to die and suffer here for poor lost sinners? And what, sinners—will all this make no impression upon you? Let me tell you, sirs, Christ came into the world, for no other end and reason—but only to die for poor sinners. It was the great design of Christ to save poor sinners. Sirs, if you will not credit me—then look into the Scripture, and then surely you will believe it, 1 Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying," says the apostle, "and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Mark sirs, he came into the world to save sinners! Christ hanged upon the cross, and wept upon the cross, and died upon the cross—to save sinners! All the hardships, all the trials and sufferings which he met with—it was for the sake of poor sinners. Christ has suffered all this woe and misery for sinners—and will not you leave your swearing, and your drunkenness, and your wickedness for Christ? Oh! the sad, sad day that is coming on you! How can you answer this before God Almighty, that Jesus Christ, the King of kings, should come into the world, and abase himself so much as to be in a poor and suffering state—and yet this should have no affect on you!

Oh! who will pity you who would not pity yourselves—when you are damned—when you are howling and roaring in hell? Oh! for the Lord's sake, consider that God should come and take our nature, and that he should take our rags—that we might wear his glorious robes! What, will you rather remain in your sins and die and go to hell—than come to Christ for eternal life? Oh! sinner, for the Lord's sake, put off your beggar's rags—that you may put on his lovely robes.

I have read of Alexander the Great, that when he came against a city, he used to set up a candle, and if they yielded to him before the candle was out, they would be shown mercy—but if they stood out against Alexander, they could expect nothing but death. Oh! sirs, Christ sets up a candle—and if you will come in today, you shall have mercy! But if you do not yield to him—you will have none of his mercy. If all the angels and saints in heaven would fall upon their knees, and say, "Oh! Lord, spare this poor creature, one grain of mercy for him!" it would not be regarded, the Lord will not hear them! And therefore, consider that men are sentenced to hell, not only for their sinfulness—but for their slothfulness! Men may perish for being unprofitable servants—as well as for being abominable sinners!

Methinks you should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness—as in those promises that assure happiness! If the day of mercy leaves you graceless—the day of judgment will find you speechless! Though you may resist the judgment that he lays before you—yet you can never resist the judgment that he lays upon you! There is no standing before Christ—but by standing in Christ. Ungodly men fear no wrath—because they presently feel no wrath. Because their sin is now unpunished—they think there is no punishment for their sins! Because God continues to spare them—they go on to provoke him! Because he adds to their lives—they add to their lusts! Because he is very merciful—they will be very sinful! Because He is very good to them—they will be very bad to him! Because justice now winks—men think he is blind! Because he does not reprove them for their sins—therefore they think he approves them in their sins! But JUSTICE will soon avenge the quarrel of abused mercy! The longer God forbears, not finding amendment, the sorer he strikes when he comes to judgment.

Oh! sinners, though the patience of God is lasting—it is not everlasting! If by the warnings of God, you are not alarmed—you shall be consumed by his wrath! The longer God is in raising his arm—the heavier will be the blow when it comes! "I gave her time to repent, but she would not turn away from her immorality." What follows? "Therefore, I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely!" Revelation 2:21. The day that begins in mercy—may end in judgment! God is silent for only so long; but know, that God has vials of wrath filled with indignation—for vessels of wrath fitted for destruction! If God's mercy does not draw you to repentance—God's judgments will drive you to destruction! The sea of damnation shall not be sweetened with a drop of compassion!

Oh! sinners, either seek out a Savior to deliver you from the wrath of God—or else find out a shoulder to bear you up under the wrath of God!

Oh, that you would consider your ways! Has not God said, "You can be sure that no immoral, no impure, no greedy person, no swearer, no drunkard—shall enter into the kingdom of heaven?" And such are some of you! God knows it, and your own consciences know it! And yet you flatter yourselves, and speak peace to yourselves—when God speaks not a word of peace to you. Oh! sinners, think of this—before the bottomless pit has shut its mouth upon you! Oh, do no longer forget God and your own salvation! Hebrews 2:3, "How will we escape—if we neglect such a great salvation!" If you neglect the great salvation—you cannot escape the great damnation!

Sixthly, Believers, let me beseech you to stand fast, and to hold fast that which you have already, Revelation 2:19. "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life!" He has a crown for runners—but a curse for runaways! As you look for happiness as long as God has a being in

heaven—so God looks for holiness as long as you have a being on earth! "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them," Galatians 6:16. To tread in any other path but holiness on earth—is but to mistake your way to heaven! While you are on this side of eternity—you must hold the scepter of grace in your hands, until God set the crown of glory upon your heads! This is the sparkling diamond that is set in the apostle's crown, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7. O believer! it will be your happiness, your glory, your honor throughout eternity—if you are faithful while on earth. Oh! do not turn your backs upon the truths of God, as too many in our days have done. That man's beginning was in hypocrisy, whose end is in apostasy; indifference in religion is the next step to apostasy from religion.

Oh! do not make him a stone of stumbling, whom God has made a stone for building. If the golden chain of duty will not hold you—the iron chain of darkness shall bind you. If you abuse your liberty in this world—you shall lose your liberty in the next world. That soul was never related to Christ—that was never devoted to Christ; there is no obtaining the prize of happiness—without running the race of holiness!

Oh! for the Lord's sake, do not you begin in the spirit—and end in the flesh. O do not put your hand to the plough—and look backward. Be not true to the father of lies—and false to the Father of truth! Keep close to the Son of God, to the Word of God, to the ordinances of God, to the day of God, to the ministers of God, to the people of God—and you will be safe. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up!" Galatians 6:9.

## 01.02. Section 2

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(Section 2)

THE EVERLASTING FATHER "He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16 Doctrine, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Man is the excellency of the creature; the saint is the excellency of the man; grace is the excellency of the saint; glory is the excellency of grace.

"He will be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

Beloved, we have shown you from the third title, Mighty God, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, a Mighty God, mighty with God, mighty as God, the Great and Mighty God. This fourth title holds him forth to be a Father; not only a Father—but an Everlasting Father—the Everlasting Father. The proposition which I shall lay down from the title is this, That God in Christ, is a believer's everlasting Father. That I may clear up this point, I shall lay down these truths:

First, That God, in Christ the Everlasting Father, begot himself in us, and us in him. Christ is both "the author and finisher of our faith," of all our joy, of all our peace, of all our life, of all our salvation. Christ is a Father ever begetting and bringing forth himself in us; his light is in us, his love is in us, his nature is in us, his wisdom is in us, his power and strength are in us; "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another," John 1:16.

All believers who were in time past, who are in time present, who shall be in time to come—shall receive his fullness. And therefore he is called, The Everlasting Father.

He is the Sun—we are the beams. He is the Fountain—we are the streams. He is the Root—we are the branches. He is the Head—we are the members. He is the Father—we are the children. And hence it is, that believers are called his offspring, "We are the offspring of God," says the apostle. In creation God has given us to ourselves—but in redemption he has given himself to us. It is a greater favor to be converted—than created; yes, far better to have no being—than not to have a new being; it is only the new creatures that are heirs of the new Jerusalem.

Secondly, God in Christ, calls all his children by his name; he puts his name upon them. Mark, sirs, "I will write upon them the name of my God," in Revelation 3:12. The saints are called godly, from God; Christians, from Christ; spiritual, from the Spirit; and heavenly, from heaven, because their conversation is there, because their Head is there, and they be heirs of heaven. So the wicked are called devilish, from the devils; and the cursed, from the curses; and worldlings, from the world; and sinners from sin.

O the great difference that there is between the names of the saints and the names of the wicked! The ungodly are called dogs, vipers, swine, thorns, and ravening wolves, who lick up, and suck the blood of the innocent! But the saints are called jewels, treasures, kings, doves, lilies, and heirs of

the kingdom of glory! And hence it is, that some godly men have thought it a greater honor to be a member of Christ—than to be a king upon a throne; a greater honor to be one of Christ's little ones—than one of the world's great ones. Indeed, sirs, a holy heart—is better than a great estate; inward holiness—is better than outward happiness; a Christ without honor—is better than honor without Christ; piety without prosperity—is better than prosperity without piety; godliness without greatness—is better than greatness without godliness.

Thirdly, God in Christ is a Father who is tender and full of affection towards his poor children. When we were full of sin—then he was full of love. Christ is more tender of his mystical body—than he was of his natural body. He allowed his natural body to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be weary, to hang upon the cross, to bleed upon the cross, to suffer upon the cross, to be pierced and bored with nails upon the cross. Oh, he went through the furnace of wrath—to keep us out of the flames of hell! But now mark, sirs, for his mystical body—O how tender is he! He loves them, he pities them, he smiles upon them, he carries them in his bosom, and dandles them on his knees. Oh! they are the beauty of his eyes, the joy of his heart; he cannot endure to see them wronged, to see them injured and abused; every blow they get—goes to his very heart! "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" You see how tender Christ is of his body mystical. Christ is our Jonah, who threw Himself into the sea of His Father's wrath—to save us from everlasting perdition! "Then they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging!" Jonah 1:15. He has opened the gates of heaven, to let us into salvation.

Fourthly, God in Christ is a Father who lays up for his children. He gives them something in possession—but more in promise. He gives them a little in hand—and a great deal in hope.

1st, God in Christ, is a Father who lays OUT for his children—He gives them something in hand. He gives us the air to breathe in, and the earth to tread upon. He gives us the sun, the moon, the stars, wind, water, and fire. He gives us the fish of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the birds of the air. Poor man lives by death—our natural life is preserved by the death of the creature, and our spiritual life by the death of our Savior. Hence I may say, we live by death. It is man's duty to serve God, since God has made all the world to serve him. Says the apostle, "He gives us all things richly to enjoy." Mark, he does not only give us some things—but all things; not only all things—but all things richly to enjoy.

2nd, God in Christ, is a Father who lays UP for his children—as well as lays out. Psalms 31:19, "Oh! how great is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you!" David is astonished at it, "Oh! how great is your goodness which you have laid up!" Mark the words!

Just so in 2 Timothy 4:8, "Hence is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." What, only for you Paul? No, not only for me—but for ALL those who love his appearing." So again, see another Scripture for this, 1 Corinthians 2:9, "As it is written," says the apostle, "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Why, sirs, what is this which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive? Why, mark "the things that God has prepared for those who love him!"

Oh! beloved, God gives his children the best portion, the richest portion, the greatest portion! All things are theirs: life is theirs, death is theirs, things present are theirs, and things to come are theirs, God is theirs, Christ is theirs, the Spirit is theirs, heaven is theirs! What more can they

have? God gives his children in this world—a talent of grace; and in the world to come—a talent of glory! They shall wear Christ's crown above—who bear his cross below!

Fifthly, God in Christ, protects and defends his children from their enemies: from Satan, from sin, from the world, from the curse, and from the second death, which is hell. Revelation 2:11, "He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death." Mark, a believer may feel the stroke of death—but he shall never feel the sting of death! The first death may bring his body to corruption—but the second death shall never bring his soul to damnation! Though he may live a life that is dying—he shall die a death that is living. He who is housed in Christ—shall never be housed in hell. God protects his children from all wrongs and injuries, he allows no man to do them wrong. "He allowed no one to oppress them; for their sake he rebuked kings." Psalms 105:14. Mark the phrase well, sirs—if kings will lay on saints the hands of violence—God will lay on kings the hands of vengeance. He rebukes kings for their sakes; if kings will wrong the poor saints for Christ's sake—Christ will reprove kings for the saint's sake. So says the Word of God. They who are gods before men—are but men before God. If men will throw saints into prison for their piety—God will throw them into hell for their iniquity!

Mark what the prophet says in Isaiah 30:33, "Topheth—the place of burning—has long been ready for the king; it has been piled high with wood. The breath of the LORD, like fire from a volcano, will set it ablaze!" The prophet speak so forthright, as though hell was chiefly prepared for great men. Oh sirs, hell is prepared for great men—as well as the lowly. Those to whom God bestows great temporal mercies—if they abound in great vices—God will inflict great punishments! How shall they be able to lift up their heads before Christ, who lift up their heads against him? "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts 4:26. Christ will pass a sentence—upon every sentence that has been passed. He who says, "Come, you who are blessed," will also say, "Go, you who are cursed."

Sixthly, God in Christ, is a Father who teaches his children, and instructs his children. "They will all be taught by God." John 6:45. All God's children shall be taught by God. And what does he teach them? Why, among other things he teaches his children those six lessons:

1st, He teaches them to deny themselves. A true believer will lay down his lusts at the command of Christ, and his life for the sake of Christ.

2dly, Christ teaches them contentment. Here is another divine lesson which Christ teaches his children. A believer will be contented to bear the wrath of man for him—who bore the wrath of God for him.

3rdly, The vanity of the creature. He teaches us, that all earthly things are vanity, and vexation of spirit.

4thly, The sinfulness of the heart.

5thly, The deceitfulness of the heart.

6thly, The right knowledge of himself.

Oh, Christians, have you learned these lessons? Then let all your actions be Christ-like, and walk like Jesus as your example. Jesus lived to teach us how to live—and he died to teach us how to

die! He who will not follow the example of Christ's life—shall never be saved by the merits Christ's death. As Christ is the root on which a saint grows—so he is the rule by which a saint squares. If Jesus is not your Jacob's staff to guide you to heaven—he will never be your Jacob's ladder to mount you up to heaven.

We should be as willing to be ruled by Christ, as we are willing to be saved by Christ. God made one Son like to all—that he might make all his sons like to one. If the life of Christ be not your life—you are dead and doomed!

Seventhly, God in Christ, is a Father who stamps upon all his children the lovely image of Jesus Christ—they resemble him to the very life. As was said of Constantine's children, 'They resemble their father to the life.' So we may say of believers, 'they resemble Christ to the life.' God will allow no man to wear the livery of Christ upon him, who has not the likeness of Christ within him! "And we all, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory!" 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Oh! sirs, what a rare jewel is grace! The Lord of grace, calls it glory. Mark, with ever-increasing glory—that is, from one degree of grace to another. "The Lord will give grace and glory!" Psalms 84:11. Grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant! Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace made perfect! Grace is the first degree of glory, glory is the highest degree of grace! Grace is the seed, glory is the flower! Grace is the ring, glory is the sparkling diamond in the ring! Grace is the glorious infant, and glory is the perfect man of grace! Grace is the spring, glory is the harvest! The soul of man is the cabinet, the grace of God is the jewel; Christ will throw away the cabinet where he finds not the jewel. He who restored us in the image, will restore us to his image.

Eighthly, God in Christ, is a Father who never dies. All other fathers are dead and gone; our father Abraham is dead, our father Isaac is dead, our father Jacob is dead—and all others are dead and gone.

Oh! but God in Christ is a Father who lives forever, who loves forever, who reigns forever. He is the Father of eternity, in eternity, from eternity, to eternity! Proverbs 8:1-36. He was always, is always, and shall be always, and he cannot but be always! "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1:8. Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time. Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same," says the apostle, "yesterday, today, and forever!" "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen." Romans 11:36.

Ninthly, God in Christ, is a Father who corrects his children. All whom God loves, he chastens, though he does not love to chastise. God had one Son without sin—but no son without sorrow! He had one Son without corruption—but no son without correction! Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loves—he chastises, and scourges every son whom he receives." Revelation 3:16, "As many as I love—I rebuke and chasten." Afflictions are blessings to us—when we bless God for the afflictions! God is as far from beating his children for nothing—as he is from beating his children to nothing.

Christ tells us, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24. There is a fourfold self which must be denied for Jesus Christ, or else you cannot be called his disciple.

1. A sinful self.
2. A natural self.
3. A self-righteousness.
4. A self-gain, or lucre.

Sinful self is to be destroyed, and natural self is to be denied. We cannot enjoy ourselves—until we deny ourselves! The Application. Is it so, that God in Christ is a believer's Everlasting Father? Oh then, what is so sweet a good as Christ! and what is so great an evil as sin? Oh! love Christ more—and hate sin more! Christ brings life with him—a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory. But sin brings death with it—death of body, death of soul, death here, and death hereafter.

Oh! the blood of Christ speaks better things than the blood of Abel; Abel's blood cries for vengeance—but Christ's blood cries for mercy. He is the pearl of great price, for which the rich merchant sold all that he had, and bought it, and found more joy in this pearl, than ever he had with all that he possessed. Oh therefore! let me beseech you who are his children, to love him and to serve him! He is your Everlasting Father, therefore do his will on earth, as the angels do in heaven. You cannot complain of him for lack of mercy; so good has he been to you, as he has not been lacking to you in anything—and will you be lacking to him in everything?

"A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. I am your father and master, but where are the honor and respect I deserve?" Malachi 1:6. As a father—he will be revered for his goodness to his children. Oh what is that little he desires from you—compared to that which he deserves from you! If honor is not due to him—let it not be bestowed! If it is due to him—let it not be denied! If God does great things for his children—he will not accept of small things from his children!

See the outcry that God makes against his own children in Isaiah 1:2, "Hear, O heavens! Be astonished, O earth!" Why—what is the matter? "The children I raised and cared for—have turned against me!" The nearer the relation—the greater the obligation! Christ is related to them as a Master to his servants, as a Father to his children, as a Prince to his subjects, as a Head to his members! Where the relation is nearest, there the provocation is greatest. It is a more pleasant thing to see rebels become children—than it is to see children become rebels.

What mother can endure to see those lips that drew her breasts—suck her blood? Oh! Christians, you are more known to God than others, and therefore you must more acknowledge him than others! You do not look for so much splendor from the burning of a candle—as from the shining of the sun; nor so much moisture from the dropping of the bucket—as from the dissolving of a cloud. To whom much is given—of them much shall be required.

God does not expect much—where little is bestowed. Nor does he accept little—where much is received, "Hear this word the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt—You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins!" Amos 3:1-2. God has exalted you above all others—and therefore you must do more for God than others. It was a great blemish to Hezekiah, that his returnings were not answerable to his receivings. Oh believers! let me beseech you to do much, to love much, to give much, to pray much—seeing you have received much!

I shall wind up all, with a word of COMFORT to the children of God. Oh! sirs, God in Christ, is your Father, your loving Father, your everlasting Father—and you are his children! Therefore fear not—it shall go well with you both here and hereafter! "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!" He will withhold no good thing from you! "For the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord gives grace and glory! No good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless!" Psalms 84:11. He gives both grace and glory unto you! Grace is the silver link that draws the golden link of glory after it! THE PRINCE OF PEACE "He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16 Doctrine, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Wherever Christ is a Priest for redemption—he is a Prince for dominion! Wherever he is a Savior—there he is a Ruler! Wherever he is a Fountain of happiness—there he is a Fountain of holiness! Wherever he is a Redeemer—there he is a Refiner! Wherever he takes a burden from off the creature's back—there he lays a yoke upon the creature's neck! "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King—he will save us!" Isaiah 33:22.

I shall now proceed to the fifth title of Jesus, "He will be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!" Isaiah 9:6

It is the happiness of the church of God, that although they cannot give peace—yet they may get peace; though they cannot settle it on earth—yet they may seek it from heaven. Peace is the well-being of all other enjoyments; all other mercies suck their livelihood at the breasts of peace. Peace is the mother of all prosperity; as the life of old Jacob was enrapt up in the life of the lad Benjamin, so is all happiness enrapt up in peace. Peace is the felicity of the saints on earth, and the glory of the angels in heaven. When the old Hebrews wished any happiness to anyone, they only used this expression, 'Peace be unto you'. From this title of Christ, I shall lay down two propositions:

First, That Zion's King is a peaceable King.

Secondly, That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

These two points lie fully in the words; but I shall only speak of the latter, namely, That Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace. In the prosecution of it, I shall show you four things—

1. Christ is the Peace-bringer.
2. Christ is the Peace-maker.
3. Christ is the Peace-giver.
4. Christ is the is the Prince of Peace, or the peaceable Prince.

First, Jesus Christ is the Peace-BRINGER. He brought in everlasting peace by righteousness, and not by a sword, "Peace on earth, and good-will towards men." Why was the Bread of Life hungry—but that he might feed the hungry with the bread of life? Why was Rest weary—but to give the weary rest? Why was the Prince of Peace in trouble—but that the troubled might have peace? None but the Image of God could restore us to God's image. None but the Beloved of God

could make us beloved to God. None but the natural Son of God could make us sons of God. None but the Wisdom of God could make us wise. None but the Prince of Peace could bring the God of peace, and the peace of God, to poor sinners; and therefore he is called our Peace, Ephesians 2:14.

Oh what is so sweet a good as Christ! And what so great an evil as sin! Christ brings us to joy and peace; sin brings us to woe and misery.

Secondly, He is the Peace-MAKER, as well as the Peace-bringer. He is the Peace-maker between God and men. Sin is the great bar between God and the soul. Sin is the wall of separation between God and us—and the Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us. He paid all the debts, and took up all the controversies, and blotted out the hand-writing, and has broken down the partition-wall, and made up the great breach between God and man! 2 Corinthians 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." Mark, it is in Christ; so likewise elsewhere. "You who were once afar off, he has made near by the blood of Christ." Oh! sinners, Christ is our Peace-maker! The Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us; he reconciles God to men, and men to God; so that though God might be justly displeased with us—yet in his Son he is well pleased with us. He is more pleased with a believer for Christ's sake, than he was displeased with us for sin's sake.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is the Peace-GIVER. Alas! poor sinners, we have no peace with conscience, nor one with another—until the Prince of Peace gives it to us, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you," says our Lord unto his disciples, John 14:27. Oh! sirs, he gives peace with God, in Romans 5:1, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ gives peace to us, which the world cannot take from us. Worldly trouble cannot overcome heavenly peace.

Fourthly, He is a Prince of Peace, or the PEACEABLE Prince. So he is styled not only Peace—but the Prince of Peace. Indeed, beloved, he is all peace to a believer, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," speaking of Christ, Proverbs 3:18. Mark, all her paths are peace.

Now, what are these paths? I shall name six to you:

1. The path of repentance.
2. The path of faith.
3. The path of truth.
4. The path of self-denial.
5. The path of obedience.
6. The path of holiness.

1st, These are several paths of peace, and peaceable paths. Oh sirs! there is no peace to be found—but in the paths of peace! As all his works are great and marvelous—so all his ways are peace and pleasantness.

2ndly, His gospel is a gospel of peace. It is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace—but a greater mercy to enjoy the peace of the gospel.

3rdly, His reward is peace, Isaiah 57:2, "He shall enter into peace." Here the joys of heaven are called peace. The true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth—shall be crowned with peace. They shall enter into peace. And thus, beloved, I have briefly, yes I have fully proved the point That Jesus Christ is the cause and fountain of a believer's peace!

USES. Now for the application of the point. I shall reduce it to four heads:

1. For information.
2. For examination.
3. For exhortation.
4. For consolation.

First, By way of INFORMATION. Here we may see what great need we stand in of Jesus Christ.

Firstly, Oh, Christians! Is Jesus Christ the cause and foundation of all our peace? Then we have no right or title to peace—but by the Prince of Peace, "We have no peace with God," says the apostle, "but through our Lord Jesus Christ." we are reconciled to God in Christ Jesus; and "we who were afar off," says Paul, "are made near by the blood of Christ." We are only acceptable in the Beloved; so that, beloved, it is all in Christ, and through him—that we have our peace. A Christless man is a peaceless man. We have no peace with God, no peace with conscience, outside of Christ. Until we are Christ's friends—we are our own foes. It is true, a wicked man may speak peace to himself—but God speaks not a jot of peace to him. He may speak peace to himself until he falls into everlasting flames! God is his enemy, the devil is his foe, angels hate him, all creatures cry for vengeance upon him. Isaiah 57:21, "There is no peace to the wicked, says my God!" No, not a word, not a grain of peace to a person who is outside of Christ! Therefore, oh sirs! consider in what need you stand of the Prince of Peace.

Secondly, it informs us, that to have peace with our God and Maker is the sweetest and best thing in the world. Oh how infinitely sweet is peace! What is sweeter than peace? Alas! gold is but dust, pleasures are but toys, wit is but a flash, beauty but a blast, honor but a rattle, life but a vapor! Oh but peace is better than the sweetest, and better than the best of all those!

1st, Because he who has peace with God may come boldly to God, Hebrews 6:16.

2ndly, He who has peace with God, has communion and fellowship with God, 1 John 1:3. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

3rdly, He who is at peace with God—is a son of God. Peace is of all other good things—the most sweet! Oh! it is wine to comfort us, and bread to nourish us, it makes a man live comfortably, and die cheerfully.

Thirdly, If Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of all our peace; why then, he who lacks the Prince of Peace, lacks all good things! He who is without Christ—is the most miserable man in the world; he lacks reconciliation with God; he lacks a saving interest in

Christ; he lacks the sealing and comforting of the Spirit; he lacks justification, sanctification, and adoption; he lacks pardon of sin, and freedom from the dominion of sin; he lacks that favor which is better than life, that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, and that faith, a grain of which is more worth than a king's ransom! He lacks those riches which perish not, those evidences for heaven that fail not, that love which dies not, that kingdom which shakes not!

Oh, beloved! how many things does that poor soul lack—which lacks a Christ! He is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked! Revelation 3:17.

Christ is a pearl—whoever has him can never be poor, and whoever lacks him can never be rich! Did but men see all in this pearl of great price—then they would sell all for this pearl of great price.

Fourthly, If Jesus Christ is the cause and foundation of our peace, then it is our greatest concernment to get into favor with the Prince of Peace! "Many seek the ruler's favor," says the Scripture—but oh seek the favor of this Prince! Poor souls, without him there is no mercy, no peace, no grace, no glory, no heaven, no crown, no eternal life; for "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent!" John 17:3.

Use 2. By way of EXAMINATION and self-denial. The trial of ourselves, is the ready way to the knowledge of ourselves. Oh Christians! would you see your God? Then cast your eyes upward. Would you see yourselves? Then cast your eyes inward.

Contemplation is a looking-glass to see your God in. It is of greater concernment to know the state of our hearts—than to know the estate of the kingdom. And therefore, I beseech you, examine yourselves, that you may know yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and where you will go when you die, and what will become of you to all eternity! Oh, sirs! bring yourselves to the trial, and try yourselves, and see whether you are in the faith, and the faith is in you. Faith is such a grace, that a man cannot be saved without it—and not a man can be damned who has it.

Oh see whether you are in the narrow way that leads to life—or in the broad way that leads to death! Whether your hearts are chairs for vice to sit in—or thrones for grace to rule on! Whether you are one of Christ's spouses—or one of the Devil's harlots! Whether you are heirs of heaven or hell! Whether you are Satan's bondmen—or God's freemen. Examination is the beaten path to perfection, 1 Corinthians 1:25, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." It is seldom that the sparkling diamond of a great estate, is set in the gold ring of a gracious heart. A man may be great, with Saul—and graceless! He may be rich with Dives—and miserable. The richest are oftentimes the poorest—and the poorest are oftentimes the richest. Oh how many threadbare souls may there be found, under silken coats and purple robes! A sight of ourselves in grace—will certainly bring us to a sight of ourselves in glory! Those sins shall never make a hell for us—that have been a hell to us!

Use 3. But it is time for me to turn my speech into an EXHORTATION. Oh, that you would make your peace with the Prince of Peace, that you may be the true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth, that you may be righteous before God, and holy before men; that you may gloriously shine in glory; and that you may have peace with God and with your own consciences, and with one another!

Well, sirs, what do you say in answer to the message? Shall the Prince of Peace be your love and Lord; your nearest and dearest, your joy and your delight? Will you kiss the Son? Will you make your peace with the God of Peace, and give up your souls and lives to be ruled by him? These things I exhort you to do—and God expects them at your hand. But that this exhortation may stay with you, I shall back it with some pressing considerations.

First, Consider God's goodness and good-will towards men. God has given you rich means, that you may make and secure your peace with God.

First, He has given you the law and the gospel.

Secondly, He has generously given time and opportunity.

Thirdly, He has given you mercies and afflictions. Mercies to draw you—and afflictions to drive you.

Fourthly, He has given you preachers, both inward and outward preachers. By outward preachers, I mean the ministers of Christ, who beseech you, and entreat you, for Christ's sake to be reconciled to God, and make your peace with God. By inward preachers, I mean your own conscience, that judges you, and checks you, and reproves you for your sins and abominations.

Fifthly, He has given you precepts and promises. Precepts commanding you what to do—and promises assuring you of a glorious reward for your doing.

Sixthly, He has given you the Spirit and convictions, Genesis 6:37, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Oh! how long will you stand out against God? What have you to say against this? How can you answer this, when you and I shall appear before God's judgment-seat? Have you anything to say against this? Oh! sad will be your end—unless you make your peace with God; and therefore (seeing God has given these things to you, that you may make and secure your peace with him) he who lives in sin without repentance, shall die in sin without forgiveness!

Secondly, God invites and woos you to come and make your peace with him; Isaiah 55:1, "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost!"

Beloved, here are three 'comes' in this text, to show the infinite willingness of God to save poor sinners. Just so in Revelation 22:17, "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life!" There are three 'comes' again in this text. What, are there none thirsty among you? Do none thirst for Christ, and grace, and heaven? If you come, sirs—here you may have grace, and mercy, and happiness. Now, for the Lord's sake, consider why God invites you to all this—that you may make your peace with God. Shall the God of heaven call—and you will not hear? What, will you rather stay in your sins, and die and go to hell—than go to Christ for life! Oh! sirs go to the Prince of Peace for peace, that you may have peace! If you do not lay your sins to your hearts, that you may be humbled for them—God will lay them to your charge, that you may be damned for them. A third consideration is this: either you must taste of God's goodness—or of his fury! There is not a man, woman, or child among you—but must partake of the one or the other! Your portion will be either joy—or sorrow; either desolation—or consolation! If you are not trees for fruit-bearing, you must be trees for burning! If you are not for fruit—you must be for the flames! If

you do not swim in the waterworks of repentance, you shall burn in the fireworks of vengeance! If you do not go and make your peace with God, that you may have heaven, you shall go to hell for not making your peace! One of them you must do.

Oh! sirs, I have set life and death, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet, before you this day. Will you make your peace with God—or not? Will you still go in a way of wickedness, breaking his laws, grieving his Spirit? Will you die a natural death, before you live a spiritual life? I say then if you live so, and die so—you shall be damned with the damned, and punished with the punishment of hell, and so sent to hell with loads of wrath upon your backs! You shall have your part in that lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, "He who believes, shall be saved, and he who believes not shall be damned!" says our Lord, Mark 16:16.

Oh! sirs, it is better to repent without perishing, than to perish without repenting! Therefore look to it well. Are you able to deal with God? Alas! alas! all the world is but like a drop of water in comparison of God; and therefore make your peace with him, Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape—if we neglect so great salvation!"

Fourthly, Consider what the damned in hell would give for the offers of mercy that are now offered to you. Certainly they would give ten thousand worlds if they had them, for these opportunities that you enjoy. Should God say to poor wretches that are suffering in hell for their drunkenness upon earth, and their whoring and abominations, as he does to us, "Come unto me, all you who labor are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" oh! how earnestly would they run and catch the word out of God's mouth! But alas! alas! poor damned wretches, there is not a grain of mercy for them! No, not so much as a drop of water for them, not one drop of water to cool their flaming tongues!

Oh, that you would consider this, and make your peace with God before death comes, which may be the next night, for anything you know; if you lose your golden seasons of mercy—you lose your souls. Oh therefore make your peace with God, that it may not be said of you, as it was once said of Jerusalem, in Luke 19:42, "Oh that you had known, in this your day, the things that concern your peace; but now they are hid from your eyes!" Here was a weeping word, a sad word to Jerusalem. Alas! now it is hid from their eyes; their golden season is gone; there is no peace to be had; and therefore I beg of you, as though I were condemned, and begging of my life; so I beg of you in the affections of Christ, and for your soul's sake—make your peace with God!

Fifthly, Seriously consider the multitude of sins you have been guilty of, even more than the hairs of your head, or the sand on the sea-shore, or the stars in the heavens, which are innumerable. Says David, "They are more than the hairs of my head," Psalms 40:12. Alas! one of your sins were enough to sink you into hell forever! What advantage does Dives reap in hell, from all those delicious banquets that he had on earth? Oh! think on that time, wherein you shall be ashamed of nothing but wickedness, and glory in nothing but holiness.

SIN is like a serpent in the bosom that is stinging; or like a thief in the closet that is stealing; or like poison in the stomach that is poisoning; or like a sword in the heart that is killing! Some are in hell already for the same sins you live in! And if you live and die without Christ—you shall before long be with them! Therefore, I say, make peace with God.

Sixthly, Consider that there is more bitterness following upon sins ending—than there ever was sweetness flowing from sins acting. You who see nothing but well in the commission of sin—will

suffer nothing but woe in the conclusion of sin! It is better here to forego the pleasures of sin—than hereafter to undergo the pain of sin! You who sin for your profits—will never profit by your sins! He who likes to do works of sin—will never like to have the wages of sin. Sin is both shameful and damnable: it shames men in this world, and damns them in the other world. Sin is like Judas, who at first greets—but at last betrays us. Sin is like Delilah—who smiles to our face, and betrays us into our enemies' hands. Oh! sinners, think of this, and part with your sins, that you may meet with your Savior, and make your peace with him.

Seventhly, Consider the heavy judgment that hangs over your heads. You lie open to all the judgments in this life, and torments in the life to come. Oh! sinners, the days are hastening upon you, wherein you have misery without mercy, sorrow without support, pain without ease, punishment without pity, and torment without end—unless you sincerely repent! "The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power!" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Oh! let the hearing of this—prevent the feeling of this, poor sinner.

Eighthly and lastly, If none of the former arguments or considerations prevail with you to make your peace with the Prince of Peace—yet let this one convince you, I beseech you. Consider the readiness and willingness of God to give Christ, and Christ to give himself to you. Oh! sinners, is God willing to give his Son—and are you unwilling to receive his Son? Consider the willingness of God, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hears my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him." Mark, sinners here, "Behold, I stand," Who stands and knocks? I who have heaven to give; I who have a crown to give; I who have all joys to give; I who have myself to give—I stand and knock! Do you see this, poor sinners? Who is it that stands at the door of your hearts and knocks? Who? It is the King of saints, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God—and will you not open to him? What! are you unwilling to be saved, to go to heaven, and to be happy forever! What! are you unwilling to be delivered from Satan, from sin, and from the flames of hell! Make your peace with God, for God is willing to open heaven for you—if you are willing to open your hearts to him. He is willing to save you—if you are but willing to be saved. He is willing to give a Christ—if you are willing to receive a Christ! Therefore, poor souls, let these considerations provoke you to go for life—to the Lord of life; to go for peace—to the Prince of Peace; to go for grace—to the God of grace! Were men so diligent as to do their best—God is so indulgent as to forgive the worst!

THE PRECIOUS ELECT "He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16 Doctrine, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. Who can be weary of preaching, or hearing, or reading, or learning of Christ? He is so precious and lovely! Mahomet is the Turks' love; Moses is the Jews' love; the Pope is the Papists' love; but Christ is a believer's love.

I shall now make some entrance upon Christ's sixth, famous, and lovely title, The Elect Precious.

"See, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:6 From this excellent title, I shall lay down two propositions:

Doctrine 1. That Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is God the Father's elect.

Mark, sirs, there is a three-fold elect:

First, The elect Jesus Christ; Isaiah 13:1, "Behold my servant, my elect," says the Father, speaking of Christ.

Secondly, The elect angels; 1 Timothy 5:21, "I charge you before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels."

Thirdly, The elect saints; and for this see Colossians 3:1, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved." But alas! what are the elect angels, or the elect saints, compared to the Elect Precious! It is only the blessed Jesus, who is the Elect Precious, and precious to the elect. But I shall not stand on this point—but proceed to the second.

Doctrine 2. And that this is—That the crucified and glorified Christ, is very precious to all believing saints. In handling this precious point, I shall show you five things.

1. That Christ is precious.
2. That Christ is most precious.
3. That Christ all precious.
4. That Christ is always precious.
5. Why Christ is so precious.

First, That Christ is precious. Jesus Christ is precious three ways: to God, to angels, and to saints.

1st, Christ is precious to God the FATHER. This will appear by what God the Father has said himself of the Son, Isaiah 43:1, "My elect in whom my soul delights." Here you see Christians, what God says to Christ—the soul of God delights in the Son of God. So again, Matthew 3:17, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Mark here, not only pleased—but well pleased. Oh! how precious is Christ to God the Father! The Lord Jesus, though he was a man of sorrows—yet he was not a man of sin; he had correction—but not corruption; he who was a Way to others, never went out of the way himself. Jesus Christ must needs be precious to the Father, because he never displeased him in anything—but pleased him in everything. In John 8:29, Christ says, "I always do what pleases him!" Oh! friends, it will be your glory, your crown, your honor, and happiness forever—if you do these things that please God while on earth! Christ must needs please the Father, for he went about doing good, Acts 10:38. He did not always stay in one place—but he always went about doing good wherever he was. And truly, sirs, if people were not made better by his coming, they might blame themselves, for he went about doing good. As he was never ill employed, he was never unemployed; as he opened the Scriptures to our understanding, so he opened our understanding to the Scriptures.

2dly, Christ is precious to the ANGELS, as well as to the Father. The angels were very joyful at the birth of Christ their Lord; they sang praises to God on high, Luke 2:13-14. See with what joy and triumph the angels sang at the birth of Christ! Oh! how precious is Christ to the elect angels! The angels adore him, "Let all the angels of God worship him," Hebrews 1:6. The Lord Almighty is worshiped by an host of angels, "Let all the angels of God worship him!" The angels desire to pry into the mysteries of the gospel of grace; as you may see in 1 Peter 1:2. The angels, though they are glorious to all eternity, look upon it as not below them to pry into the mysteries of Christ. Oh,

sirs, the angels are desirous to know these things—which we neglect to know. The angels stand ready to serve God and his people. When he bids them go—they go. When he bids them come—they come. When he bids them do this—they do it. They obey all his commands, Psalms 103:20. Jesus Christ is the Creator of angels, the Lord of angels, the Prince of angels, the Head of angels, Colossians 1:16. Do you see, sirs, how precious Christ is to the angels of God! And well he may, for indeed he is the precious jewel in the cabinet of grace.

3rdly, Jesus Christ is precious to the SAINTS, as well as to his Father and angels, 1 Peter 2:7, "Unto you who believe—he is precious!" Mark here, 'unto you'. Unto who? "To you who believe—he is precious!" He is precious indeed to those who believe, and no wonder—he is a believer's all. Now that which is his all, must needs be precious! Christ is his all—Christ is all that he has, and all that he truly enjoys. They have nothing of true worth without him. It is not worth a man to live—unless he lives in Christ. Christ is the gain of a believer, living and dying; so that whatever is good for a believer, he must say, "for this, I am indebted to Christ!" All things are yours—and you are Christ's.

Now, sirs, let me give you a more particular account of the Christian's worth, and inventory of his estate; and all along I shall show you that Christ is the worth of all that. What is it that makes a believer so precious and excellent? Why, it is such things as these:

1. He is a living man.
2. He is a seeing man.
3. He is a person of honor.
4. He has a great deal of joy, and hope of more.
5. He is righteous and holy.
6. In a word, he is saved at last.

These are things that make a Christian so excellent a person, and he has none of these but by Christ, and he has all this alone by Christ.

First, This is the excellency of a Christian, that he is a LIVING man. There is no man on earth who can, in a spiritual sense, be called a living man—but a believer. All men be dead men—but those who believe. You know that it was said of the prodigal, while he lived in his sins he was dead, "This is my son who was dead, and is now alive." When he believed, then he was alive. Now, sirs, LIFE is the most valued thing which we have, skin for skin, all that a man has will he give for his life! A man will rather part with his livelihood, than with his life, because his life is so dear to him. Now, beloved, if natural life is so desirable a thing, what is a spiritual life, that which in Scripture is called the life of God!

Now the believer is the only living man, every other man is spiritually dead. How does the believer come to life? By whom does he live? Why, it is by Christ Jesus! Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ, notwithstanding I live." What, crucified—and yet live? Yes, Christ was crucified, and yet lives; and so did Paul in resemblance and conformity to Christ, "I live," says he, "yet not I—but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God." So

that Paul will not call his life his own—but only as he derived it from Christ. Christ lives in him—more than he himself lives.

Secondly, The excellency of a believer lies in this, that he is the SEEING man. It is sight which makes a vast difference between person and person. It is a sad thing to be born blind, or to be made blind after a man is born. Now all men are either born blind, or made blind after they are born, or both. Now, beloved, would you know how precious sight is? Ask a blind man who once could see! We read of a poor man who comes running to Christ, and cries out, "O Lord, that I may receive my sight!" Now, sirs, if in nature having the sight of our eyes is a thing that makes us so much more excellent than otherwise we would be without it, oh then how much value should we put upon this spiritual sight which refers to our souls! We can much better lack the eyes of our heads—than the eyes of our understanding!

Now, in a spiritual sense, there is no seeing man—but a believer. No man saw Christ savingly—but those who saw him believingly. Every man but a believer walks in darkness; nay, he is in darkness. The apostle says in Ephesians 5:8, "You were once darkness—but now are you light in the Lord." In the Lord Jesus Christ—a believer sees. He was once as dark as others, and as blind as others, until he was in the Lord; and no sooner was he in the Lord—but he was light in the Lord.

Thirdly, The excellency of a believer lies in this, That he is a very beautiful and HONORABLE person. Beauty and honor are ravishing things of this world—and all but believers are deformed people—there is no beauty nor loveliness why they should be desired. But now the believer is a very lovely and beautiful person; he is so in the eyes of God, Ezekiel 16:11-14, "I gave you lovely jewelry, bracelets, and beautiful necklaces, a ring for your nose and earrings for your ears, and a lovely crown for your head. And so you were made beautiful! You looked like a queen, and so you were!" But now mark how she came by this beauty in the next verse, "Your fame soon spread throughout the world on account of your beauty, because the splendor I bestowed on you perfected your beauty, says the Sovereign Lord." She was not only beautiful in the eyes of the Lord—but she had her beauty also from the Lord! As they are thus lovely in the eyes of God, so also of holy angels and saints too. For as glorious a place as heaven is, the angels think it not below them to wait on the image and pictures of Christ, here below—and to be the Lord's guardians here upon earth, Hebrews 1:14, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be the heirs of salvation?" But this is not all they do for them, they will not leave them when they die—but take those lovely souls and transport them to a better country than ever this world was to them. There is no believer who goes to heaven—but he goes in the arms of angels! Luke 16:12, In the history of Dives and Lazarus, says the text, "Lazarus died (believing Lazarus died,) and his soul was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," that is, to heaven. Oh what an honor have believers at their death, that the very angels transport their souls to heaven! And they are also very lovely and honorable in the eyes of all godly people. The truth is, there is scarcely any man fit company for believers—but believers; and therefore, says the apostle, "be not unequally yoked," that is, believers with unbelievers.

Now godly men are much taken with a believer, though he is a stranger to them on all accounts; they are very fond of one another in this world, and had rather suffer together than live with other men.

Now, this makes a believer so excellent—that he is thus beautiful and honorable in the eyes of God, and holy angels, and godly men. Now all this beauty and honor they have from Christ. It is Christ who makes him honorable in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of holy angels, and godly men. All that beauty and honor they have, it is through Christ, he is their worth in every capacity.

Fourthly, That which makes a believer so excellent is, that he has true JOY. All other men have no joy which is not worth the having. Alas! the joy of the hypocrite, what is it—but the crackling of thorns under a pot? But now, a believer has a joy that no man can take away. But how and where did he obtain his joy? Why, in and from the Lord, "These things I speak," says Christ, "that my joy may be in you." They rejoice in the Lord, "We rejoice in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "and have no confidence in the flesh."

Fifthly, Have they HOPE? it is from Christ; and indeed none have hope but they. For without God, and without Christ, and without hope, are put together, in Ephesians 2:12. But now the believer has good hopes, and this bears him up many times. Alexander thought hope was so noble a thing, that when he gave to one man whole countries, and to another vast treasures, and being asked what he would keep for himself—says he, "I will keep hope!" For he thought it enough for so brave and great a soul as his, to hope for that which would make him to do whatever he was able to do, or any one could think. The hopes of eternal mercy, and joy and peace—will carry a man through thousands of difficulties.

Now the believer has this hope—but he has it from Christ, Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you—the hope of glory."

Sixthly, none but they are RIGHTEOUS and HOLY. Every sinner is a fool—he plays the fool all the time he spends without of the fear of God! All sinning-time is a fooling-time. Now the believer is a wise man, and he is a righteous man, and a holy man. How he comes to be thus, we see in 1 Corinthians 1:30. Christ is the ALL of a believer, "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption." So that you see if a believer is a wise man—he may thank Christ for it. If he is a righteous man, and if he is a holy man—he may thank God for it!

Lastly, In a word, they are SAVED. Indeed, this is apex of all the others! Says Christ, "he who believes shall be saved, and he who believes not shall be damned." The believer is already in the state of salvation, and the unbelieving are in the state of damnation. By nature we are all children of wrath; now faith in Jesus Christ is the means that God has appointed to free us from being children of wrath. Now he who believes shall not be condemned, he shall be saved. How does he come to be saved? It is by only by Christ, by believing in Christ. Oh! who is the Savior, but Christ? To be IN Christ is heaven below—and to be WITH Christ is heaven above! There is no being WITH Christ above, if we were not IN Christ here below.

Thus you see, beloved, what it is that makes a believer so excellent and precious, it is Christ that makes him such; he has it all from Christ, Christ is his all in all. Now put all this together, and see that there is great reason that Christ should be precious to believers.

Secondly, As Jesus Christ is precious—so he is MOST precious. Oh, sirs! angels are precious, saints are precious, friends are precious, heaven is precious—but Christ is ten thousand times more precious than these! A believer had rather have Christ without heaven—than heaven without

Christ! "Whom have I in heaven but you? and there is none on earth that I desire besides you!" Psalms 73:25. Let a believer search heaven and earth, and yet he will find nothing comparable to Christ. To be like to him—it is our happiness; and to draw near to him—is our holiness. You will see, beloved, life is precious, freedom is precious, health is precious, peace is precious, food and clothing are precious, gold and silver are precious, kingdoms and crowns are precious. Indeed they are, in their places—but nothing is as precious as Jesus Christ.

Mark, sirs, what the apostle says, "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ!" Php 3:7-8

What is our life but a warfare? And what is our life but a pilgrimage? It is only the best of beings that can bestow the best of blessings. Oh how good is a believer's God, who sweetens his pilgrimage to him? Oh, Christ is a believer's all, and therefore he is more precious than all! He has all in Christ, and nothing outside of Christ; there is no such thing as a believer without him. By faith we have a saving interest in Christ—and by having an interest in Christ, we have an interest in all things; the believer is the only blessed man, the only happy man, the only rich man. Revelation 21:7, "He who overcomes shall inherit all things." Oh what a glorious inheritance are they born to—who are new born! All things are theirs, and they shall inherit all things! What can they desire, more than all? All that Christ has is theirs! His wisdom is theirs to teach them, his love is theirs to pity them, his Spirit is theirs to comfort them, his righteousness is theirs to justify them, his power is theirs to protect them, and his glory is theirs to crown them.

Oh, sirs! Christ cannot but be most precious to a believer, because all his precious comforts come from Christ. The Lord Jesus is fairer than the fairest, sweeter than the sweetest, nearer than the nearest, dearer than the dearest, and richer than the richest, and better than the best. The Elect Precious is the most precious of all:

1st, Because that Christ is the GREATEST gift that God can give, or that we can receive, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son!" This is more than if he had given us all the world! For God has but one Son—and can make no more. But God can make more worlds at his pleasure. This gift is God himself, and God can give us no greater gift than himself. We may say, as one said to Caesar, when he gave him a great reward, "This is too great a gift for me to receive," said he "But it is not too much for me to give," said Caesar.

2ndly, Because Christ is the RICHEST gift that ever was given, for Christ is all in all. If he has given us Christ, he will give us all other good things, Romans 8:36.

3rdly, Christ is the one thing NEEDFUL. Yes, he is the gift of God, "If you knew the gift of God, (says our Savior, John 4:10) you would have asked for it, and begged it of me." Why is Christ called THE gift of God? Surely God has given us more gifts than one; true—but as the sun is more worth than all the stars, so this gift excels all the others put together. "We do not thank God for stars—when the sun shines."

4thly, Because he is the CHIEF gift that God has to give. Other gifts he gives promiscuously to both the godly and wicked. Judas had the money-bag; and Dives dined deliciously every day, when Lazarus would have been glad to get his crumbs. But God never gives this gift to any but

whom he loves with his dearest, special, and eternal love.

Suppose some prince would woo a great lady, and had a jewel worth a fortune. And it may be that he would give some coins, or some slight tokens of favor unto the servants. But the rich jewel—that he gives to his spouse! This jewel is Christ!

Abraham may give to Ishmael a bottle of milk—but Isaac had the inheritance.

5thly, The Lord Jesus is the RAREST gift of all! Christ is a gift given to very few—here to one, and there to another. Millions of millions perish, for not knowing and trusting in Christ.

Oh! what a rare jewel is Christ! Though our souls are more worth than a world—yet a world of souls is not worth Christ! It is he who makes us blessed in life, happy in death, and glorious after death!

6thly, The Lord Jesus is the SWEETEST gift of all others; for if God gives his Christ, then he gives us all other gifts in his love, and they become a blessing sweetened to us! Those who have this good—shall lack no good, "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger—but they those who the Lord shall not lack any good thing," Psalms 34:10.

Now put all this together—and you will see Christ to be most precious.

Thirdly, Christ is ALTOGETHER precious. I told you in the last section, that Christ is precious; and indeed I told you the truth, for they are not only my sayings—but God's sayings, therefore they are true. Christ is altogether precious, there is nothing in Christ but what is precious; he is amiable and desirable; he is fullness and sweetness, and greatness and goodness, light and life, and happiness. Believers enjoy all things in Christ; in all things he is the joy of a believers life, and the life of a believer's joy. Oh sirs! Christ is precious, he is very precious, he is most precious, he is always precious, he is altogether precious to the believing soul.

1st, His NAME is precious, he is called a precious Stone, Isaiah 28:16. Christ is there called a precious Stone.

2ndly, His BLOOD is precious, in 1 Peter 1:9. His blood is there called precious Blood. Yes, and well it may, for a drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours! And yet he died our death—that we might live his life.

3rdly, FAITH is precious, in 2 Peter 1:1. Faith is there called precious faith, the least grain of faith is more worth than all the gold in Europe!

4thly, His PROMISES are precious, in 2 Peter 1:4. "Giving to us exceeding great and precious promises." Christ's promises are called great and precious promises. Why great—and why precious? They are great for extent, and precious for their excellencies.

5thly, His GIFTS and GRACES are precious, Proverbs 3:15. "More more precious than jewels!" All things you can desire are not to be compared to them.

6thly, His MEMBERS are precious, Isaiah 43:4, "Since you have been precious in my sight, you have been honorable." Here you see the members of Christ are called precious. A believer indeed is a raven in the world's eye—but a dove in Christ's eye! In the world's account, the saints are

ding and dirt; but in God's account, they are jewels and pearls! Graceless men look upon God's people as castaways—but God will give whole kingdoms for their ransom! Wicked men may call the saints factious—but God calls the saints precious. Indeed, sirs, the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in other ages, were but bunglers compared to the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in our age. Well, there is a time coming, when Christ will laugh at the ungodly, for now laughing at ungodliness. Though holiness is that which a sinner scorns—yet holiness is that which a Savior crowns! As you expect happiness from God above, so God expects holiness from you below. "For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life." 1 Thessalonians 4:7

7thly, The REPROACHES of Christ are precious; Hebrews 11:26, "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." I beseech you mark, is it not here said, that Moses esteemed the person of Christ, or the members of Christ, or the privileges of Christ, or the glory of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt? Oh! beloved, the worst of Christ's—is better than the best in the world! Christ's cross—is sweeter than the world's crown! The reproaches of Christ—are greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

Esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Our afflictions are also good and precious. Now, beloved, if I can prove that afflictions and reproaches for Christ are good and precious, which is the worst of him—then you will conclude with me, that Christ is all precious.

1stly, That must needs be good—which comes from God. Now, afflictions come from God, who alone good. Psalms 39:9, "I was silent; I would not open my mouth." Why David? "because You are the one who has done this!"

2dly, That must needs be good—which was suffered by the sweetest good. Now, afflictions were endured by Christ who is the sweetest good; "He was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief," Isaiah 53:3.

3rdly That must needs be good—which fits and prepares us for a glorious estate, the eternal good. Now, affliction does this, "It was good for me that I was afflicted." Sirs, do you believe king David? Will you believe David was a man after God's own heart? Why, he says that it was good for him he was afflicted. But you will say, Why was it so good? Look in the 6th verse, and there is the reason. Says he, "Before I was afflicted—I went astray." A very satisfactory answer; and therefore it was good for me I was afflicted. So again, in 2 Corinthians 4:17, "For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us." What do they work? "A far more exceeding weight of glory!"

Oh Christians! under your greatest troubles—lie your greatest treasures! Afflictions are good—but not pleasant. Sin is pleasant—but not good. There is more evil in a drop of sin—than there is in a sea of afflictions. God by affliction, separates the sin he hates so deadly—from the soul he loves so dearly! By the greatest affliction—God teaches us the greatest instruction! And a believer, when he lies under God's hand which afflicts him—he lies in God's heart which loves him! Believers are crucified by the world—that they may be crucified to the world. The flesh is an enemy to suffering, because suffering is an enemy to the flesh! Those who do not carry the yoke of Christ upon their necks—will never carry the cross of Christ upon their backs! But a believer studies more how to adorn the cross—than how to avoid the cross! None are so courageous, as those that are very pious. Some glory in that which is their shame—and shall we be ashamed of that which is our

glory? It is an honor—to be dishonored for Jesus Christ!

Tell me, oh believer, is not Christ with his cross, better than the world with its crown? Suppose, Christian, the furnace is hot, seven times hotter—it is but to make you seven times more holy! Fiery trials make golden Christians! Sin has brought many a believer unto suffering—and suffering has kept many a believer from sinning! Those who here be crossed for well-living, shall hereafter be crowned for well-dying. The losing of our heads, makes way for receiving of our crown! God will season our vessels with water of affliction, before he pours in the wine of glory. By this you see, beloved, that the reproaches of Christ are precious. It is better to be preserved in brine—than to rot in honey!

## 01.02a. Section 2 contd

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4thly, Jesus Christ is always precious to believers; he is more precious to them than a thousand worlds! Because he is always with them, in all their trials, and in all their troubles, and in all their straits, and in all their afflictions. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," says the text. Sirs, who would not suffer with such a companion as this? "But now, O Israel, the Lord who created you says: Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters and great trouble, 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. Do you see this, Christians, he is with you in the fire, in the water, in the prison, in all places, and at all times! He never leaves you, nor forsakes you, Hebrews 13:5. He beds and boards with you; he lies down, and rises up with you! He is called a friend, and indeed he is our best friend! "Yes, He is altogether lovely! This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16 1. Jesus Christ is a faithful friend.

2. Jesus Christ is a prudent friend.
3. Jesus Christ is a providing friend.
4. Jesus Christ is a compassionate friend.
5. Jesus Christ is a constant friend.
- 6, Jesus Christ is a loving friend.
7. Jesus Christ is an everlasting friend.

He loves us to the end—and there is no end of his love! He who gave his image to us—loves his image in us. Jesus Christ gave himself to us, and for us; he loves us in himself, and as himself. Oh! what a sweet friend is Christ! God, in giving Christ to us—gave his very heart for us! Now, beloved, how can Jesus Christ be but always precious to a believer, who is thus always with a believer?

5thly, and lastly, WHY is Jesus Christ so precious to believers?

First, Because he is a believer's life! Colossians 3:4, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory!" There is a three-fold life that flows from Christ: a life of grace,

a life of comfort,

a life of glory.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their light! Alas! alas! until we are in Christ—we must be in darkness! It is in his light, that we see light, Ephesians 5:14, "Awake you

that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."

Thirdly, Christ is precious to believers, because he is their food! "My flesh is the true food, and my blood is the true drink." John 6:55. Oh! what choice fare have they to feed on—who have Christ to feed on! Oh! You who have not Christ to feed on—your bread is but perishing bread.

Fourthly, Christ is precious to believers, because he is their strength! Take a man that is outside of Christ—he has no strength to withstand or overcome. "Without me," says Christ, "you can do nothing!" John 15:5. "When we were without strength, Christ died for us." To be without Christ, and to be without strength—is all one.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their righteousness and holiness.

Sixthly, Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their portion! Jesus Christ is the terror of his enemies—and the portion of his people. Jesus Christ is a lion his enemies—and the Lamb to his people.

I might in a few particulars ANATOMIZE the believer, and begin with his head. All that he knows of the things of God—he is indebted to Christ for it. Says Paul, "God who has shined in our hearts, by the light of the gospel, in the face of Christ." All the knowledge of God, all gospel light, all the knowledge of spiritual things, we have all from Christ.

Consider the believer in his heart. We find there a broken heart, a tender heart, a good and honest heart, a new-covenant heart. How does he get this heart? Why, he has it only from him in whom the new-covenant is made, and that is Christ.

Consider the believer in his graces, as faith, and love, and patience, and humility, and the rest—he has all from Christ! "Indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness!" John 1:16. There is not one grace we have—but we have it from Christ.

Consider the believer in his life. He is an honest and just man. Who made him to differ? Why is he not so full of cheating tricks as other men? Why, he has not so learned Christ! Christ teaches him to live at a more holy rate than others do—so that if the believer is better than others in this, he may say, "Thanks be to Christ, for that before I lived as vainly as others did; but now I have not so learned Christ!"

Consider the believer in his privileges. He is a child of God, and it is by the Son of God—that he is a son of God, "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name—He gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12. So that if he is a child of God, he must thank Christ for it! If he is one of the family royal, one of the chosen generation, he must thank Christ for it! For it is in Christ, and by him alone, that we have all the good which we enjoy.

Consider the believer in his comforts. He has not one good day—but it is from Christ. Has he comfort in ordinances, in the society of saints and prayer? He must thank Christ for all this. And thus I have given you a brief anatomy of the Christian, and showed you that Christ is all in all. Whatever a believer has of worth, he is indebted to Christ for it.

Now put all this together, and see what great reason there is that Christ should be precious to believers. Is it any wonder that these souls are enamored so with him, that they think their lives not

worth the living but for him, and in him, and for his sake. Oh sirs, there is very great reason why believers set so high a value and esteem upon Christ, who is their all in all.

APPLICATION The first use shall be for examination and self-trial. You have heard that Christ is precious, precious to God, to angels, to saints. But now, O soul—is he precious to your soul? If he is precious to you—then all which is precious to him—is precious to you.

Oh, that men would but deal truly with their own souls! Many talk of grace—but few taste of grace! Many talk like a Christian—but few walk like a Christian! Many know what is to be done—but never do what is to be done. Many wear Christ's livery—but do the devil's drudgery! Many have hands as white as snow—but their hearts as black as hell! Many think themselves as surely going to heaven, as if they were already dwelling in heaven! Many think it shall go well with them hereafter, because it is so well with them here! Many lie down with such hopes in their beds of rest, which they dare not lie down withal in their beds of dust! Many appear righteous, who are only righteous in their appearance. But such as deceive others with a false show of holiness—will deceive themselves with a false hope of happiness! Remember, sirs, that the sheep's coat shall be stripped off the wolf's back! "They come to you in sheep's clothing—but inwardly they are ferocious wolves!" Matthew 7:15. There is no making out our salvation—but by working out our salvation.

God binds up none in the bundle of life—but such who are the heirs of life! "Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my end be like theirs!" Numbers 23:10. There is no living a life that is wicked—and then dying a death that is righteous. Oh! therefore, examine yourselves. I shall propose four questions to be resolved by your own hearts.

1. What interest have you in him?
2. What influences have you from him?
3. What affections bear you to him?
4. What preparations make you for him?

Oh, sirs, that you would consider well these weighty things! Tell me, sir—what did Judas get by all his deceitful dealings? Nothing but a halter—in which his body was hanged; and a fire—in which his soul was burned! Though the earth may keep a wicked man living—yet heaven will not take a wicked man dying. I say, therefore, examine yourselves.

Secondly, I shall speak a little by way of exhortation and conclude.

1st, If Jesus Christ is so precious, oh then, open the door of your affections to him—that he may open the door of salvation to you! Open to the God of glory—that he may make you glorious. Behold the God of heaven stands at the door of your hearts, and knocks, Revelation 3:20, "Behold! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." He knocks by his Word, by his rod, by his Spirit, by his mercies, by his judgments, by his comforts. And all is, that he may come in and commune with you. Now, sinners, will you not open the door of your hearts to Christ—that he may open the door of heaven to you? If you shut out Christ out of your hearts—he will shut you out of heaven! And what will you get by that? Oh, sirs, he has gold to enrich you, wine to cheer you, bread to nourish

you, righteousness to justify you, mercy to save you, and happiness to crown you!

2ndly, Let all that which is precious to God be precious to you:

1. The Son of God.
2. The book of God.
3. The worship of God.
4. The ordinances of God.
5. The ministers of God.
6. The people of God.

Oh! let these be precious to you. May the Lord give his blessing to what has been written.

WONDERFUL "Yes, He is altogether lovely!" Song of Solomon 5:16 Doctrine, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. To be in a state of grace—is to be miserable no more—and to be happy forever. It is faith which unites Christ and sanctified souls together on earth; and love that unites God and glorified souls together in heaven. Oh! believers, you are those worthies of whom the world is not worthy! From one saint, Jesus Christ has more glory given to him, than he receives from all the world besides. We owe not only our service to Christ—but we owe also ourselves to him.

I shall now make some remarks upon our Lord Jesus Christ's seventh famous and lovely title, which is Wonderful.

"He shall be called Wonderful." Isaiah 9:6 The point that we shall lay down and speak to from hence, is this, Doctrine: That a believer's Savior, is a Wonderful Savior. The world and devils fear him. But he is Wonderful in the eyes of all angels and saints, for his love. For the opening of this excellent point, take these particulars:

1. Christ is Wonderful in his nature.
2. Christ is wonderful in his person.
3. Christ is wonderful in his incarnation.
4. Christ is wonderful in his saints.
5. Christ is wonderful in his offices.
6. Christ is wonderful in his miracles that he wrought.
7. Christ is wonderful in his humiliation.
8. Christ is wonderful in his conquest.
9. Christ is wonderful in his ascension.
10. Christ is wonderful in his exaltation.
11. Christ is wonderful in his working in his saints.

Lastly, Christ is Wonderful in his judgment.

Some preachers have more time than matter—but I have now more matter than time; therefore I must omit much precious matter, for lack of precious time.

Beloved, I will handle but one of these in particular, and that is the seventh: That Jesus Christ is wonderful in His HUMILIATION. This is the head we shall now insist upon, and indeed this is one of the greatest wonders of all. That he who was so high—should be brought so low; that he who was so rich—should become so poor; that the Lord of life—should die; that the great God—should become a helpless babe; that the Eternal Word—should not able to speak a word; that he who made the law—should be under the law; that he who was more excellent than all the angels—should become less and lower than the angels. Oh! you angels, how you stand amazed at this, that the Lord of heaven and earth—should become a Servant to his own servants! Php 2:7, "He took upon him the form of a servant." This must needs be wonderful to all the angels in heaven. The first wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he took upon him our nature, Hebrews 2:16. God could stoop no lower than to become man, and man could be advanced no higher than to be united to God. He who before made man a soul after the image of God—now made himself a body after the image of man. For a man to be like to God is a wonder—but for God to be like man is a greater wonder! But when was it, that Jesus Christ took upon himself our nature? When it was in a state of innocency, free from all misery and calamity? No! But when it was at the lowest after the fall, when it was most beggarly, most wretched, most bloody, most accursed, most sinful, most feeble, "When we were without strength—Christ died for the ungodly," says the apostle. Romans 5:6.

Now, my brethren, that Jesus Christ should take upon him our condition, our frailty, our curse, our nature, when it was thus low, thus poor, thus wretched—oh! this is the wonder of wonders, and yet thus you see did Jesus Christ. Oh, wonderful abasement! Must God take upon him our frailty! Had we so far run upon the score of justice—that none could satisfy but God himself? Could he not send his angels or saints—but must he come himself in person? No, no! Angels or saints could not do it! If Christ will save us—he himself must come and die for us! The second wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he descended very low.

1stly, He was born of a poor maiden, of no account or reputation. Was there not even one great lady in Jerusalem, for this great Prince of heaven and earth to be born of? Must he be born of a poor despised virgin? Yes, certainly, there were many noble women in Jerusalem, but our Lord Jesus Christ had no more regard for the rich, than for the poor.

2ndly, He was revealed to poor despised shepherds—and not to emperors and kings. I say, the angels did not go and declare these joyful tidings and good news to Caesar at Rome—but to poor shepherds in the fields, Luke 2:8.

3rdly, He was born in a stable, Luke 2:12. Not in a parlor in a stately house or palace. No—but in a stable where horses and cows are fed.

4thly, He was wrapped in strips of cloth, and laid in a feeding trough. They were no cloths of fine linen or silks. They were not gilded with silver or gold. Nor were they precious robes—but poor beggars' rags.

Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me what is more wonderful and astonishing than this? Oh! humility, humility, how great is your riches that are thus commended to us! You please men, delight angels, and confound devils—and bring the Creator to a feeding trough! Oh, sweet Jesus, you conquer death by dying! The third wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he became poor. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: although He was rich, for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich!" 2 Corinthians 8:9. He who was so rich—became so poor! He who was Lord of all—had nothing at all! He who made heaven and earth—had no home of his own! He who gives crowns of glory to others—had only a crown of thorns for himself! The foxes and the fowls had more than Jesus! "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have no home of my own, not even a place to lay my head!" Matthew 8:20. The foxes had holes to lay their heads in—but Christ had not a place to lay his head on. As he was born in another man's house—so he was buried in another man's tomb!

"He became poor!" Yes, poor indeed, and so poor that he had not a penny! You will say, that a man is very poor—who has not a penny! Truly such a one was Christ—he had not a penny to pay the tax until he got it out of the fish's mouth! "Go down to the lake and throw in a line. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a coin. Take the coin and pay the tax for both of us." Matthew 17:27 And when he was to ride into Jerusalem—he had no coach, no chariot, no horse of his own—he had to ride upon another man's donkey! Matthew 21:2.

Oh! admire and wonder at this! Is not he the brightness of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of man, the destroyer of death, the King of saints! And that he should become so poor for us—oh! this is wonderful and astonishing to angels and men! The fourth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he shed his blood six times for poor sinners! This is a great wonder!

1st, The first time was, when he was circumcised at eight days old. Oh, what a blessed Jesus is this! What, ready for the sacrifice already? What—but eight days old, and shed his blood for the salvation of men's poor souls!

2ndly, The second time was, when he was in his agony, when he was in the garden. Matthew tells us, that "his soul began to be sorrowful." "deeply distressed and troubled", says Mark. "Now my soul is troubled" says John. Troubled? O Lord, what! You who bind up the proud waves of the sea—you who turns the hearts of kings as rivers of waters—you who laid the foundations of the earth, and spread the heavens as a curtain—you who guides the stars and thunders in the clouds—you who upholds all things by the Word of your power. What—you troubled? Oh, the horror, the terror, the sorrow that seized upon the soul of Christ! "And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground!" Luke 22:44. He sweat what? Not natural sweat—but blood, he was in a bloody sweat all over! "He sweat clots of blood," as the original has it.

Oh! how did Christ come swimming to us in blood—and have not we a tear to shed for all these streams of his! We ate the sour grapes—and his teeth were set on edge! We climbed the tree, and stole the forbidden fruit—and he went up the ladder of the cross, and died! Oh! how lovely should he be in our eyes? We should wear his cross in our hearts, and treasure it up as Moses did the manna in the golden pot.

Christ's cross is the golden key that lets us into paradise! His red blood washed away our crimson sins!

3rdly, He shed his blood for us when his cheeks were ripped and torn; the pulling off the hair, as the prophet speaks, "I gave My back to those who beat Me, and My cheeks to those who tore out My beard. I did not hide My face from scorn and spitting." Isaiah 50:6. Some are of opinion, that Christ's cheeks were rent to his very chin, and his beard was pulled off; both were very likely to be true; neither of them could be without much blood.

"The men who were holding Jesus started mocking and beating Him." Luke 22:64. Oh how was that face of his lacerated and covered with blood—which was brighter than the sun! He who was fairer than the sons of men; he who is the great glittering and sparkling diamond of the ring of glory! How was he bespotted and besmeared with blood! Oh! you hard of heart, you stubborn of heart, and indeed too stubborn are we all, if judgment and the hammer will not break your hearts—let love and mercy do it. Look unto Christ, and say, "Have you suffered this for me—and shall I not love you, O Lord! Shall I not serve you, and obey you, and honor you!"

4thly, Christ shed his blood when the crown of prickling thorns was put upon his head. "They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. Mark 15:17. Certainly there was much blood shed here. Oh! what a sight was this—to behold that head of his, that was as the most fine gold, as the spouse expresses it to be—now covered and torn with thorns! That he should wear the prickly crown of sharp thorns—who was fit to wear the crown of glory!

5thly, A fifth time when he shed his blood was when his hands and feet were nailed to the cross! These beautiful feet of his which came skipping upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and salvation; skipping from the throne to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from the cross to the throne again! How were these blessed hands of his nailed and made fast to the cross! Oh, you blessed spirits, look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneel at the feet of men. Oh, you angels! how should you be amazed at this, to see your Lord and master so far deny himself, as to take upon him the form of a servant! "We see Jesus (says the apostle,) made a little lower than the angels." To suffer death, the Creator not only became a creature—but inferior to some of the creatures which he had made. Oh, you blessed saints! Why do you not wonder at this wonder? to see the beauty of heaven, the paradise of angels, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Redeemer of man—thus to humble himself, and take upon him man's nature—for the salvation of man's soul.

6thly, and lastly, Christ shed his blood when the spear was thrust into his side, out of which presently gushed water and blood; John 19:34. That is a very strange cure—that the physician should bleed, and his blood should have the virtue, that would save others. Physicians are usually liberal of other men's blood—but sparing of their own; but it is not so with our great Physician. Instead of the patient's bleeding in the arm—he bled in the side! Why do you shower down your blood—and come swimming in your blood? Is not a drop sufficient? One drop of his blood, is more worth than heaven and earth!

Oh love without measure! Oh wonderful redemption! That God should take upon him man's frailty, that is wonderful indeed! It is enough for a king to pardon a thief—but that the king himself should

die for the malefactor, that is beyond expression! This our blessed Lord did, our blessed Savior! He died—that we might live! He went and suffered in agony—that he might "stay us with flagons, and comfort us with apples." He endured the greatest pains—that we might enjoy the greatest pleasures. Oh how lovely, how lovely was Christ in his sufferings! Who would not love you, O King of saints? Christian! consider how much your dear Lord and Savior has suffered and undergone for you. Oh precious blood—it redeems us, it cleanses us, it washes us, it justifies us, it sanctifies us, it restores us to God, and brings us to heaven! "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed!" Isaiah 53:5 The fifth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—He suffered in his soul. Matthew 26:38, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death!" says Christ. Oh what a word was this for a God to speak! For a man to say so, is no wonder—but for God to say so, oh, this is a great wonder indeed! The suffering of his soul—was the soul of sufferings! Christ yielded his soul—for our souls.

Many of the faithful servants have suffered much in their bodies, as the martyrs that were racked, and burnt, and sawn asunder; but they had much freedom in their souls, their souls were full of much spiritual joy and comfort. But now Jesus Christ did not only suffer in his body—but in his soul. This is what makes the wonder the greater—that Christ suffered in his soul. He drank the cup of affliction—that we might drink the cup of consolation! He tasted death for us—that we might taste life through him! He was forsaken—that we might never be forsaken! The sixth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—that he should allow himself to be so much mocked! He was mocked as Sampson was by the Philistines, when his eyes were put out. And truly this is a great wonder:

1. If we consider who Christ was.
2. If we consider who they were, who mocked him.

He was God—they were but dust and ashes!

1. They spit upon him.
2. They blindfolded him.
3. They crowned him with thorns.
4. They put a reed into his hand, instead of a scepter, 5. They clothed him with purple garments.
6. They bowed their knees to him in scorn.
7. They saluted him with, "Hail, king of the Jews!"
8. They made him carry his own cross, on which he was to be hanged; as malefactors go with halters about their necks to execution, so they made him carry the cross.
9. They reviled him, wagging their heads.
10. They crucified him with two thieves, and him in the midst of them, as though he had been the prince of the thieves, the greatest malefactor of them all.
11. They insulted over him in his misery.

All this they did in scorn to him, that they might make his death the more painful and shameful! Thus they never left off mocking him—until his soul left the world! Oh sirs, this is no small wonder—to consider how Jesus Christ was cruelly mocked. The seventh wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he suffered much from his Father! "Stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted." Isaiah 53:4. Here is the wonder of wonders! He did not only suffer from Jews and Gentiles, Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and Pilate, wicked men and devils—but he suffers too, from his own Father! One would have thought, if God would spare any—it would have been his Son, his own Son, his beloved Son, his only begotten Son, his bosom Son. And yet God spared him not a jot! "He did not even spare His own Son—but offered Him up for us all!" Romans 8:32. Mark, if Jesus Christ will come and take our sins upon him, God will not spare him—but let out the fullness of justice, and justice to the full upon him, until he had paid the uttermost farthing of justice!

Oh! blessed Jesus, you suffered so much for our sinning, for our offending, for our rebellion!

Oh! then, what infinite cause have we to love you, and obey you, and honor you! For the more you has done and suffered for us—the dearer you ought to be unto us. The eighth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—Christ foresaw all this—and yet he willingly undertook it, to save his people! He knew before he came from heaven, how men would abuse him, and that one of his family would betray him. Says the text, "Jesus knew from the beginning, who would betray him!" Now, that our Lord Jesus Christ should foreknow all this most dreadful misery that he would endure—yet that he should come freely, willingly, and joyfully from heaven, to die and suffer by and for such poor wretches as we are—here is a wonder to angels and men!

"Here I am, I have come to do your will." Hebrews 10:9. Why did he come? To suffer for poor man, to redeem poor men! Do you see here, sirs, what great love Christ bore to his people! Rather than they should be in hell, and be damned—Jesus Christ would come from heaven and suffer all this for them, though he knew before how he would suffer! Oh, this is a great wonder, dear Christians! Methinks such a pearl should sparkle in our eyes. We sail to glory, not in the salt seas of our tears—but in the red sea of Christ's blood. Truly it is astonishing to think how much he did for us—and how little we do for him! The greater our sins were—the greater his sufferings were! The greater his pain was—the greater should our love be to him.

I shall make of this point—a use of information and exhortation.

Use 1. INFORMATION. Did Christ suffer so much for his people? Then we have a wonderful Savior! This informs us of eight things:

First, My first inference is this, that Christ suffered in what he endured from men in his body, and what he endured from God in his soul. He did not only endure pain in his body—but agony in his soul. Oh, the sea of sufferings, the sea of sorrow, the sea of blood, the sea of tears that our blessed Savior waded through—to bring peace to our souls, salvation to our souls, grace and glory to our souls! He suffered from devils, he suffered in his name, he suffered in his body, he suffered in his soul! The cause was our sins—the effect was our salvation!

If you look through the chronicle of his life, you will find his whole life full of sorrow and misery; he was persecuted, he was tempted, he was reproached, he was falsely accused, he was apprehended, he was betrayed, he was crucified. What more shall we say? Shall we say more?

What more can be said? He was full of sorrow—he took his name from sorrow, "He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief." Isaiah 53:3. Now judge sirs, whether Christ's life was not full of sorrows, he took his name from sorrow.

Oh! sweet Jesus, your sufferings were great. This is my first inference.

Secondly, Jesus Christ suffered by himself. He was alone in his sufferings; neither angels nor saints bore any part with him in his sufferings. No! he drank the bitter cup alone! He alone purged our sins! Hebrews 1:3, "He alone, by himself," says the text, "purged our sins." No, Christ had none to help to bear his heavy burden with him—he bore it himself alone.

But, my beloved, though our Lord Jesus Christ suffered by himself—yet he did not suffer for himself! He suffered for us, he suffered that wrath which we deserved! "Surely he took up our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought our peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed!" Isaiah 53:4-5. Do you see here, Christians, how many 'ours' are here? Our griefs, our sorrows, our transgressions, our iniquities, our peace; you have here, five 'ours'! So again, "For our sakes he became poor;" 2 Corinthians 8:9. Mark, for our sakes. Beloved, he was born for us, "Unto us a child is born;" he was given for us, "to us a son is given," Isaiah 9:6. "He was made a curse for us," Galatians 3:13. He was delivered up for us, "Who spared not his own Son—but delivered him up for us all." Oh, sirs! all these things were FOR US: given for us, made a curse for us, made sin for us, delivered up for us, and is now in heaven interceding for us, Hebrews 7:25. My brethren, all that our Lord Jesus suffered, it was not for himself—but it was for us! Our blessed Savior suffered for us—that we might not suffer! This is the second inference.

Thirdly, My third is, That this is more for Christ to suffer anything—than for all men and angels to suffer all things. Mark, sirs, if all the kings and emperors would leave their thrones, their crowns, their kingdoms, their scepters, their glory, their honors and princely robes—and would take upon them a poor Lazarus' condition—to live poorly, and fare poorly, and die shamefully; why, all this would not be so much as for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to suffer the least thing he suffered!

Now further, I say, if all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had come and suffered, and died ten thousand deaths—why, put all this together—and all this would not be as much as it was for Christ to suffer anything! This is because they are creatures—and he is the Creator; they the servants—and he is the Master; they are subjects—and he is the Prince; they are mean—and he is Mighty; he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords! Now, I say, it would not have been half such a wonder, if all the angels in heaven, and men in earth—had come and suffered—as it was for the Son of God. Oh! this is a wonder of wonders! His sufferings were wonderful, his humility was wonderful, his patience was wonderful, his love was wonderful; greater love could no man show; he loved us so—that he died for love!

Now, I beseech you, consider this inference, which was this, That it is more for Jesus Christ to suffer anything, than for all men and angels to suffer all things. And indeed, sirs, let me tell you—that I lack words to express it, or set it forth; for there is both lack of words, and lack in words—to express this this astonishing truth!

Fourthly, My fourth inference is this, What a miserable and dreadful case we lay in—that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ must endure all this, bear all this, undergo all this, for poor sinners! What do you think is the miserable and dreadful case we lay in? Certainly the misery of man was very great—that man should need such redemption as this! Oh! what a breach had sin made between God and us—that the Son of God must come from heaven to earth to suffer all this! Oh! sirs, mischievous sin, I say mischievous sin, has undone us! Sin has robbed us of six jewels, every one of which is of more worth than heaven and earth. Would you know what jewels they are, which sin has robbed us of? I will tell you—and then you will agree with me—that we were in a very miserable case indeed!

1. Sin robs us of the image of God. Was not this a precious jewel? I say, sin robbed us of the image of God—and drew the devil's picture in us! Malice is the devil's eye, oppression is the devil's hand, blasphemy is the devil's tongue, and hypocrisy is the devil's cloven foot!

2. Sin robs us of our divine sonship—and makes us slaves to the devil, slaves to sin, slaves to the world, and slaves to ourselves! This is another jewel we have lost.

3. Sin robs us of our friendship with God—and makes us enemies to God, and enemies to Christ, enemies to our own souls, and enemies to all that is holy!

4. Sin robs us of our communion and fellowship with God—and makes us strangers and aliens to God.

5. Sin robs us of our rights and privileges of heaven, and heavenly things—and makes us children of wrath and heirs of hell.

6. Sin robs us of our honor and glory—and makes us vile and miserable; as you may see in Isaiah 1:6, "There is no soundness in us—but only wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores!"

Now, sirs, put all this together, and then see whether or not we are miserable, and whether we needed a Savior to come and deliver us from this misery into which our souls were plunged! Now here is our happiness, Christians: in Christ we have these jewels back again—which we lost in the old Adam! The glorious image of God, our divine sonship, our friendship with God, our fellowship with God, our heavenly privileges, and our glory and honor—we have regained all this by Jesus Christ!

Oh! sirs, man was in a very sad condition; man had brought himself into a sad condition; our condition was a miserable condition. A Fifth inference is this, Jesus Christ brought life to us—but we brought death to him! He brought to us a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory—but we brought shame to him! He brought riches to us—but we brought poverty to him! He brought joy to us—but we brought sorrow to him, sorrow upon sorrow! He put the crown of glory upon our heads—but we put the crown of thorns upon his head! He does not think heaven is too good for us—but we thought the earth too good for him, and would not let him live here—but put him to death! He is not ashamed to own us before his Father, and his holy angels—but we are ashamed to own him before men! He justifies us—but we condemn him! Oh! sirs, think of your unkindness to him, and let the considerations of his infinite love and favor to you—draw out your affections after him! My Sixth inference is this, All believers have exceeding great cause to bless God for Jesus Christ; God the Father gave him to us—who were not his friends, but enemies; to us—who were

not sons, but slaves; to us—who were not angels, but men; to us, who loved not God—but hated him! Oh! have we not cause to bless God for Jesus Christ? "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Oh, sirs, what a gift is Jesus Christ!

Seventhly, If Jesus Christ is so wonderful—oh, then, how vile a thing, how base a thing is it for the hearts of men to prefer anything before Jesus Christ! Surely, sirs, if Jesus Christ is so wonderful, so precious, so lovely, so rich, so sweet, so rare—oh then it is a most abominable thing, a wicked thing, a vile thing to prefer anything before Jesus Christ! Oh! I speak it with grief of heart, that there are too many in the world who despise him, and make nothing of him, and love him not, and prefer every base lust before him! Though there is nothing more cursed than this—yet there is nothing more common than this—for men to prefer the vilest things before Christ.

1stly, The wicked worldling prefers the trash of the world before Jesus Christ! He can leave hearing and praying, reading and meditating—to follow the world! He prefers gold before God, earth before heaven, gain before glory, his corruptible silver before the eternal Savior. Oh, you wicked worldling, you wretched worldling—can your riches save your soul? Let me ask you, "Can your riches deliver you from hell? Can your riches bring you to heaven—that you prefer them before Christ." Oh! the Lord Jesus will come in flames of fire, to take vengeance on such—and then you will know to your cost, and pain, and torment—that your riches cannot keep you out of hell, much less bring your soul to heaven! Then you will see your folly when it is too late!

2ndly, Drunkards, wicked drunkards, prefer their drunkenness before Christ! The drunkard prefers his cups before Christ; the drunkard wades through a sea of drink to his grave; he can sit a day or a whole night in the ale-house, and think it a little time; but an hour in the worship of God, oh now tedious is that! Oh! you drunkard, you drink up your cups so fast, God Almighty has a cup for you—but not a cup of wine, or a cup of beer—but a cup of wrath, which you shall drink to eternity! This is worse than to drink scalding hot lead down your throat! You have so much liquor here, not only drink to quench his thirst—but to drink to excess. But is no tavern or ale-house in hell; no, there is not even a drop of water to be obtained all through hell. Oh, wretch! you shall live in burning flames, and your tongue shall cleave to the roof of your mouth, and if you would give a thousand worlds for one drop of water, you shall not have it. And therefore, I beseech you, if any such there are here, in the name of God—hear and fear, and live no more wickedly!

Oh! I would not be in your condition for ten thousand worlds; and yet I cannot have but affections of pity towards you, which constrains me thus to speak, knowing your condition better than you do yourself. Oh! could you but speak with your fellow-drunkards that are now in hell, oh what a dreadful story would they tell you of their burning, and suffering, and pain, and torments! Some are in hell already—for the same sins you live in! And if you live and die without Christ, you shall be with them before long!

3rdly, The swearer, the blasphemous swearer, prefers his cursing before Christ. Many can swear by their Creator and Maker, and speak proudly, and look highly, and walk contemptuously—as if there were no God to punish, and no devil to torment. Well, let me tell you, oh swearer, who now delight in cursing—before long you shall be sent with a curse to a cursed place! Christ will say to you, "Depart, you who are cursed, into everlasting flames!"

Lastly, The proud person prefers his pride before Christ. If a fine suit of clothes were on the one hand, and Christ on the other—the proud person would rather put on the suit of clothes than Christ! Oh, I beseech you, sirs, consider what a vile and abominable thing it is—to prefer anything before Christ! "Consider this," says the Psalmist, "you who forget God—lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you!" Oh, poor wretch! consider of that text! You are open to all the judgments in this life, and to all the torments in the life which is to come—all you wicked ones that prefer anything before Christ!

Eighthly, The last inference is this: If Jesus Christ is so wonderful, oh then everyone who hears of him, should think it is a most dreadful thing to miss of him.

Oh, friends! consider it; certainly that man or woman's condition must needs be sad indeed, who lives and dies without Jesus Christ. Oh, poor wretch! the devil looks but for a look from God to come and rent you to pieces, and draw your soul to hell. Poor soul, your soul is in danger every hour of being arrested by death, and carried prisoner to hell. Oh, sirs, I beseech you—think and consider what a sad thing it is to miss of Christ. Until a man is in Christ, he has nothing, he knows nothing, he enjoys nothing, can do nothing, and is fit for nothing, and is worth nothing, Proverbs 10:20.

Oh, I beseech, you, that you would consider seriously that of all miseries that is the greatest of miseries to miss of Christ; we are never able to lament the loss of the poor soul that loses Jesus Christ; all losses be enrapt up in that one loss. And therefore I beseech you all—think what a sad condition that person is in, who misses of Christ. So much for this use of information.

### 01.03. Section 3

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#### (Section 3) A BELIEVER'S GOLDEN CHAIN

I come now to the second use, and that is a use of exhortation. And here I shall make a Golden Chain of twenty links for believers to wear about their necks.

I. Hear the best men. Read the best books. Keep the best company.

1. Hear the best MEN. Oh, sirs, hear a soul-enriching minister, a soul-winning minister, and soul-searching minister--one that declares the whole counsel of God, and gives the Father his due, the Son his due, the Holy Spirit his due; one that makes hard things easy, and dark things plain.

Many there are, I may speak with grief and to their shame, who, instead of making hard things easy to the people--make easy things hard to the people. They make plain things dark, speaking in an unknown tongue, which the people cannot understand; and all to work a vain admiration of themselves in the ignorant! But how unlike Christ, and the prophets, and the apostles, these are--I will leave you to judge. A sanctified heart--is better than a silver tongue! A heart full of grace--is better than a head full of notions! Mere notional knowledge, it may make a man's head giddy--but it will never make a man's heart holy! That which most tickles delicate ears--least helps sin-wounded hearts! How are we to speak to God and live--much less to speak from God and to the people, that they may live! How holy had they need to be--who draw near to a holy God! Ministers are called angels, because we should be as angels in our lives; but it angels fall--they turn into devils. Oh! we should be holy as the holy angels.

It is the foolishness of preaching which saves souls--but not foolish preaching! Christ taught them as they were able to hear it, and as they were able to bear it, Mark 4:33. Paul was excellent at this, "I had rather speak five words in a known tongue--than ten thousand in an unknown tongue." A man may be a great scholar--and yet a great sinner.

Judas the traitor--was Judas the preacher! Therefore, sirs, let me beseech you, for your poor souls' sake--hear these ministers who come nearest to Christ, the prophets, and the apostles. He is the best preacher--who does the most good, and wins the most souls. You may go from men to truth--but not from truth to men; for the best of men--are but men at best.

2. Read the best BOOKS, for in them you will find the best things! Compare what is spoken in the books of men--with what is written in the book of God.

3. Keep the best COMPANY. Be much with those who are much with God. Walk with those who walk with God, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John 1:3.

Forsake all bad company--and join yourself with good company. Let them be your choicest companions--who have made Christ their choicest companion. Lay them nearest your hearts--who lie nearest his heart. Carry them in your bosom by love--who shall be carried by the angels into

Abraham's bosom. Let Christ's love--be your love. With whom shall believers be--but with believers? You know what our English proverb is, 'Birds of a feather will flock together.' Acts 4:23, "On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people." Indeed none are fit company for a believer--but a believer. To see a saint and a sinner associating one with another--is to see the living and the dead keep house together! Carnal men, though they are naturally alive--yet they are spiritually dead! It is better to be with Lazarus, though in rags--than to be with Dives, though in his fine robes! "He who walks with the wise--shall be wise," Proverbs 13:20. Oh dwell where God dwells, make them your companions on earth, who shall be your companions in heaven.

II. Meditate often on these four last things:

Death, which is most certain.

Judgment, which is most strict.

Hell, which is most doleful.

Heaven, which is most delightful.

1. Meditate upon DEATH, which is most certain. "It is appointed to men once to die." Hebrews 9:27

Out of the dust was man formed--into the dust shall man be turned. To think of death--is a death to some men! But, beloved, meditate upon death. Meditation on death--will put sin to death! Death to the wicked--is the end of all comfort, and the beginning of all misery! But death to the godly--is the outlet to sin and sorrow, and an inlet to peace and happiness. The saints' enjoyment shall be incomparable, when the sinners' torments shall be intolerable! When a believer's soul goes out of his own bosom--it goes into Abraham's bosom! When a believer dies--he leaves all his bad behind him, and carries his good with him! When a sinner dies--he carries his bad with him, and leaves his good behind him! The godly man goes from evil to good; the wicked man goes from good to evil. When a saint leaves the world--his flesh returns to the dust, and his spirit returns to rest! When a sinner leaves this world--his body goes to worms to be consumed, and his soul goes to flames to be tormented! The saint goes to Abraham's bosom, the sinner goes to Beelzebub's bosom! The wheat goes to the barn; the chaff goes to the fire! Oh! for the Lord's sake, meditate upon death! When you come into the world--you do but live to die! When you go out of the world--you do but die to live! He who lives well--cannot die ill. He who is assured of a life that has no end--cares not how soon his life is at an end. He who lives without the fear of God--shall die without hope. He who has no grace in his life--shall have no true peace in his death. An old sinner is nearer to his second death--than he is to his second birth; his body is nearer to corruption--than his soul is to salvation.

Death levels the highest mountains with the lowest valleys; the robes of princes and the rags of beggars are both laid up together in the wardrobe of the grave! The reason why men so little prepare for death, is because they think so little of death; when they feel sin arresting them--then they fear death approaching. The grave is a bed to rest in--but not a shop to trade in. When the soul at death takes its flight from his loving mate--they shall meet no more until the general assize. When you are putting off your clothes, think of the putting off your bodies; be going to your beds, as if you were going to your graves, and close your eyes in one world, as if you would open them

in another world; when you are creeping between the sheets, then think of your winding-sheets.

Remember, Christians, that God can as easily turn you into the dust as he could take you out of the dust; today is your living day, tomorrow may be your dying day. The meditation of death will prepare you for death.

2. Meditate upon JUDGMENT, which is most strict. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ!" Those who will not come before his mercy-seat, shall be forced to come before his judgment-seat! Those who will not hear his Word--shall feel his sword! Those who are graceless in this day--will be speechless in that day! At the world's end--such will be at their wits' end, to see the earth flaming, the heavens melting, the stars falling, the graves opening, the judgment hastening, the sun and moon mourning, and Christ and his angels coming! He who comes to raise the dead, will also come to judge the dead. Oh! sirs, the great day to great sinners will be a dreadful day--when they shall see Christ coming in the clouds, with great power and glory, crowned with dignity, and attended with the angel reapers, and enraged with anger--to bring all kings and nobles, high and low, rich and poor, to his judgment bar! And there he will judge them, not by the whiteness of their countenances--but by the blackness of their hearts! "He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity!" Psalms 98:9

He who was guarded to the cross with a band of soldiers, shall be guarded to the bench with a guard of angels! You who make no account of his coming--how do you think to give an account at his coming? For the Lord's sake, meditate upon judgment! Sirs! meditation on judgment--may make you judgment proof! Those who now judge themselves in their own private sessions--shall not be judged by Christ at his great white throne!

3. Meditate upon HELL, which is most doleful! Oh sirs, heaven is a place where all is joyful, and hell is a place where all is doleful. In heaven--there is nothing but happiness; but in hell--there is nothing but heaviness! "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Psalms 9:17. Mark, sirs, the wicked shall be turned into hell. Oh, dreadful place--where the devil is the jailor!

Hell is the prison,

damnation is the punishment,

eternity is the duration,

brimstone is the fire, and

men and devils are the fuel! To endure this will be intolerable--and to avoid it will be impossible! This is the day of God's long-suffering, that will be the day of man's long-suffering! There they will suffer: pain without ease, torment without end, sorrow without support, and misery without mercy!

Sirs! Meditate upon hell! Oh, what hells are there in hell! Hell is the loss of God, the loss of Christ, the loss of all good! Endless, ceaseless, and remediless torments must be their eternal portion. Oh, that you would often think of hell! If once you drop into hell--then after a thousand years, you will be as far from coming out hell--as you were at your first entrance in! There is only one way to keep a man out of hell--but there is no way to get a man out of hell! In this world, the wheat and the chaff both grow together--but they shall not always both lie together! In hell there shall not be a

saint among those that are terrified! And in heaven there shall not be a sinner among those that are glorified! The sea of damnation--shall not be sweetened with a drop of compassion! Will you pity a person who is going to the gallows, and will you not pity a person who is going to the bottomless pit? What a dreadful visitation is that--where the black horse of death goes before, and the red horse of wrath follows after! Oh, that must needs be sad--when one death comes upon the back of another; when the second death comes upon the back of the first death! A man's condition in this life may be honorable, and yet his state in eternity may be damnable! Poor Lazarus goes to heaven--when rich Dives goes to hell. It is far better to go to heaven poorly--than it is to go to hell richly! Oh, sirs! let us go to hell by contemplation, that we may never go to hell by condemnation!

4. Meditate on HEAVEN, which is most joyful. "Then the King will say to those on his right--Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world!" Matthew 25:34

"Well done, good and faithful servant! Enter into the joy of your Lord!" Matthew 25:21. Heaven is a place where all joy is enjoyed! In heaven, there will be mirth without sadness, light without darkness, sweetness without bitterness, life without death, rest without labor, plenty without poverty! Oh, what joy enters into the believer--when the believer enters into the joy of his Lord! Who would not work for glory with the greatest diligence--and wait for glory with the greatest patience?

Oh, what glories are there in glory! Thrones of glory, crowns of glory, vessels of glory, a weight of glory, a kingdom of glory! Here on earth, Christ puts his grace upon his spouse--but there in heaven, he puts his glory upon his spouse! In heaven the crown is made for them, and in heaven the crown shall be worn by them! In this life believers have some good things--but the rest and best are reserved for the life to come.

Oh, sirs! meditate upon heaven, for meditation of heaven will make us heavenly! Heaven is not only a possession promised by Christ--but a possession purchased by Christ! When our contemplations and minds are in heaven--then we enjoy heaven upon earth! To be in Christ is heaven below, and to be with him is heaven above! There cannot be a better thing for us, than for us to be with the best of beings, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Php 1:21. Paul was contented to stay a while out of heaven, that he might bring other souls into heaven: his life to them was most useful--but his death to him was most gainful. Let our condition be ever so great, it is hell without Christ! And let our condition be ever so bad--it is heaven with Christ! "I had rather be in hell with Christ, than in heaven without him," says Luther. Indeed hell itself would be heaven--if Christ were in it; and heaven would be hell--if Christ were from it. That which makes heaven so full of joy--is that it is above all fear! And that which makes hell so full of horror--is that it is below all hope! The vessels of grace--shall swim in the ocean of glory! Here all the earth is not enough for one man--but there one heaven is enough for all men. A believer shall see with an eye that is purified, what he shall shortly see with an eye that is glorified. We may talk of the greatness of our crowns--but we shall never know the weight of our crowns--until they are set on our heads!

III. Set the watch of your lives--by the Sun of righteousness. "But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture!" Malachi 4:2

Live in print--and keep the copy of your lives free from blots and blurs--that the characters may be read by all. Bring up the bottom of your living--to the top of your Scripture light. When the watch of your life is set by the beams of the Sun of righteousness, then it moves with uprightness. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age." Titus 2:11-12

Those who will not submit to grace's teaching, shall never enjoy grace's salvation. Oh, live so that the Word which has brought salvation to your souls--may bring your souls into salvation; that you may be such jewels of grace--as shall be locked up in the cabinet of glory! The Father of light takes no pleasure in the children of darkness; "Let your light so shine before men," Matthew 5:16. We must shine in grace--before we can shine in glory!

Those who look for a heaven made ready--should live as if they were in heaven already.

There are four things which make a new creature:

1. Light.
2. Life.
3. Holiness.
4. Good works. The children of light--must put on the armor of light.

I cannot but sadly reflect, on the inconstancy of rotten professors. An applauded Christ shall have many hosannas--but shall a condemned Christ should not have many crucifiers! A true believer can as well go with Christ to the tree where he is to be crucified--as he can go with him to the throne where he is to be glorified. Oh, how unanswerable are the lives of some professors--to the light of professors! They know much--but do little! They know the good they are to do--but they do not do the good which they know! They speak of heavenly things above--but they love and follow after earthly things! A man is not what he says--but is what he does! A man is not what he says--but is what he does! To say what we do--and not to do what we say--is but to undo ourselves by doing. Take heed, sirs--that you do not take yourselves to hell with heavenly words! What is the great prejudice that the world has against professors but this, that those who profess against pride more than others--are themselves as proud as others! They profess against covetousness more than others--but are themselves as covetous as others! They often meet together to be better--but they are never the better for their often meeting together! Do but take away their profession--and you take away all their religion! They have nothing of the form of religion--but the skin! They are better in their outside--than they are in their inside!

Oh, sirs, if ungodliness is evil--why do you so much practice it? And if goodness is good--why do you so little practice it? Either take Christ in your lives--or cast him out of your lips! Either obey his commandments more--else call him Lord no more! Either get oil in your lamps--or cast away your lamps. To be a professor of piety--and a practicer of iniquity--is an abomination unto the Lord.

Some would not seem evil--and yet would be so! Others would seem to be good--and yet are not so! Either be what you seem--or else be what you are. There are many who blush to confess their sins--who never blushed to commit their sins.

There is nothing done in vain--but what is vainly done. Oh, Christians, bring your lights to the light. What darkness can obscure those who have a sun above them? Believers, when their candles are put out, they can fetch light from the Sun of righteousness. The nearer you are to such a sun--the clearer will be your light. Oh, Christians, you are never the better for your light--if you are not made better by your light. He who sins against his light, will at last sin away his light. If your light does not put sin and the world under your feet--it will never put a crown of glory upon your head.

IV. Be willing to lack--what God is not willing to give. As God has never the less for the mercies he gives--so he has never more for the duties he gets. Man is such a debtor to God--that he can never pay his due to God! We are so far from paying the utmost farthing--that at the utmost we have not a farthing to pay! There is no man but has received more good than he deserves--and done more evil than he has suffered! Therefore he should be contented though he enjoys but little good-- and not discontented though he suffers much evil. "If we have food and clothing, we will be content with these." 1 Timothy 6:8. A Christian is to submit to the will of God's disposing--as well as to the will of God's commanding. That man obtains his will from God--who submits his will to God. A gracious heart shall never be out of heart, because God has said, "I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you," Hebrews 13:5. He who has said it--will not unsay it; therefore take up your contentment, in God's appointment.

We are not to be troubled for this--that we have no more from God. But we are to be troubled for this--that we do no more for God! A Christian though he has a will of his own--yet it does not befit a Christian to do his own will. Contentment without the world--is better than the world without contentment! Christian, get a holy heart--and your estate on earth shall be sufficient! Christian, is God not willing to give you riches? Oh, then--you be willing to lack riches! Is God not willing to give you health? Oh, then--you be willing to lack health! Is God not willing to give you children? Oh, then--you be willing to lack children! Is God not willing to give you your desire for this thing or that thing? Oh, then--you be willing to lack this or that thing!

Never were any saints their own carvers--but before they were done, they cut their own fingers! Lot, you know, was put to his own choice--and he chose Sodom. And you know what happened--it was not long before Sodom was burned to the ground! Rachel said, "Give me children--else I die!" And she had a child--and it cost her her life! Abraham desired the life of Ishmael--but he had much trouble from him all his days. Therefore, dear Christians, submit your will to God's will. That soul shall have his will from God--who desires nothing but what God wills! Do but take care of all that which belongs to God--and God will take care of all that which belongs to you!

It is only reasonable, that God should fall out with those who, in the course of his providence--fall off from him in the course of their obedience.

Wicked men make the world their treasure--and God makes the world their torment! When they desire great estates--they are troubled for them. And when they gain great estates--they are troubled with them. Murmuring people think everything too much that is done by them--and everything too little that is done for them! God is as far from pleasing them with his mercy--as they are from pleasing him with their duty. It is unthankfulness, which is the cause of the earth's unfruitfulness. Did a man believe that the Lord would not fail his body--how carefully would he look after his soul! It is only the Christian man--who is the contented man. He does not quarrel with God for mercies denied--but blesses God for mercies bestowed. The higher a Christian is raised above

the things of the earth--the more is he ravished with the joys of heaven!

V. Crucify your sins--which have crucified your Savior! "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires!" Galatians 5:24. Did the rocks rent, when Christ died for our sins--and shall not our hearts rent, who have lived in our sins! Oh, that the nails which pierced his hands--should now pierce our hearts! Oh, that they should wound themselves with their sorrows--who have wounded him with their sins! Oh, that they who have grieved his heart--should be grieved in their hearts! Oh, that I should be such a bad a child to him--who has been such a good a Father to me! My sins have been my greatest terror--and my Savior has been my choicest helper!

Oh! put sin to death--for sin was the cause of Christ's death! If someone killed your father--would you hug him and embrace him as your friend, and let him eat at your table? Would you not rather hate and detest the very sight of him! If a snake should sting your dearly beloved spouse to death--would you preserve it alive, warm it at the fire, and hug it in your bosom? Would you not rather stab it with a thousand wounds! And were not our sins the cause and instrument of Christ's death? Were not they the whips that scourged him, the nails, the cords, the spear, the thorns that wounded him, and fetched the heart-blood from him! And can we love our sins--which killed our Savior? Can a spouse truly love her husband--and still embrace an adulterer?

We complain of the sins of Judas, and seem to hate them, and shudder at their mention! And can we love our Judas sins--which put Christ to death? And yet how many are there--who had rather have sinful-self satisfied, than to have sinful-self crucified. Oh, sin is that mark at which all the arrows of Divine vengeance are shot! Were it not for sin--death would never have had a beginning! And were it not for death--sin would never have an ending! Man began to be sorrowful--when he began to be sinful. The wind of our lusts--blows out the candle of our lives. If a man had nothing to do with sin--death would have nothing to do with man.

Oh, did sin bring sorrow into the world? Oh, then--let sorrow carry sin out of the world. Of all evils--sin is the great evil! "The wages of sin is death!" Romans 6:23. Oh, sin is worse than punishment, banishment, and imprisonment! Sin kills both body and soul--it throws the body into cold earth rotting, and the soul into the hot hell burning!

Oh, for the Lord's sake, think on this, and weep for this early! Let the cry of your prayers--outcry the cry of your sins!

Nothing can quench the fire that sin has kindled--but the water which repentance has caused. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from our sins. 1 John 1:11. A saint is not free from sin--that is his burden! A saint is not free to sin--that is his rejoicing! Sin is in his soul--that is his lamentation. His soul is not in sin--that is his consolation. If you will grieve for your sins--you will not sin grievously.

VI. Those who are most blessed by God--must bless God most. God is good to all--but he is most good to his people. "Surely God is good to Israel--to those who are pure in heart, even to such as are of a clean heart." Psalms 73:1. They can never speak enough of God--who have tasted the goodness of God. It is but reasonable, that they should bless God most--who are most blessed by God.

Those who lease the largest farms--must pay the greatest rents. Differing mercies--call for differing duties. It is very fit that Christ should be magnified by us--who makes us fit to be glorified with him. Oh, Christians, if he has called you out of your marvelous darkness into his marvelous light--you ought to show forth his marvelous praise! 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God--that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Men should not glory in what they have received--but they should give glory for what they have received. The glory of God must be the golden bulls-eye, at which all the arrows of duty are shot. Grace in our hearts is like the moon--which shines not by its own splendor--but by the borrowed beams from the Sun of righteousness. "Giving thanks to the Father, who has made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light!" Colossians 1:12. As the best of means should make us fruitful--so the best of mercies should make us thankful. Shall a saint find God to be a bountiful master--and shall God find a saint to be an undutiful servant? If he gives us any enjoyment, it is but for his own glory! He shall never lack mercy--who does not trifle with mercy. To bless God for mercies--is the way to increase them. To bless God for miseries--is the way to remove them. No blessing lives so long--as that which is thankfully improved. No evil dies so soon--as that which is patiently endured. Oh, Christians, give all your glory unto him--who has given all his glory unto you. Do as these glorified ones do in glory, "The the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one who lives forever and ever. And they lay their crowns before the throne and say--You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created!" Revelation 4:10-11. All you have is derived from God--let all you have be returned to God. The more God's hand is enlarged in the blessing of us--the more our hearts should be enlarged in the blessing of God.

Oh, believers! God has frowned upon others--but he has smiled upon you! God has passed by others' doors--and knocked at your doors! God has made you light--when others remain in darkness! God has made you live--when others remain dead! God has made you heirs of glory--when others remain the children of wrath! God has made you his sons--when others remain Satan's slaves! God has made you higher than the angels--when others are no better than devils! All this has he done, and more--for you who are believers. Now, have you not great cause to bless God? While man is a-blessing of God for his mercies, God is a-blessing of man with his mercies. Can you find me out that good that is not given you--or that evil that is not forgiven you? God deserves more from every Christian--than he demands from every Christian! Where the Sun of mercy shines the hottest--there the fruits of grace should grow fairest!

VII. Do not fear--the fear of men. Wicked men must not be feared--though they are ever so mighty. Nor must they ever be followed--though they are ever so many. "Do not fear those who can kill the body," says our blessed Savior, "but can do no more," Matthew 10:28. If a righteous cause brings us into suffering--a righteous God will bring us out of suffering. If we suffer for well-doing, we do well in suffering. Shall we cease to be professors, because others will not cease to be persecutors. "If you suffer for well-doing," says the Scripture, "you are blessed."

What! are you members of Christ--and yet afraid to be martyrs for him? What! are the children of God--afraid of the children of the devil? What! are the children of light--afraid of the children of darkness? What! are the children of heaven--afraid of the children of wrath? What though you re

weak--your King is strong! What though you are lambs among wolves--your Captain is the lion of the tribe of Judah! What though you have no power--Christ has all the power given him both in heaven and earth! Matthew 28:8. The fear of persecution--is more than persecution. He who loses a base life for Christ--shall find a better life in Christ. Persecution, though it brings death in one hand--it brings life in the other hand. Though it kills the body--it crowns the soul. Though it sends the body to the dust--it sends the soul to rest! The worst they can do against you--is the best they can do for you! The worst they can do is but to send you out of earth--and the best they can do for you is to send you up to heaven! They take a life from you, which you cannot keep--and bestow a life upon you, which you cannot lose.

If they are blessed who die in the Lord--oh, how blessed are those who die for him! Do wicked men glory in that which is their shame--and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory! It is an honor--to be dishonored for Christ. What is a short happiness, attended with everlasting misery--compared to a short misery, attended with everlasting happiness?

Oh how clear will the Sun of righteousness shine, when these dark clouds are blown over! What if they threaten you with present death--does not God threaten you with everlasting death, if you be not ruled by him? Whose threatening should you fear? Is man more dreadful than God? Is death more dreadful than hell? God has said, "I, even I, am the one who comforts you. So why are you afraid of mere men, who wither like the grass and disappear?" Isaiah 51:12. Do you see, Christians, God would not have you to be afraid of men; he who is afraid of man--is afraid of grass! "Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand!" Isaiah 41:10. Let but Christians do their best--and let the world do their worst.

8. Cleave closest to that truth--which is the choicest.

First, Be both for hearing and doing--but more for doing. He who does most--shall receive most. Christians, the more glory you bring to God--the more glory you shall have from God. Oh, how abundant shall they be in the work of the Lord--who know that their labor is not vain in the Lord! 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Secondly, Be both for knowledge and practice--but more for practice. Alas! what is it to be a Christian--no farther than a few good words will go! I tell you, sirs, good words without good works--will never turn to a good account! Holy sayings without holy doings--will never conduct your souls to a holy place!

Thirdly, Be both for gifts and graces--but more for graces. A sanctified heart--is better than a silvered tongue. Grace brings Christ and your soul together, and unites them together. Without grace, there may be much "head knowledge". But without grace, there can be no "saving knowledge".

Fourthly, Be both for reputation and conscience--but more for conscience. Where there is a pure conscience, there will be a pure life. As no flattery can heal a bad conscience--so no cruelty can hurt a good conscience.

Fifthly, Be godly in both good and bad times--but more in bad times. To be godly at all times, is a Christian's duty--but to be godly in bad times, is a Christian's glory. You cannot tread in the steps

of our Savior--but you will taste of the cup of our Savior! "Any man," says the apostle, "who lives godly in Christ Jesus--must suffer persecution."

Sixthly, Be both for body and soul--but more for the soul. Oh, how careful are men for their bodies--but how careless for their souls! They are true to the part which is without--but false to that part which is within. As long as they have something of the world in their hands--they care not though they have nothing of heaven in their hearts. Oh, Christians! Our work below is then the best done--when our work above is first done. The greatest happiness of the creature--is not to have the creature for one's happiness!

Seventhly, Be both for peace and truth--but more for truth. Oh, Christians! Love the truth in truth. Love the truth of God in truth. Justify the truth--and the truth will justify you. Until you can love the naked truth--you will never love to go naked for the truth. Remember that, I pray, Christians.

Eighthly, Be both for life and Christ--but more for Christ. Christ is sweeter than wine, and better than life. He who came from above--is above all. He alone who has the key of heaven--can open the door of heaven!

Ninthly, Be both for works and faith--but more for faith. Faith is a grace that is the most needful, and a grace that is the most faithful. A faith that does not work--is a faith that does not save! Nothing will get up to heaven--but that which came down from heaven.

Tenthly, Be both for public and private duties--but more for private duties. Be much in private duties; if you fall short in any duties--fall short in public duties, and be most in private duties. You who have filled the book of God, with your sins--must fill the bottle of God, with your tears.

Eleventhly, Be both for the form and the power of godliness--but more for the power. Christians, alas! What is the form of godliness, without the power of godliness? Some give God the hymn and the knee--and give up themselves to all manner of abominable wickedness. Oh, Christians, I say--be for the power of godliness, more than the form of godliness.

Twelfthly, Seek to please both men and God--but more to please God. To be in favor with those who are out of favor with God, to be well spoken of by those who are evil spoken of by God--is rather a reproach than an honor! If there is no fellowship between Christ and you in holiness--there will be no society between Christ and you in heaven.

9. Acquaint yourselves with yourselves. The trial of yourselves--is the ready road to the right knowledge of yourselves. No man begins to be good--until he sees himself to be bad. Until you see how foul your faces are--you will never bow to Christ for washing them. He can never truly relish the sweetness of God's mercies--who never tasted the bitterness of his own misery. The bottom of our disease lies here--that we do not search our disease to the bottom. "He who trusts in his heart is a fool"--and yet such fools are we, that trust our hearts! The outward life may be civilized, when the inward life not sanctified. A man may be acquainted with the grace of truth--who never experienced the truth of grace. "Therefore examine yourselves, and prove yourselves," 1 Corinthians 13:5 "whether you are in the faith or not" or whether the faith is in you or not; whether your hearts are the cabinet of such a jewel! For lack of this self-examination, men are like travelers skilled in other countries--but ignorant of their own. Many have their evidences of grace to seek--when they should have their evidences of grace to show.

Oh, beloved, I beseech you with beseeching, be more in searching of your own hearts! It is of a greater concernment to know the state of your hearts--than to know the state of all your estates. A man may profess like a saint, pray like a saint, speak like a saint, look like a saint--and yet be a devil! You cannot always tell what 'time' it is in a man's heart--by the 'dial' of his countenance. The humblest look--is sometimes linked to the proudest heart!

Believers, for the Lord's sake, consider well these three things:

1. What you were--in the state of nature.
2. What you are--in the state of grace.
3. What you shall be--in the state of glory.

Oh! methinks you should think of this, what you were, are, and what you shall be. Conversion begins in consideration. Grace, as it makes our comforts sweeter--so it makes our crown greater.

Beloved, for God's sake, and for your soul's sake--acquaint yourselves with yourselves! The readiest way to know whether or not you are in Christ--is to know whether or not Christ is in you! For the fruit is more visible--than the root. The tree of righteousness, is known by the fruits of righteousness. Matthew 7:20, "The tree is known by its fruit," said our Lord Jesus Christ. If you would know the heart of your sins--you must then know the sin of your heart. Will you remember that Christians?

"For out of the heart," says our Lord, "come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all other sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander!" Matthew 15:19. Many have passed the rocks of gross sins--who have been cast away upon the sands of self-righteousness! If you are found in your righteousness; you will be lost in your righteousness! He who has no better righteousness than what is of his own providing--shall meet with no bigger happiness than what is of his own deserving!

10. Do good in the world--with the goods of the world.

It is better spending your time in doing good--than in getting goods! For the goods we get, we must leave--but the good we do, will never leave us! Revelation 14:13, "They shall rest from their labor--and their works follow them." The ambitious man shall leave all his greatness behind him--when the pious man shall carry all his good with him.

Dives' charity was very cold--and he found the flames of hell very hot! There is not a drop of water for such Dives' in hell--who have not a crumb of bread for such Lazaruses on earth! Dives denied Lazarus a crumb of bread--and therefore Lazarus must not bring him a drop of water! He who will show no mercy--shall have no mercy shown to him. Let charity be your shop to trade in--and eternity shall be your bed to rest in! Be a father to all in charity--and a servant to all in humility! Do much good--and make but little noise.

Every grace that is more exercised--shall be more glorified. The more good you do for God--the more good you shall receive from God. As the poor cannot live without your mercy on earth--so without God's mercy you shall not live in heaven. He who gives to the poor saints for Christ's sake--shall be rewarded by Christ for the saints' sake!

"Then the King will say to those on the right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' And the King will tell them, 'I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters--you were doing it to me!'" Matthew 25:34-40 The more you disburse for Christ on earth--the greater sums of glory you shall receive from Christ in heaven. The crop that is sown in mercy--shall be reaped in glory! As we must lay all out in the cause of God--so we must lay down all for the cause of God. That which is cast into Christ's treasure by the way--is not cast away. Charity is so good a servant, that it will never let its master die a beggar! Though charity makes your pockets lighter--yet it will make your crowns greater Oh, that God should give the rich so much! And, oh, that the rich should give the poor so little!

Some say that the barrenest ground--is nearest to the richest mines; it is too true in a spiritual sense. How many rich men, though their estates are like a fruitful paradise--yet their hearts are like a barren wilderness! They have much of the earth in their hands--but nothing of heaven in their hearts! They are rich in goods--but not in goodness. I wonder that such worldlings do not tremble at these sayings:

"Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his demons! For I was hungry, and you did not feed me. I was thirsty, and you did not give me anything to drink. I was a stranger, and you did not invite me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me no clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you did not visit me.' Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' And he will answer, 'I assure you, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me!' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life." Matthew 25:41-46

Oh, that men should be so much taken up with their riches--who must shortly be taken away from their riches! As you brought none of your money into the world with you--so you shall carry none of it out of the world with you! In the world you find it--and in the world you shall leave it; to whom you know not--it may be to those whom you would not. Did but some rich men know before their death, how their gold and silver would be spent after their death--they would wish it back again into the mines from whence it came! Oh, you rich men, I say unto you--do good in the world, with the goods of the world! It is a greater honor to give like a prince--than to live like a prince! It is better to have a heart, and not wealth--than to have wealth, and not have a heart. "Give--and it shall be given unto you." Your charity should seek the poor--before the poor should seek your charity! He who shows mercy when it may best be spared--shall receive mercy when it shall be most needed.

11. Improve that TIME--which is yours but for a time.

Time before long--shall be to you, time no longer!

Opportunities are for eternity--but opportunities are not to eternity. Christians, remember that the race which you run, is short--but the prize for which you run, is eternal. Had we not need to take heed how we shoot--who have but a single arrow to direct to the mark? No time is ours but what is present--and that is as soon past, as present! Nature's womb--often proves nature's tomb!

Oh! consider how much of your time is gone--and yet how little of your work is done! Shall your sleep steal away one half of your time--and your lust the other half? Oh, what enemies are they to themselves, who waste their time! Your work is great, and your time is short! You have a God to honor, a Christ to be believed in, and a soul to save! You have a race to run, a crown to win, a hell to escape, and a heaven to make sure of! You have many strong corruptions to weaken, and many weak graces to strengthen! You have many temptations to withstand, and many afflictions to bear! You have many mercies to improve, and many duties to perform! Therefore endeavor to improve your time!

All the time God allows us--is little enough to perform the task which he allots us! Therefore, dear Christians, "Redeem the time!" Ephesians 5:16. If much of your time is past--let no more of your time be wasted! How much the longer our time has been--the shorter our time shall be. Oh! that every step our souls take, might be towards heaven. Oh! and that you would make sure of God today, because next day you are not sure of yourselves. For the Lord's sake--improve your time! For your soul's sake--redeem your time! The lawyer will not lose his opportunity, the sailor will not lose his tide, the tradesman will not lose his bargain, the farmer will not lose his season--and will you lose your precious season? If you lose your season--you lose your soul. There is but one heaven--miss that--and where will you take up your eternal lodging, but in hell? There is no preparing for heaven under ground, for those that have lost their time above ground. The great hindrance of well-living, is the expectation of long-living. Many think not of living any better--until they think of not living any longer. Oh, how just is it--that they should miss of heaven at the last! Now is the time of grace to accept of you--and now is the time for you to accept of grace.

"Today! Today! Today!" says God, thrice in one chapter, Hebrews 3:1-19. Today! in Hebrews 3:7; Today! in Hebrews 3:13; Today! in Hebrews 3:15. Oh--but sinners say, "Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Tomorrow!" Alas! sirs, one today--is better than ten tomorrows. Today is your living day, tomorrow may be your dying day; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, do not put it off. Now--if ever, now--forever, now--or never--be up and be doing--lest you be undone forever.

12. Learn humility--from Christ's humility. "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:29

Humility makes a man like an angel. For lack of humility--some angels became devils! Proud sinners are fit companions for none but proud devils! The most lowly Christian--is the most lovely Christian. A believer is like a vessel in the sea: the more it fills--the more it sinks! None live so humble on earth--as those who live highest in heaven. Do but see how one of the best of saints looks upon himself--as one of the least of saints, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints," said the great Paul in Ephesians 3:8. The most holy men--are always the most lowly men. Where humility is the corner-stone, there piety is the top-stone. It is good to have true thoughts of ourselves. The coat of humility--should always be worn on the back of Christianity. "Clothe yourselves with humility." 1 Peter 5:5

God Almighty has two houses in which he dwells: his city-house, and his country-house. His city-house is the heaven of heavens; and his country-house is the humble and lowly heart! Isaiah 57:15, "I dwell in the high and holy place," that is, in heaven, God's city-house; "and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit," that is his country house. Humility is a 'Bethel' for God's dwelling-place! Pride is a 'Babel' for the devil's residence. If you do not keep pride out of your soul, and your soul out of pride--pride will keep your soul out of heaven!

I will not say a poor man is never proud--but I will say a proud man is never godly. James 4:16, "God resists the proud--but gives grace to the humble." The face of piety, shines brightest through the mask of humility.

"Clothe yourselves with humility." Of all garments, humility best fits Christians, and best adorns their profession. God will not endure that any man should think well of himself--but Himself. A Christian should look with one eye upon God's grace--to keep him thankful; and with the other eye upon himself--to keep him mournful. When you begin to grow proud of your glistening feathers--look down upon your black feet! Revelation 4:10, "The twenty-four elders fall down before the throne, and cast down their crowns before him who sits on the throne." The only way of keeping our crowns on our heads--is the casting them down at Christ's feet! Alas! sirs--what are you proud of? Are you proud--of your riches, of your honors, of your relations, of your beauty, of your strength? Alas! alas! these are poor base things to boast in! When men glory in their pride--God stains the pride of their glory!

Oh, go to the graves of those who have died before you. Are not their bones scattered, their eyes rotted, their flesh consumed, their mouth corrupted! Where now are their ruddy lips, their lovely cheeks, their fluent tongue, their sparkling eyes, their flowing hair? Are they not all gone, as a dream? And where will you be before long? And will you be proud of these things? A humble heart knows no fountain--but God's grace; and an upright man knows no end--but God's glory. "I hate pride and arrogance!" Proverbs 8:13. "He is able to humble those who walk in pride!" Daniel 4:37.

13. Be altogether Christians. The gospel does not only require that we should be excellent Christians--but that we should be diligent Christians. The more glorious dispensations you live under--the more gracious conversation you should have. Spiritual actions, will make you look lovely in the eyes of spiritual Christians. The more you have of God in you--the more you shall have of good with you. The clearer the lamp of grace burns on earth--the clearer the Sun of glory shall shine in heaven. We live--by dying to ourselves; and die--by living in ourselves.

Christians should be burning lamps--as well as shining lamps. Should we walk in darkness--whose Father is light? Shall the tongue be found lying continually to men--which was found praying so earnestly to God? Shall those be found gazing on sinful objects--who were found reading of sacred oracles? Shall such as have received Christ's holy wages--fight under Satan's vile colors? Beloved, either let your works be according to your profession; or else let your profession be according to your works. Never put on your fair suit of profession--to do your foul work of corruption! Never put on Christ's livery--and do Satan's drudgery.

"Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." "Not everyone who says unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven--but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Oh, that men's tongues should be larger than their hands! In words they

profess him--but in works they deny him! Many set a crown of glory on the head of Christ by a good profession; but place a crown of thorns on the head of Christ by an evil life. "They worshiped the Lord--but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought." 2 Kings 17:33

Alas! beloved, what good will your profession do you--if you do not make good your profession? "All that glitters--is not gold." It is better never to glitter--than not to be gold. Either take oil in your lamps--or throw away your lamps! The almost Christian--shall be but almost saved!

Therefore my brethren, let me beseech you, be altogether Christians; be right, upright Christians, be sincere Christians, be as godly as the godly in Psalms 15:1-4. Who is the upright man? Who is the right, upright Christian? "He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart," and so he goes on. If you would keep yourselves unspotted from the world, you must keep yourselves unspotted in the world. Oh! be not vain--in a vain world! The loose walkings of professors--are the reproaches of professors. Were Abraham now on earth, how would the father of the faithful blush to see their actions, who call themselves his offspring? Oh! there are some men who think themselves too good to go to hell--but God thinks them too bad to go to heaven! Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation, Genesis 6:9; he was not a sinner among those who were saints; but he was a saint among those who were sinners. He walked with God--when others walked in iniquity. He was a just man, and like unto God--though there was not another man, like unto him. The primitive Christians were the best of Christians; they knew little--but did much. We know much--but do little. Oh! sirs, if the service of God is bad--why do you set forth in it? Be altogether Christians--or else be not Christians at all. It is good to profess--but it is better to practice. Yes, of the two, practice without profession, is better than profession without practice! We must not be offended at the professors of religion, because they are not all religious, who make a profession. Though there are many professors who are not true believers--yet there are no true believers, but are professors. Those who make a good profession, are sure to make their profession good.

14. Let it be your aim in duty--to give God your heart in duty. "My son--give me your heart!" Proverbs 23:26. You see, God calls for the heart! The heart is that field from which God expects the most plentiful crop of glory. God bears a greater respect to your hearts--than he does to your works. God looks most--when men look least. If the heart is for God--then all is for God: our affections, our wills, our desires, our time, our strength, our tears, our alms, our prayers, our estates, our bodies, our souls. For the heart is the fort-royal, that commands all the rest. The eye, the ear, the hand, the tongue, the head, the foot--the heart commands all these. Now, if God has the heart--he has all; if he has not the heart--he has none. The heart of obedience--is the obedience of the heart. As the body is at the command of the soul that rules it--so should the soul be at the command of God who gave it. 1 Corinthians 6:20, "You are bought with a price," says the apostle, "therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits." He who is all in all for us--would have that which is all in all in us. The heart is the royal castle, where the King of Glory takes up his lodging. That which is most worthy in us--should be given to him who is most worthy of us. The body is but the cabinet--the soul is the jewel. The body is but the shell--the soul is the kernel. The soul is the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of angels, and the envy of devils! The devil knows that if there is any good treasure, it is in our hearts! And he would gladly have the key of this cabinet--that he might rob us of our jewel! The devil would gladly have the key of our hearts.

As we commit our estate into the hand of men, so we should commit our hearts into the hands of God. But alas! man has no desire to give, what God has a desire to have. "This people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips--but their hearts are far from me!" Matthew 15:8.

Alas! too often we have our hearts to seek--when we come to seek God. You may keep your duty to yourselves, if you do not give your heart to God. A duty that is heartless--is a duty that is fruitless. You can never give God the heart of your service--if you do not give him the heart in your service. The heart should be the first that comes into duty, and the last that goes out of duty. Good words without the heart, are but flattery; and good works without the heart, are but hypocrisy. Beloved, for your poor souls' sake: let words and works go together; let your tongue and hearts go together; let your lips and lives go together; let your prayer and practice go together. If your duties do not eat out the heart of your sins--your sins will eat out the heart of your duties! A grain of works, is better than a flood of words. A heart without words--is better than words without a heart. A little done with the heart--is better than a great deal done without the heart.

15. Be diligent in the means--but do not make an idol of the means.

"Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Peter 1:10. It is our present business--to make sure our future blessedness. When estates, and honors, and life, and friends, and pleasures, cannot be made sure--let future blessedness be made sure. For, you see, by daily experience, earthly blessings cannot be made sure. 2 Timothy 6. 19, "Lay up for yourselves a good foundation." See what the apostle says, "Lay up for yourselves a good foundation." And why? That you may lay hold on eternal life. There is no landing on the shore of felicity--without sailing on the bark of fidelity.

Php 2:12, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." Until you attain to firm salvation--you will never be free from great temptation. Luke 13:24, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate!" Who would not strive for glory with the greatest diligence, and patiently wait for glory?

"Pray without ceasing," 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Pray continually, though you are not continually at praying. Our daily bread--calls for daily prayers. Every day, begin and end the day with God; let prayer be your first work and your last work every day. Oh, Christian, lock up your heart with prayer--and give God the key! Are you called by the name of Christ--and will not you call upon the name of Christ? Take away spiritual breathings--and you take away spiritual living. We may pray always--and yet not be always at prayer. Christians can never lack a praying time--if they do not lack a praying frame. None can pray aright--but those that are new creatures; but all ought to pray--because they are creatures. A spiritual man may pray carnally--but a carnal man cannot pray spiritually. Prayer fetches an angel out of heaven to fetch Peter out of prison; he prayed heartily and speeds happily. The gift of prayer may have praise from men--but it is the grace of prayer which has power with God. Prayer--never did man rightly make it--but God did quickly grant it. No Christian has so little of Christ--but he has matter of praising; and no Christian has so much of Christ--but he has matter of praying. Do not deny God faith in prayer--and God will not deny a faithful prayer. But then, in the second place--as you must be diligent in the means--so do not make an idol of means. Take up all duties in point of performance, and lay them down in point of dependence.

What is hearing without Christ--but like a cabinet without a jewel? What is receiving without Christ--but like an empty glass without a cordial? Duty can never have too much of our diligence--nor too little of our confidence. A believer does not do good works to live--but he lives to do good works. It is a bad thing for us to be something in ourselves--and to be nothing in Christ. We must undertake all our duties, and yet to overlook all our duties. The righteousness of Christ is so to be magnified--but the righteousness of Christians is not to be mentioned. When you have done all, then say, "We are unprofitable servants; we have only done our duty." Luke 17:10. We owe the life of our souls--to the death of our Savior. Duties are not destroyed by Christ--but they must be denied for Christ.

We have as much need of the Spirit to bring up our graces--as we have need of the Spirit to bring forth our graces. The clock of our hearts will stand still--unless he oil the wheels! "Rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Good works are so indigent--as none can be saved by them; and yet they are so excellent--as none can be saved without them. Duties, if Christ breathes not in them--a Christian grows not under them.

We must live in obedience to Christ alone. Many live more upon their customs--than they do upon Christ; more upon the prayers they make to God--than upon the God to whom they make their prayers. Duties are but dry pipes in themselves, though ever so meticulously worked out--until Christ fills them.

16. Take nothing upon trust--but all upon trial.

Though all gold glitters--yet all that glitters is not gold. All is not truth--which goes for truth. Mark, sirs, "Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. "Prove all things--hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:21. Prove all things, that is, test all things by the Scripture. Many hold fast before they test--but we must test before we hold fast.

Alas! there are many who are like infants, that swallow everything put into their mouths. Truly it is so with many men and women, whatever men say--down it goes! They will not take so much pains as to test the sayings of men, by the sayings of God. 'Oh,' they say, 'the men we hear are honest men, able and learned men!' But would you blindly trust them with your money? And will you take your beliefs upon trust, without trial? Only a fool would buy a jewel in a box, without first seeing it! Remember, Christians, that the whore's cup is gold without--but poison within! Revelation 17:4, "She had a golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness." The cup is of gold--but the poison is the rankest poison; methinks this cup is much cupped about. The learned men are grown so wise, that they have almost made the whole world into fools! "But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies!" 2 Peter 2:1. Oh! that there were not so many false teachers in these days. To counterfeit the coin of heaven, is treason against the King of heaven! And if this treason deserved hanging, very many deserve to be hanged! I have often thought upon Chrysostom's saying, preaching before a company of ministers, 'I do not know whether any of you clergyman are saved or not!' You will say, this is a strange saying of a minister to a company of ministers. Their calling is so weighty, their temptations so many--and their lives were so bad! They speak like angels of light--but they live like demons of darkness.

Oh, how desirous are men to put the fairest gloves--upon the foulest hands! Men are better characterized by what they do--than by what they speak. For many say--and not do. Therefore, beloved, do not believe their clever words, nor fair speeches, whereby they deceive the hearts of the poor ignorant people! "By good words and fair speeches," said the apostle, "they deceive the heart of the simple." God may reject those as copper, whom men do adore as gold.

It is ill dressing ourselves for the eternal world--by the looking-glass of this world. The Scriptures do not only present to us what God will do for man--but also what man must do for God. What is the reason that there are so many scribbling professors in the world--but because they write after such imperfect copies? The generality of people, will rather walk in the way that the most go--rather than in the way that the holiest go. Great men's vices are more imitated, than poor men's graces! But know, those who follow after others in sinning--will follow after others in suffering! We must not walk in the way that most trod--but in the straight and narrow Scripture way.

"Be followers of me" says Paul, "as I am of Christ." Where he follows Christ--we must follow him. But if Paul forsakes Christ--we must forsake Paul. If we will not take the world to be our leaders--we shall be sure to have them to be our troublers! If they cannot seduce us into an evil way--they will oppose us in our holy way. If they cannot scorch us with their fire--they will blacken us with their smoke! They will speak evil of you, because you do not run in their worldly way. Because you will not do evil with them, therefore they will say evil of you! But, sirs, whatever you do, follow those that follow Christ. Oh, that they would speak so much of God to others--and act so little for God themselves.

Now, beloved, I beseech you, that you would take nothing upon trust--but all upon trial. Try their ways, try their doctrines, try their sayings, try their worship--by the Word of truth; and if it is according to truth, and agreeable to truth, and bottomed on truth--then believe it, then receive it! If not, reject it, and tread it down as dirt under your feet; whoever it is, who brings it. Nay, if an angel from heaven comes and preaches any other doctrine, than the written Word declares--let him be eternally accursed! We ought not to receive it! "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you--let him be eternally condemned!" Galatians 1:8. Therefore, once more, let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, take nothing upon trust--but all upon trial.

### 01.03a. Section 3 contd

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17. Take those reproofs best--which you need most. Do not be angry with those who tell you the truth--nor with the truth that is told you, "Have I now become your enemy--by telling you the truth?" Galatians 4:16. He can be no true friend to you--who is a friend to your sins! And you can be no friend to yourself--if you are an enemy to him who tells you of your sins. Will you like him the worse--who tries to make you better? "Let a righteous man strike me--it is a kindness; let him rebuke me--it is oil on my head." Psalms 141:5. You see here that the godly man is not angry with reproof--but takes it as a kindness; it shall be a kindness, and as an excellent oil on his head. But the serpent, the more he is provoked, the more he gathers up his poison to spit at you. If Amos declares the Word of the Lord--the land is not able to bear all his words, Amos 7:10. If John the Baptist endeavors to take away the life of Herod's sins--Herod will take away the life of John the Baptist! Matthew 14:10. If the prophet goes about to expose the king's sins--he himself shall be imprisoned, 2 Chronicles 16:10. "The king was so angry with the prophet, that he put him into prison." Jerusalem will stone the prophets, until she has not one stone left upon another. Oh! that men should be so cruel--to those that intend their cure!

Wicked men cannot endure reproof. You allow the physician to tell you of any disease that is in your bodies; you allow your lawyer to show you any flaw that is in your estates. And what! must faithful preachers only flatter you, and deceive you, and cry, "Peace, peace!" until your souls drop into hell! Oh! we cannot, we will not, we must not! "Go out, and tell them whatever I tell you to say. Do not be afraid of them!" Jeremiah 1:17. "Command those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth." 1 Timothy 6:17. Great men, as well as poor men, must be admonished.

But, my brethren, there is a great deal of discretion to be used in reproof. Many reprove anger--with anger; and this is to lay one devil and raise another. Reproof should not be with passion--but with compassion; not with jeering--but with grieving; not with laughing--but with weeping! "I have told you often, and now I tell you weeping," Php 3:18. The apostle could not make mention of their sins, with dry eyes; his eyes were wet, because their eyes were dry.

It is the part of a godly man to reprove, though his reproof is not taken in good part. It is better to lose the smiles of men--than to lose the souls of men! The magistrates, they look to your peace; the lawyers, they look to your estate; the physicians look to your bodies, the ministers, they look to your souls. Ministers must draw the sword of reproof against men, and strike at them, and thrust at them. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness--but rather reprove them," Ephesians 5:11. We must not allow wicked men to walk in the devil's ways without reproof! We must reprove you wisely, sincerely, sharply; and when you mend your lives--we shall mend our language!

18. Labor more for the inward purity--than for the outward felicity.

"Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life." John 6:27. That man who is a laboring bee for earthly prosperity, will be but an idle drone for heavenly felicity. Gold in your bags will make you greater--but it is grace in your heart that will make you better. He is a rich man that lives upon his wealth--but he is a righteous man that lives upon his faith! A heavenly conversation is better than any earthly possession. It is a great mercy to have a portion in the world--but to have the world for a portion, is a great misery. Our affections were made for things that are above us, and not for the things that are below us. Colossians 3:1-2, "If you have been raised to new life with Christ," What then? "Set your hearts on things above! Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things!" The things of this life--do not have the promise of godliness--but godliness has the promise of the things of this life.

Inward piety is the best friend to outward felicity--though outward felicity be many times the worst enemy to inward piety. The ways of iniquity are the ways of beggary. You make heaven your throne to serve it--and God will make the earth your foot-stool to serve you. Inward piety is the ready road to outward plenty. 1 Timothy 4:8, "Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Oh what an excellent jewel is godliness! We should part with all--for godliness! We should account all other things but dung and dirt--to gain godliness!

But, alas! some men are so in love with their golden bags, that they will ride with all possible haste to hell--if they are but paid well for their pains! They look upon gain as the highest good, and not upon godliness as the highest gain! They mind the present world so much--as if it would never have an ending! They mind the world to come so little--as if it would never have a beginning! The perishing things of this world--are all the happiness of the men of this world! "Who is the Almighty, and why should we obey him? What good will it do us if we pray?" Job 21:15. Oh, what wretched worldlings! Oh, what pains do men take to cover the flesh from nakedness, when their spirits are not clothed with the robes of righteousness?

They are diligent about what is temporal--but negligent about what is eternal! They are careful about dying vanities--but slothful about durable excellencies! They feast their bodies--but starve their souls! They lay up treasures on earth--but none in heaven! Oh! "Why do you spend money on what is not food, and your wages on what does not satisfy?" Isaiah 55:2. Riches have made good men worse--but they never made any bad man better. Usually the poorest on earth--are the richest in heaven. If riches would free from hell--oh then how few rich men would be damned. He who knocks at the creature's door for true happiness--will find but an empty house kept there. Oh, beloved, what is darkness, compared to light? What is gold, compared to grace? What is earth, compared to heaven? that you thus neglect the great things, the weighty things, the eternal things--and busy yourselves about toys and trifles! You have a crown to look after, a heaven to look after, a kingdom to look after!

I beseech you, beloved, labor more for inward holiness--than for outward happiness! Labor more for the seed of grace--than for the bag of gold! Labor more for inward piety--than for outward plenty! Labor more for an heavenly conversation--than for an earthly possession! The earth is for a saint's passage--but heaven is for a saint's portion. Oh, believer, while you live, you will find godliness gainful; and when you die, you will find godliness needful!

19. Live in love--and live in truth.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue--but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18. Let your love, Christians, be sincere, and not selfish.

Galatians 5:14, "Love your neighbor as yourself." How do you love yourself? How dearly do you love yourself? Why, just so you must love your neighbor! He who is not lacking in this duty, is lacking in no duty. Love is called both an old commandment, and a new commandment in 1 John 2:7-8. It is as old as the law of Moses, and yet as new as the gospel of Jesus Christ. A carnal man may love his friend--but it is a Christian man that loves his enemy. He who loved us when we were enemies, commands us to love our enemies. "Love your enemies," said our Lord, "bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who spitefully use you, and persecute you." A Christian should wish well--to those who wish him ill.

Oh, believers, let me beseech you, let me beg of you for your precious souls' sake--to live in love, and to live in truth. You are fellow-laborers, fellow-members, fellow-citizens, fellow-travelers, fellow-sufferers, fellow-heirs, fellow-servants; and will you not love one another! Remember, Christians, he who would not be his brother's keeper, would be his brother's butcher! "While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him!" Genesis 4:8.

All Christians have all the same father, God; the same head, Christ; the same guide, the Spirit; the same attendants, the angels; the same grace, faith; the same title, son; the same clothing, Christ's righteousness; the same glory, heaven. And shall we not love one another? He who loves himself, will not hate his brother; for while you are out of charity with your brother--God is out of charity with you; and you lose more for lack of God's love, than your brother loses for lack of your love!

Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue." Do you love the person of Christ--and hate the picture of Christ? Oh, sirs, remember the God of love--has commanded us to love one another. Beloved, it is a sad thing, and truly so sad, that it may make our very hearts bleed within us, to think that the Lamb's little flock--who are in strength the weakest, in riches the poorest, in number the fewest--that they should be in love the coldest! Is not this sad --that the little ones of Jesus Christ, that the lambs of Jesus Christ, should love one another so little? Oh, Christians, either lay your malice aside, or else God will lay you aside--to your great sorrow! He who will be angry and sin not--must not be angry but with sin.

Therefore, dear Christians, let me beseech you to love one another. Oh, that I could but speak out how much I desire love to one another! Oh, it will be a happy day when all the people of God are knit together in love and affection! Oh, sirs, if God had commanded some great thing of us, some burdensome thing of us--it might have been excused! But, alas! it is no more but to love our brethren--and shall we deny this to him? But you may say, How should we believers love one another? I answer:

First, You should highly esteem one another as pearls--in comparison of other men! This is how God looks on his people. God calls his people his jewels, his treasures, his glory and his portion--when he calls wicked men dogs, vipers, swine, briars and thorns! You should be very high in one another's affections.

Secondly, You should delight in the company of one another, in the society of each other! God delights in the society of saints--and so should you.

Thirdly, You should be ready to help one another, and to do good for one another, and to share with one another. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "It is a more blessed to give--than to receive."

Fourthly, Admonish one another. Exhort one another, stir up one another to love, and to do good works.

Fifthly, Sympathize one with one another. Fellow-members should be fellow-feelers; so did Moses, and Jeremiah; and old Eli--his heart was broken before his neck was broken. Dear Christians, let me beseech you, let me beg of you--to love one another! God calls us to love--who is love itself.

20. Set out for God at your beginning--and hold out with God until your ending. As there are none too old for eternity--so there are none too young for mortality, "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth," Ecclesiastes 12:1. We are born to serve God. It is better we had never been born--than not serve him. Man is indebted to God--for what he has; but God is not indebted to man--for what he does. It is a greater glory to us--that we serve God; than it is to God--that we serve him. It is not he--who is made happy by us; but we--who are made happy by him. He needs not such servants as we are on earth--but we need such a Master as he is in heaven. He will be everlastingly blessed without us--but we will be everlastingly cursed without him.

"Of him, and through him, and to him are all things--to whom be glory forever. Amen." Romans 11:36. It is sad, my beloved, it is sad--that we should live so long in the world, and do so little good; or that we should live so little in the world, and do so much evil. Oh, you must never imagine that you can dance with the devil all day--and sup with Christ at night! You can never go from Delilah's lap--to Abraham's bosom! If salvation were easy to come by--it would be slightly set by. There is no obtaining of what is promised--but by fulfilling what is commanded. Do not neglect the race of holiness, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which none shall see God!" Hebrews 12:14.

Beloved, there are many young people in the world, who are very wicked in the world. They walk in darkness, and do the works of darkness. They are young in years--but old in sin. They are very vain--in a vain world. They sin with delight--and make sin their delight. I beseech you to meditate on Ecclesiastes 11:9, "Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see!" Oh this is brave indeed--if it would always last! But after the flash of lightning, comes the clap of thunder! Mark what follows, "BUT know that for all these things--God will bring you to judgment!" Do you but see here, sirs. Oh were it not for this BUT--how brave wicked men would be! "BUT know that for all these things--God will bring you to judgment!" For all your lusts, and for all your pride, and for all your worldliness and selfishness--you shall be brought to judgment! After all your present receiving, you must be brought to your future reckoning.

Oh, therefore, let nothing be done in this world--which cannot be answered for in the eternal world. I beseech you who are young--to serve God, to love God, to honor God, to obey God in your youthful days. "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth!" The flower of life is Christ's setting--and shall it be of the devil's plucking? Will you hang the most sparkling ring of your young years--on the devil's ear! Oh! it is hard casting off the devil's yoke--when we have worn it so long on our neck! Oh, young people! If God's today is too soon for your repentance, your tomorrow will

be too late for God's acceptance. You can never come too soon to God, nor stay too long with God!

He shall be happy in the end--who is holy to the end. "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life," Revelation 2:10. Oh, hold on--and hold out to the end! He who draws back from profession, shall be kept back from salvation! He who endures in the faith shall be saved; but he who departs from the faith shall be damned! "If any man draws back--my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Hebrews 10:38. So I say to you all, both young and old, "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58.

If God gives us that grace which is not due to us--shall we deny him that glory which is due to him? If God makes our natures gracious--we should make his name glorious. Oh! be still with God! "When I awake, I am still with you!" Psalms 139:18. David was least alone--when he was most alone! There cannot be a better being for us--than for us to be with God.

## S. Christ's Voice to London

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Christ's Voice to London by William Dyer

(Preached in London during the time of the 'Great Plague' of 1665-1666. The 'Great Plague' was a massive outbreak of disease, which killed an estimated 100,000 people, 20% of London's population.)

"They provoked the Lord to anger by their wicked deeds—so a plague broke out among them!"  
Psalms 106:29

"Listen! The Lord is calling to the city—Hear the Lord and the One who appointed it!" Micah 6:9  
The Epistle to the Reader

Courteous Reader,

I hope these sermons will find as good acceptance with you, as the former; I confess this encouraged me, when I considered how my former treatises were received and embraced by the Lord's people in all parts of this kingdom, as appears by many thousands of them which have been printed and sold. And though I have met with many discouragements from slanderers, who have bent their tongues like a bow, for lies, as if I had done that which was never in my thoughts, nor in my heart, much less in practice; and though they had as little cause to report it of me, as of any man—yet how confidently did some report, and others believe, those abominable lies, as if I had lost my first love, and was returning again to Egypt! Oh! what will prejudice and malice will not do? But why should I be troubled at this, seeing it was so with the holy apostle, who went through evil report as well as good?

I rejoice that the Lord has made me any way instrumental in doing good, and in that he has kept me close to himself, and this is my crown and rejoicing. Now, that the only wise God may keep you and me by his power through faith unto salvation, that we may glorify him here, and reign with him hereafter, is the desire and prayer of him who desires the good of your soul,

William Dyer

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hears my voice, and opens the door—I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20  
The Holy Scriptures are the mysteries of God;

Christ is the mystery of the Scriptures; grace is the mystery of Christ, 1 Timothy 3:16. The Lord Jesus is our life, and the way to life, 1 Corinthians 2:7. To know him savingly, believingly, and experimentally, is life eternal, John 17:3, "I am the way," says Christ, John 14:6.

The old and good way, Jeremiah 6:16.

The new and living way, Hebrews 10:20.

The strait and narrow way, Matthew 7:24. And because poor sinners are by nature the children of wrath, and all gone out of the way, "having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," Ephesians 4:18; and become "wretched and miserable, poor and blind, and naked," like the Laodiceans, spoken of in Ephesians 4:10; therefore the Lord Jesus, who is full of love, full of grace, and full of pity to poor lost sinners, does graciously invite them to come to him, that he may "enrich them with gold, and clothe them with white clothing, and anoint their eyes with eye-salve, that they may see," Ephesians 4:18. And further, to view his willingness and readiness to save souls: he tells us in the text, that he stands at the door and knocks, that "If any man hears my voice, and opens the door—I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." In these words you have three general parts.

1. God's gracious offer to man: "Behold I stand at the door and knock."
2. Man's duty in relation to God's gracious offer: "If any man hears my voice, and opens the door."
3. God's gracious promise in relation to man's duty: "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

These words being thus opened, there flows from them four points of doctrine:

Doctrine 1. There is a marvelous willingness in the heart of God and Christ, to save and receive poor lost sinners.

Doctrine 2. That the hearts of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.

Doctrine 3. That it is the duty and great concernment of all men—to hear God's voice, and to open the door.

Doctrine 4. That whoever will but hear Christ's voice, and open the door—he will come in to them, and sup with them, and they with him.

Neither time nor strength, beloved, will give me leave to handle all these doctrines separately; therefore I shall insist but upon one of them, which is the second, 'That the hearts of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.' In the prosecution of this point, I shall do two things:

1. OPEN it—that you may see it.
2. Prove it—that you may believe it.

First, In the opening of it, there are three things to be explained:

1. The bars.
2. The voice.
3. The doors.

1st, I will show you what the BARS are—which bolt the doors of sinners hearts against Christ.

1. The bar of ignorance.
2. The bar of unbelief.

3. The bar of self-conceitedness.
4. The bar of earthly-mindedness.
5. The bar of prejudice.
6. The bar of hardness of heart.

These, my beloved, are the cursed bars, which bar God and Christ and the Holy Spirit out of the heart.

I shall begin first with the bar of IGNORANCE, and in that I shall show you these three things:

1. What ignorance is.
2. What sinners are ignorant of.
3. The mischievousness of this sin of ignorance.

First, What ignorance is. Ignorance is the lack of knowledge—or darkness of the understanding; for, said the apostle Paul, Ephesians 4:18, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Here you may see what ignorance is—the apostle calls it darkness and blindness. Likewise in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, "But if our gospel be hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing. The god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." So ignorance is darkness of mind, blindness of heart, and lack of knowledge and spiritual understanding in the soul.

Secondly, What are sinners ignorant of?

They are ignorant of God, they are ignorant of Christ, they are ignorant of the Spirit, they are ignorant of the Word, they are ignorant of their own misery, they are ignorant of the necessity of being born again, of being new creatures, of being converted, and turned from darkness to light, from death to life, and from the power of Satan to the living God! Such things as these, I say they are ignorant of—and this is that which keeps poor souls from going to Christ.

Oh, beloved, we have many of those among us who are ignorant. It was said of the priests, the sons of Eli, that they were sons of Belial, and knew not the Lord, 1 Samuel 18:1-30. So in the prophecy of Jeremiah, (Jeremiah 2:8) it is said, "The priests did not ask, 'Where is the Lord?' Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied by Baal, following worthless idols!" Just so, were the Pharisees wereblind leaders of the blind, Matthew 15:14. Would to God there were no such among our priests this day! May not that charge be drawn up against us now, as it was against Israel, "Hear the word of the Lord, you Israelites, because the Lord has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no knowledge of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away. You stumble day and night, and the prophets stumble with you. My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children. The more the priests increased, the more they sinned against me; they

exchanged their Glory for something disgraceful. They feed on the sins of my people and relish their wickedness. And it will be—Like people, like priests. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds!" Hosea 4:1-9. Thus men err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God! Matthew 22:29.

Thirdly, the mischievousness of this sin of ignorance.

1. Ignorance is that which keeps men from knowing God.
2. Ignorance is that which keeps men from pleasing God.
3. Ignorance is that which keeps men from coming to God.
4. Ignorance hinders men from having a property in God.
5. Ignorance is that which hardens the heart against God.

Oh, cursed and mischievous ignorance! What sin is like unto this? This is that which darkens, which hardens, which binds, and bars the doors of sinners' hearts against Christ! "Oh, that you had known," says our dear Lord, "the things that belong to your peace," Luke 19:42. But because they are "a people of no understanding, therefore he who made them will have no mercy on them, and he who formed them will show them no favor," Isaiah 27:11. Thus, my beloved, I have showed you what a wretched and miserable state such are in—who are thus ignorant. The second bar which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart, is UNBELIEF.

1. Unbelief makes men give no credit to the report of the gospel.
2. Unbelief makes men refuse to yield that lovely and loyal subjection to Christ, as their Lord.
3. Where unbelief reigns, it keeps off the heart from confidently believing on Christ, for all the blessings that we may have in him—and so keeps out the love of our souls. Unbelief is that which clips the wings of his mercy, "So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief!" Hebrews 3:19. Unbelief is that which binds the hand of his power, Matthew 13:58. "And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." Unbelief is that which lets the soul into perdition, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever does not believe in the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." John 3:36. Revelation 21:8, "The unbelieving shall have their portion in the lake of fire, which is the second death." Unbelief is that which hardens the heart, and causes it to depart from God, "See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness!" Hebrews 3:12-13.

Oh, beloved, unbelief also is that which gives God the lie! "Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son!" 1 John 5:10. They believe not his promise, they fear not his threatenings, nor do they hearken to the voice of his Word! Though he sets life and death before them, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet—yet they go on in the vain imaginations of their hearts, to add sin to sin, putting the evil day far away—and draw iniquity with the cords of vanity, and sin, as it were, with a cart-rope!

Oh, beloved, this is the state and condition of unbelievers, this is one of the bars which bolts Christ out of the heart! As all believers are in a state of salvation, so all unbelievers are in a state of damnation, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son!" John 3:18. The third bar which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart, is SELF-CONCEIT.

First, A self-conceited man is one who supposes himself to be what he is not. Galatians 6:3, "If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing—he deceives himself."

Secondly, A self-conceited man is one who glories in his works, and despises others, "To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'" Luke 18:9-12. But the tax collector, whom he despised, went away justified, "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Luke 18:14

Thirdly, A self-conceited man is the farthest from heaven of any man! "I tell you the truth, corrupt tax collectors and harlots will get into the Kingdom of God before you do!" says our Savior to the self-conceited Pharisee, Matthew 21:31.

Fourthly, A self-conceited man lives the most secure—while in a state of sin and misery, "Those who hear the warnings of this curse should not congratulate themselves, thinking, 'I am safe, even though I am following the desires of my own stubborn heart.' This would lead to utter ruin!" Deuteronomy 29:19.

Fifthly, A self-conceited man is the hardest to be wrought upon, and convinced of the state and condition that he is truly in—of any man; because he thinks himself righteous and holy enough, and good and sound enough. Thus it was with the scribes and pharisees, who had such high thoughts of themselves, that they thought themselves to be the most holy people in the world! But mark what Christ says to them, Matthew 9:12. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." So also it is said, John 7:48, "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No!" Note, these rulers and Pharisees were very hard to be convinced, and brought to own the truth.

Sixthly, A self-conceited man is one who thinks that God is made up of nothing but mercy, and therefore lives in his sins, and pleases himself with the thought that God is nothing but mercy. He lies still in the ditch of sin, and cries, 'God help me!'—but never endeavors to come out. And though the Lord waits to be gracious—yet the Lord is a God of justice and judgment as well as of mercy. "For the Lord is a God of justice!" Isaiah 30:18.

Oh, this is the sad and miserable condition of a self-conceited man! This is that which keeps him from closing with Christ! This is that cursed bar which bolts the door of sinners hearts against Christ! The fourth bar which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart, is EARTHLY-MINDEDNESS.

First, An earthly-minded man is one who minds the things of this world—more than he does Jesus Christ. This was the case of the rich young man in the gospel, who came to Christ, and asked him,

saying, "What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus bids him keep the commandments; he replied unto him, "All these I have kept from my youth up—what more do I lack?" Jesus says unto him, "If you will be perfect, sell that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven." But he being an earthly-minded man, would not embrace the counsel of Christ—but went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions, Matthew 19:20-22.

Secondly, An earthly-minded man, is one who will leave the work of God, to embrace this present world; this was Paul's lament over Demas, 2 Timothy 4:10, "For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." So also in Php 2:21 he says, "Everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

Thirdly, An earthly-minded man is one who will preach false doctrine, for the love of money, and filthy lucre's sake. 1 Timothy 4:10, "For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows!" Titus 1:10-11, "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, who teach things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." 2 Peter 2:15, "They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness." Oh, beloved! I could wish that this were not so much practiced in this our day; but, alas! what shall I say? such is the earthly-mindedness of many of the ministers, that I may say of them, as the blessed apostle Paul of some in his day, Php 3:19, "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things."

Fourthly, An earthly-minded man is one who trusts in his riches, and not in God. Proverbs 11:28, "He who trusts in his riches shall fall." Psalms 49:6-7, "Those who trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Therefore, "If riches increase—do not set your heart upon them," Psalms 62:10. The blessed apostle Paul does charge those who are rich in this world, "That they trust not in uncertain riches—but in the living God, who gives all things richly to enjoy," 1 Timothy 6:17.

Thus you may see, my beloved, that whoever trusts in uncertain riches more than in God, is an earthly-minded man; it is that which bars men out of the kingdom of heaven. It is the word of Christ to his disciples, Mark 10:24-25, "How hard is it for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Oh, beloved, it is a snare, it is idolatry, Colossians 3:5. And covetousness, which is idolatry, is the root of all evil, 1 Timothy 6:10, "For the love of money is the root of all evil."

Thus earthly-mindedness, or covetousness, is another great sin which keeps souls from going to Christ for life and salvation, "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'" Luke 14:18-20. The fourth bar which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart, is PREJUDICE. Wicked and sinful men have a great prejudice against Christ; that is, against these three things of Christ.

First, they have a prejudice against his doctrine. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him," John 6:60, John 6:66. "The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching?" Mark 1:27. Sinners have a great prejudice against the doctrine and worship of Christ; they think it too pure, too spiritual, and too powerful for them to hear.

Secondly, they have a great prejudice against the ministers or ambassadors of Christ; they say of them as Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him, for he never prophesies good of me!" 1 Kings 22:8. So in 1 Kings 18:17. Ahab said unto Elijah, "Is it really you, you troublemaker of Israel?" So Jeremiah complains of this, saying, "I am mocked every day; everyone laughs at me, because the Word of the Lord has brought me insult and reproach all day long," Jeremiah 20:7-8. So in Acts 24:5. it is so of Paul, "We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect." All this is according to the Word of our blessed Lord, Matthew 10:22, "And you shall be hated by all men, for my name's sake."

Thirdly, Sinners have a great prejudice against the members of Christ, and that for four reasons:

1. Because they are poor. Luke 12:22-23, 1 Corinthians 1:26, 1 Corinthians 1:30.
2. Because they are but few. Luke 12:32, Matthew 7:14. Deuteronomy 7:7, "For you were the fewest of all people." Revelation 3:4, "Yet there are a few in the church in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes with evil. They will walk with me in white, for they are worthy."
3. Because they are unlearned in the account of men. This is said of Christ, John 7:15, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" Also of Peter and John it is said, Acts 4:13, "And when they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." "Have you been led astray, too?" the Pharisees mocked. "Is there a single one of us rulers or Pharisees who believes in him? This foolish crowd follows him, but they are ignorant of the law. God's curse is on them!" John 7:47-49 .
4. Because they will not conform to men's inventions. Daniel 3:18, "Be it known unto you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you have set up!" "Why do your disciples disobey our age-old tradition?" they demanded. "They ignore our tradition of ceremonial hand washing before they eat." Jesus replied, 'And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God?' Matthew 15:2-3. See also Acts 5:28-29, "Didn't we tell you never again to teach in this man's name?" he demanded. "Instead, you have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching about him, and you want to make us responsible for his death!" But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than any human authority!" See also Colossians 2:21-22, "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!" These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings." Oh, my dear brethren, this cursed prejudice is that which keeps sinners from receiving of the love of the truth—and a bar which bolts Christ out of the heart. The sixth bar which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart, is **HARDNESS OF HEART**.

1. They are hardened against God. Job 9:4, "Who has hardened himself against God, and has prospered?"

2. Their hearts are hardened against his mercy—so that it does not draw them. Romans 2:4-5, "Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed!"

3. Their hearts are hardened against his judgments—so that they do not tremble at them! As it is said, Exodus 8:32, "And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also." As it is also said, Jeremiah 5:22, "Should you not fear me?" declares the Lord. "Should you not tremble in my presence?"

4. Their hearts are hardened against his Word, that it does not reform them. "A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy!" Proverbs 29:1. "You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you!" Psalms 50:17. See Jeremiah 44:16-17. "We will not listen to the message you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord! We will do whatever we want. We will burn incense and pour out liquid offerings to the Queen of Heaven just as much as we like."

5. Their hearts are hardened against the Spirit of God—that He does not melt them. Genesis 6:3, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." As Stephen said to the Jews in Acts 7:51, "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"

6. Their hearts are hardened against all the means of grace, or gracious invitations from the people of God, "Your ancestors refused to listen to this message. They stubbornly turned away and put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing. They made their hearts as hard as stone, so they could not hear the instructions or the messages that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry!" Zechariah 7:11-12. "They are like the deaf adder, that has stopped its ears, that will not heed the tune of the charmer, however skillful the enchanter may be!" Psalms 58:4-5. Oh, dear friends! this is another bar which bolts Christ out of the hearts of poor sinners.

Thus beloved, I have showed you what the bars are which bolt the doors of our hearts against Christ, that we do not hear his voice and open the door.

2dly, The second thing which is here to be explained, is—what this VOICE is, which sinners are to hear. It is the voice of Christ! He is speaking to poor sinners, to open the door of their hearts, that he may come in and sup with them.

There are two sort of voices by which Christ speaks to the soul—inward voices and outward voices.

First, Christ speaks to us by INWARD voices:

1. Their voice of conscience. The Lord Jesus speaks to sinners by their consciences. It is said of the Jews, (John 8:9) they were convicted by their own consciences. So Paul says in Romans 9:1, "My conscience bears me witness." And of the Gentiles Paul says, (Romans 2:15) that "they did by nature the things contained in the law, their conscience also bearing them witness." And as Paul says, 2 Corinthians 1:12,

"Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." Oh, friends! God preaches to you many times by your consciences, which speaks to you secretly and powerfully, condemning and reproving you for iniquities. Oh! therefore, hear the voice of conscience, for it is the voice of Christ! Hear, I say, and hearken to it, and let Christ in, that he may sup with you!

2. Christ speaks to us by the voice of his Spirit, as he did to the old world, Genesis 6:3, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." And as he did to the Jews, Acts 7:51, "You always resist the Holy Spirit! As your fathers did, so do you." So in John 16:8, Christ tells us, that the Spirit would convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Oh, the ever blessed God speaks to the world by his blessed Spirit, striving with them, convincing them, and reproving of them for their iniquities, that their souls may believe in him, and live with him to all eternity!

Secondly, Christ speaks to us by OUTWARD voices:

1. By the voice of his Word—which is the reading and preaching of the gospel; that is, the word of reconciliation. Oh, sinner! when you hear the Word—you hear the voice of Christ! Colossians 1:5, "You have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel." "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life!" John 5:39-40. The voice of the Scriptures—is the voice of Christ! As Christ speaks to us by them here—so he will judge by them hereafter! Romans 2:16, "God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, according to my gospel." See John 12:48, where Christ says, "But all who reject me and my message will be judged on the day of judgment, by the Word I have spoken."

2. Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his rod—by afflictions, and tribulations, and judgments. "Listen! The Lord is calling to the city, Hear the rod and the One who appointed it!" Micah 6:9

3. Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his servants. "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant?" Isaiah 50:10. So in 2 Corinthians 5:20, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." So in Matthew 18:1-35, "He who hears you, hears me." Oh, sinner! Christ speaks to you by the voice of his servants, by his ministers and members, who beseech you, and entreat you to be reconciled, that you may have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Having thus briefly showed you what the voices are,

3rdly, I shall in the third place, show you what the DOOR is, that Christ stands and knocks at, which sinners are to open and let him in.

1. The first door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of their thoughts. We must open the door of our thoughts to him, that God may be in our thoughts, and Christ in our thoughts, and the Spirit of life and power in our thoughts, and eternity in our thoughts, heaven and judgment in our thoughts! "Keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart," 1 Chronicles 29:18. "How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them!" Psalms 139:17. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, your comforts delight my soul," Psalm 19:29. Oh! this is the first door of our hearts, which believers open to their beloved Lord.

2. The second door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of consideration. "Oh, that they were wise, and understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Deuteronomy 32:29. "The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not consider!" Isaiah 1:3. "They furnish wine and lovely music at their grand parties—lyre and harp, tambourine and flute—but they never think about the Lord or notice what he is doing!" Isaiah 5:12. But those who have opened this door to Christ—they consider their ways, "The upright considers his ways," Proverbs 21:29. "Listen to this; stop and consider God's wonders!" Job 37:14. "But be sure to fear the Lord and faithfully serve him. Consider all the wonderful things he has done for you!" 1 Samuel 12:24. "Therefore thus says the Lord Almighty, consider your ways," Haggai 1:5. Consideration is the second door of the heart.

3. The third door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of love and affection. "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength," Deuteronomy 6:5. "If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ—that person is cursed!" 1 Corinthians 16:22. "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity," Ephesians 6:24. "Set your affections on things above, and not on things beneath," Colossians 3:2. This door of love and affection must be opened to Christ, that he may come into your hearts, and be your nearest and dearest, your joy and delight, that you may have reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, and communion with the Holy Spirit. Affection is the third door of the heart.

4. The fourth door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of desire—or else he will not come into our hearts, and sup with us. Oh, sinners! you must desire and thirst after Christ vehemently, and say, as the church does in the Song of Songs, "Make haste, my beloved, and be like to a roe or to a young deer upon the mountains of spices!"

Just so in Revelation 22:20, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Just so with the Psalmist in Psalms 73:25-26, "Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever!" Just so with the church, Isaiah 26:9, "All night long I search for you; in the morning I earnestly seek for God. For the desire of my soul is to your name, and to the remembrance of you." Just so with Paul, "I desire to know nothing among you—except Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Corinthians 2:2. Desire is the fourth door of the heart which you must open to Christ, without which there is no supping with him, nor he with you.

5. The fifth door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of estimation; that is, to prize him, and to value him as more precious than all other things besides. So do believers, 1 Peter 2:7, "Unto you therefore who believe—he is precious." And, with Paul, "count all things but dung and dirt to gain him!" And, also with Moses, "to esteem the reproach of Christ, as greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," Hebrews 11:26. Oh! these blessed souls that have opened this door to Christ, he is to them—all lovely, the chief among ten thousand; yes, he is better than rubies, "and all that you can desire are not to be compared unto him!" So it must be with you, poor souls—you must look upon Christ as most lovely, most precious, most desirable, and most glorious; thus he is to the Father, to the holy angels, and to the saints. This is the fifth door of the heart.

6. The sixth door which sinners should open unto Christ—is the door of a godly life, which sinners as well as saints must open to Christ, "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior." Php 3:20, "For the grace of God

that brings salvation, has appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Titus 2:11-12. "Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this—what holy and godly lives you should live!" 2 Peter 3:11. "Above all, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." Php 1:27. This is the sixth door of the heart, a godly life; this also must be opened to Christ, that he may come in, and sup with us, and we with him, that our souls may have fellowship and communion with him. And thus I have briefly showed you, beloved, what the doors are, which must be opened to Christ. Now, having done with the explanation, I come to the APPLICATION of the point. And as I have opened it unto you—that you might see it; and proved it unto you—that you might believe it; I shall now apply it—that you may receive it. Is it so, beloved, that the hearts of sinners are thus barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus?

Use 1. INFORMATION. See the sad and miserable condition of all unconverted people! They "are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked!" They are "without Christ, being strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Ephesians 2:12. Oh, sinners, who are graceless and Christless—this is your condition! And though this is sad—yet this is not all; for your hearts are barred and bolted against the Lord of life and glory. Oh, you who read this—how can you but tremble to think that your heart should be thus barred and bolted against your best friend, Jesus Christ, with ignorance, with unbelief, self-conceitedness, earthly-mindedness, prejudice, and hardness of heart—and yet all this while open to sin, to Satan, and the world—which are cruel enemies to the soul. That I may hasten you out of this condition, if it be the will of God, as the angel did Lot out of Sodom, (Genesis 19:1-38) I shall turn my discourse into an exhortation.

Use 2. EXHORTATION. And first of all, Let me exhort you whose hearts are thus barred and bolted against Jesus Christ—to hear his voice, and open the door.

First, to hear his voice. "Listen! The Lord is calling to the city—Hear the rod and the One who appointed it!" Micah 6:9. Oh, sinners, Christ speaks to you by your consciences, by his Spirit, by his Word, by his rod, and by his servants. Oh, you men and women of this city, God has spoken to you by all these voices—but you have turned the deaf ear to Christ!

Oh, London, London! God speaks to you by his judgments, and because you would not hear the voice of his Word, he has made you to feel the stroke of his rod! Oh, great city! how has the plague broke in upon you, because of your abominations! "They provoked the Lord to anger by their wicked deeds—so a plague broke out among them!" Psalms 106:29. Oh, you of this city! how is the wrath of God kindled against you, that such multitudes of thousands have died within your borders, by this severe plague, God's immediate sword! London! how are your streets thinned, your widows increased, and your cemeteries filled, your inhabitants fled, your trade decayed! Oh! therefore lay to heart, you who are yet alive, all these things, and turn from your wicked ways, that the cry of your prayers may outcry the cry of your sins, and be like the city of Nineveh, who believed Jonah's message from God, who humbled themselves, and fasted, and cried mightily unto the Lord, "The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust!" Jonah 3:5-6 Oh, let not the heathen outstrip professing Christians! Did Nineveh repent and turn

from their wicked ways—and shall not London?

Perhaps you think that all is now well, and that God is pleased with you, because the plague is abating. I say, blessed be God for this! But "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. Whatever a man sows—that he shall reap!" Galatians 6:7. To whomever God bestows great mercies, if they abound in great wickedness, He will inflict great punishments upon them! Alas! beloved, the plague abates—but your sins increase! There is no turning from sin—and turning to God! There is no reformation and amendment of life among you! If this is so—then God is not done afflicting of you!

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways—then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land!" 2 Chronicles 7:14. But if you remain: as profane as before, as superstitious as before, as carnal as before, as lukewarm as before, as hard-hearted and as cruel as before, as proud and vain as before, as worldly as before; I say, if it be thus with you, God is not yet done with London—but has other judgments to pour out upon you, though he causes the plague to cease. (Editor's note: In September of 1966, the 'Great Fire of London' gutted the city, and consumed 13,200 houses. The social and economic problems created by this disaster were overwhelming.)

See how God dealt with the Jews in this case, "I brought hunger to every city and famine to every town. But still you would not return to me," says the Lord. "I kept the rain from falling when your crops needed it the most. I sent rain on one town but withheld it from another. Rain fell on one field, while another field withered away. People staggered from town to town looking for water, but there was never enough. But still you would not return to me!" says the Lord. "I struck your farms and vineyards with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured all your fig and olive trees. But still you would not return to me!" says the Lord. "I sent plagues on you like the plagues I sent on Egypt long ago. I killed your young men in war and led all your horses away. The stench of death filled the air! But still you would not return to me!" says the Lord." Amos 4:6-10. Therefore, my dear brethren, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, and for your soul's sake, hear his voice, that you may be prosperous on earth—and glorious in heaven.

2ndly, Let me exhort you, and oh that I could prevail with you, to persuade you of this city to three things:

1. That you would thoroughly turn from your evil ways, and amend your doings—that God may relent of the evil, which otherwise he may bring upon you. Oh, see what the Lord says, Jeremiah 26:3, "Perhaps they will listen and turn from their evil ways. Then I will change my mind about the disaster I am ready to pour out on them because of their sins!" See Jeremiah 26:13. "Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the Lord your God. Then the Lord will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you!" Also mark what the Lord speaks by the prophet, Jeremiah 7:3, "This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place." (Jeremiah 7:5) "if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings,"

Oh, beloved the Lord our God is willing to hear, willing to heal, and willing to forgive. Great cities are places which are usually guilty of great sins, great provocations, and great abominations; and for this cause God has destroyed and overthrown many cities, as the cities of Sodom and

Gomorrah, Genesis 19:24, "Then the Lord rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah!" Just so were Jerusalem and other cities were destroyed by God for their sins and wickedness, 2 Chronicles 25:16, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel!" Jeremiah 12:12-13, "On all the bare hilltops, destroying armies can be seen. The sword of the Lord devours people from one end of the nation to the other. No one will escape! My people have planted wheat—but are harvesting thorns. They have worn themselves out—but it has done them no good. They will harvest a crop of shame because of the fierce anger of the Lord."

Now see what the apostle Peter says to this, 2 Peter 2:6, "God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people!" O London! repent, that it may not be so with you. O! rent your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord, who is willing to receive you, that so his judgments may be diverted, your former mercies restored, and his blessing poured down upon you!

2. That you would dearly love, and highly prize the precious saints of the most high God which are among you. These are they of whom the world is not worthy, Hebrews 11:38. God prizes them as his jewels and treasures, Malachi 3:17, Exodus 19:5. God calls them the dearly beloved of his soul, Jeremiah 12:7. "They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Peter 2:9. Oh! therefore "God allowed no man to do them wrong; yes, he reprov'd kings for their sakes!" Psalms 105:14. Oh, beloved, nations, and cities, and kings, are blessed for their sakes. See Genesis 12:2-3. "And you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and curse those who curse you." O London! in this you are happy; yes, more happy than any one city upon the face of the earth, because you have within your borders—more righteous, more saints, more true believers, who are still sighing and mourning for your sins, praying for your peace, and seeking and desiring your eternal good.

3. And lastly, Let me exhort you to open the door and let Christ in, into your thoughts, into your minds, into your affections, into your desires, into your estimations, and into your conversations.

Oh, beloved, keep Christ out no longer—but let him into your hearts and souls, that he may make you rich—rich in faith, rich in knowledge, rich in assurances, rich in privileges, rich in experience, and rich in good works.

Oh, therefore, let not sin be let in—and Christ shut out. Oh, let Jesus Christ into your hearts—for if you shut the door against Christ—he will shut the door against you.

First, the door of mercy.

Secondly, the door of acceptance.

Thirdly, the door of salvation.

First, the door of MERCY will be shut against you. Such whom Christ calls to, and they will not hear him—they shall call to him, but Christ will not hear them. "I called you so often, but you wouldn't come. I reached out to you, but you paid no attention. You ignored my advice and rejected the correction I offered. So I will laugh when you are in trouble! I will mock you when disaster overtakes you—when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster engulfs you like a cyclone, and anguish and distress overwhelm you. When they cry for help, I will not answer.

Though they anxiously search for me, they will not find me. For they hated knowledge and chose not to fear the Lord. They rejected my advice and paid no attention when I corrected them." Proverbs 1:24-30

"My eye shall not spare, neither shall I have pity; and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice—yet will I not hear them!" Ezekiel 8:18. "Therefore, this is what the Lord says: I am going to bring calamity upon them, and they will not escape. Though they beg for mercy, I will not listen to their cries!" Jeremiah 11:11. "Then they will cry out to the Lord, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done!" Micah 3:4. Thus, my beloved, you see how the door of God's mercy will be shut against you—if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ.

Secondly, the door of ACCEPTANCE will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ, "So this is what the Lord says to his people: You love to wander far from me and do not restrain yourselves. Therefore, I will no longer accept you as my people. Now I will remember all your wickedness and will punish you for your sins!" Jeremiah 14:10, Jeremiah 14:12. "There is no use offering me sweet frankincense from Sheba. Keep your fragrant calamus imported from distant lands! I will not accept your burnt offerings. Your sacrifices have no pleasing aroma for me!" Jeremiah 6:20, "I hate all your show and pretense— the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings. I won't even notice all your choice peace offerings. Away with your noisy hymns of praise! I will not listen to the music of your harps!" Amos 5:21-23. Oh! beloved, those who will not accept of Christ—shall not be accepted in Christ, "who has made us accepted in the beloved," Ephesians 1:6.

Thirdly, the door of SALVATION will be shut against you—if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ, "He who made you—will not save you; and he that formed you—will show you no favor." But as you have refused to open the door of your hearts to your Savior—so will he refuse to own you as his people, and to open the door of salvation for you. See the words of our blessed Lord himself, "When the master of the house has locked the door, it will be too late. You will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Lord, open the door for us!' But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' Then you will say, 'But we ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' And he will reply, 'I tell you, I don't know you or where you come from. Get away from me, all you who do evil!' There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, for you will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God—but you will be thrown out!" Luke 13:25-28.

Consider what has been said, and may the Lord give you understanding in all these things.

## S. Considerations on Death

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Considerations on Death by William Dyer

Containing several reasons why men fear death—and opposite reasons, by way of answer, why they should not fear it.

Objection 1. First, Because thereby we are deprived of the exercise of all our senses, so that whatever delights either our taste, smell, hearing, sight, or feeling has afforded us—we shall enjoy the same no more, while, perhaps, many generations after us shall have the fruition thereof!

Answer. As the exercises of our senses afford opportunity of delight—so are they capable of annoying and grieving us. As the taste—by bitterness and sharpness; the smell—by noisome pollution, corruption; the hearing—by terrible and hideous noise, and evil tidings; the sight—by loathsome affrighting and miserable appearances; the feeling—by tedious pains, etc.

Again, we have had the benefit of surviving former generations, who were liable to what we are; and so shall those who shall follow us.

Objection 2. But that which aggravates the evil thereof, is a man's being cut off in the flower or strength of his age; whereas, if he lived the common age of man, he would the more contentedly leave this life.

Answer 1. Why, what is a man? Is he not as transient as the flower, and as the grass grass, and the wind? And are they not cut off in their best states? And may not God, when he walks in, or views his garden of human flowers, have as much liberty to crop them as men have of theirs? Surely, yes—for all are his!

Secondly, And though God permits some men to live as long as any ordinary course of nature ought, be it seventy years, (which is judged the most common) or more; yet he has not promised them so long life.

Thirdly, And though some live so long—yet considering the wars and plagues, and other diseases among men, it is not without reason that there are many more that die who have not lived according to the course of nature.

Fourthly, As we conclude that no person better, or so well as the gardener, or such as sowed, planted, dressed, and frequently practiced about the flowers and plants, knows when, and for what reason, to gather and pluck up—so no person knows better, nor so well as God knows, when to cut or pluck up what he has planted in the world. He does all his actions upon good and weighty reasons, even greater and better than any gardener or other person has, for what he does in his world.

Objection 3. In death, a man becomes a loathsome spectacle to all beholders, insomuch that they find a dead and rotten corpse of a man, more foul and offensive than the most loathsome creature in the world. And is not that very grievous, to become from a delightful companion—an abhorrence

of all people?

Answer 1. True, being dead, a man becomes a loathsome spectacle to all beholders. And do not many diseases, to which a man is incident in his life, effect the same in beholders?

Answer 2. Though man becomes loathsome by death—yet he has no sense thereof; and in that is the proverb verified, 'What the eye sees not—the heart rues not.' For look on man as a dead lump of corruption, and what of misery do we behold? We look on a dunghill says, "Alas! How foul!" But the dunghill neither feels nor knows not any foulness. Just so, although the thoughts of such a condition by death, grieves us while living—yet in that condition itself, we shall be free from such grief.

Answer 3. Again, consider that we were but earth before we had life— and being dead we return to our first estate! And though we become for a season more impure and corrupt than the earth—yet eventually we shall become dust, when the putrefaction has consumed. And in that sense (but especially in a more excellent) will that saying be fulfilled, to wit, "Corruption shall put on incorruption."

Objection 4. Death deprives man of his society, with whom he has had sweet converse.

Answer 1. True—but it is in order (if he dies in God's favor) to enjoy, in due season, better society than men on earth have.

Answer 2. Besides, as you lose your friends on earth—so you are rid of your enemies there too.

Objection 5. Though death may make way for better society than we have been used to here—yet who knows when that shall be; the body being not to receive new life until the general resurrection, which may be very long delayed.

Answer. Suppose it is so (as the most of Christians believe) that the best part of man receives glory and happiness immediately after death; yet, from the time of death to the general resurrection—the space between death and it is but one day; as he who being in a coma, sleeps many days and nights without waking, cannot esteem of the time he has slept, answerable to the measure thereof—but it may be to him, as one day or night. And in this sense may death be reckoned (as usually it is in holy Scripture) a sleep.

Objection 6. Suppose a man should die by the hand of a cruel man-slayer, who delights in torturing and destroying the body of man; would not the thought of one so cruel, coming to act his mind upon a person, make the thoughts of such a death more terrible, when therein a man is no more regarded than a dog, or the vilest creature?

Answer 1. Yes—but do not many, by reason of wounds and gangrened members, in their life, for preserving the body, limbs, or members—endure as great pain, and tremble as much at the sight of the surgeon, when he comes to do his office on them, as a man does at the sight of the executioner to do his, and consider that all that is commonly done at such a death, causes less pain for the one—than what some suffer by cutting off one limb, in curing some wound or disease.

Answer 2. Again, consider the more of torment a man endures in this life, whether at death or otherwise, the less he is likely to suffer after this life; and the more blessing he is likely then to

enjoy, if he is a good or worthy man, suffering here as a child of God, and not as a reprobate, Revelation 28:6 and Revelation 20:4-6.

Objection 7. But in our present estate we have being, life, sense, and reason; and in death, we shall have (at the most) only being; and is not that very grievous to consider, that we shall be reduced to no better a condition than a piece of earth or stone!

Answer. It is true, that the consideration thereof is very grievous in itself; but yet while man has reason as well as being, life, and sense—let him use it to consider also, that he has no more cause to complain, than for a piece of the earth he now treads on, if it should please God (as at the first) to create thereof a man like himself, and shortly reduce it to its former state; for thus it is now with mankind in general.

Objection 8. Although the miseries of man in this life are not many—yet if the benefits therein did not surmount those miseries, it is likely that men would not so much desire to continue therein, as they now do; and therefore, who would not fear death!

Answer 1. No man is able to say, how long a person, in order to be happy, should live here to enjoy his life; but God he knows, and he has appointed for men once to die; therefore rest satisfied in his wisdom, for disposing of your time for death, concluding that it shall be in its due season.

Answer 2. Again, consider that it is God's prerogative over all his creatures, to dispose of them how, and when he will.

Answer 3. Moreover, God has already set the bounds of your life, beyond which you can not pass; therefore, patiently commit yourself to him in well doing, and quietly satisfy yourself with his pleasure; for it is vain for a man to strive against the stream, by tormenting himself with that which he cannot avoid. Yet this does not hinder that all men may, yes, ought to use what lawful means God gives them opportunity of, for saving their lives.

Objection 9. Well, though it be granted, that these answers, which have been urged, have commonreason and experience on their side; yet there remains further grounds to fear death, as well from what the holy Scriptures, as nature or custom does evidence; and that in part in this, to wit, death is reckoned the "king of terrors," as Job 18:14, compared with Hebrews 2:15.

Answer. Death is indeed granted to be the king of terrors—but that is in regard of a certain sting that is in it; if that sting is taken away, death will not be so terrible as before; yes, it will be rather gain than loss to die, if that sting does not reach the party dying.

Objection 10. I confess there may seem to be some comfort in that answer, if one knew how to escape that sting—but that is a thing so difficult, that I greatly fear death; if I were sufficiently provided in that case, I should have comfort.

Answer. It is true, that the difficulty lies even there where it is expressed; but though it is so difficult, yes, impossible with man—yet it is not so difficult with God. He has sufficiently provided for man in that case; for he who is King of kings, has subdued that king of terrors, and done what is needful for a man concerning the same; for which purpose see these Scriptures, 1 Corinthians 15:55-57, John 3:14-18, Romans 5:12, and forward to the end of the chapter.

Objection 11. I grant it appears plain enough, that there is, through Jesus Christ, victory wrought over death, the sting being taken away. I say, taken away from some—but not from all, because it is said, "the sting of death is sin" so that where sin is, there is the sting also; and I know myself a sinner, and therefore in danger of that sting.

Answer. Indeed, if you know yourself to be a sinner, and grieve not for it—but are therewith content, neither repenting of, nor reforming from it, I cannot say the sting of death is taking away from you. But if you truly repent of your sins, and endeavor with your heart to forsake sin—the sting of death is taken away from you. For the Scripture tell us, Christ died for sinners; that is to say, humble penitent sinners, not for obstinate ones. A notable example whereof was manifested, when the Savior of the world himself was crucified between the two thieves; the one railed on Christ, and was reprov'd; the other humbled himself, he also prayed, and received the answer of salvation.

Objection 12. Indeed that example, methinks, does tend to prove what you say; but in so considerable a case as this, a man would desire more than one witness.

Answer. Therefore take more, namely, Proverbs 8:13, Isaiah 1:17-19, Matthew 9:12-13, Romans 5:8, 1 Timothy 4:15-16.

Here are some further grounds whereon a poor sinner may expect mercy, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

First, through a sense of sin, so look on the Lord Christ, as those who were stung with the scorpions in the wilderness did on the brazen serpent.

Next follows the humbling of the soul, the effects of which is to be seen in these Scriptures, namely, Job 22:29, Psalms 10:17, Isaiah 15:15, James 4:6. Which humiliation begets a self-examination, by which knowing the holy rule of life, and comparing a man's life to that rule, trying how his case is, he is thereby ready to say, (in respect to his misery) as the apostle does, Romans 7:9-11.

He sees himself a dead man in the sense of the law.

Then that works in him a holy sorrow, and true repentance to salvation, 2 Corinthians 7:10-11.

It brings him to see, not only that he is a condemned or guilty person—but that he is irrecoverably lost, and must needs perish, without some person as a mediator or redeemer, to undertake for his ransom. For God is infinitely just, and he must have his justice satisfied; and all that the poor soul can do, is but to amend his life for the future, walking more conformable to the righteous law of God than heretofore. But alas! that is no more than what we ought to be for the time to come; it will not satisfy divine justice for the transgression already done against the law of God. Neither, indeed, can a man of himself satisfy the justice of God, for what he shall owe to it in the remaining part of his life.

Now this consideration works the soul into a melting frame, brings him on his knees to say, as the poor publican, "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner!" And as the humbled prodigal sees all his rambling shifts in vain, for yielding him the solid comfort his soul thirsts after, therefore resolves to go home to his father; and although he may look upon him as enraged against him, (for which his

soul knew there was just cause) yet he goes humbling himself to his father, saying, "Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called your son." Now observe the success, "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." And further entertained him, not as a servant, as he humbly besought, (for the humble shall be exalted) but as a son, and rejoiced in him, Luke 15:18-20. The Assyrians also well knew what good this humble application for mercy was likely to effect in an Israelite king, 1 Kings 20:31-32. And if mercy is expected from one of these kings, then much more may it be from the Supreme, the King of those kings, the Almighty who has promised large graces to humble souls. So Esther, at the advice of Mordecai, Esther 4:5, made good proof of this humble way of addressing for mercy, in a case otherwise desperate; the success whereof was the royal scepter held forth with grace, to grant even beyond the petition, though she knew not when she went about it—but that she should perish; yet wisely perceiving that she must perish, if she had not so applied, she proceeded.

Thus it was with the four lepers, 2 Kings 7:4. If they went into the city, they would suffer famine—if they stayed where they were, they must die; they therefore ventured for relief among their enemies, being sure they could not be worse than they were, they could but die one way or another. So when the soul is thus brought to see its own misery, and humbles itself thoroughly, and is willing to embrace whatever means as have a possibility of saving it; then God shows his mercy to refresh it, according to Isaiah 57:15-16, ec. "To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones." So Psalm 11:15, Ezekiel 33:11 and forward. And Christ comfortably invites such a poor sinner, who is weary and heavy laden with the sense of his sin—he invites him to come and receive rest; and thus the gospel does in general give encouragement to humble and penitent sinners, to expect salvation from the eternal God, the sting before spoken of being taken away.

Then being truly humbled under a sense of that miserable condition, which sin has made a man liable to, and being rightly desirous of salvation, that which is required of him, is only to believe that the righteous God, who might have made him eternally miserable—has, notwithstanding, through his tender compassions, (his mercy being above all his works) resolved on a way to satisfy his justice, by acquitting the guilty, who was no way able to pay a sufficient ransom for his own redemption, therefore provided a price satisfactory to redeem poor fallen man from the curse; concerning which, both the apostles and prophets have witnessed, Isaiah 53:1-12, Micah 5:1-15, Hosea 11:1, Psalms 22:1-31, Acts 1:8, and Acts 10:41 and more Scriptures; that price of salvation, Jesus Christ; of whom the angels proclaimed, about the time of his entrance into the world, "Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men," Luke 2:14. And the evangelist John, declares positively, "That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him, should not perish—but have eternal life." This is the term of salvation, namely, believing in his Son to be that gift and ransom which the gospel generally holds forth to those who would know what they should do to be saved; withal there must be an obedient living, and that universally to all God's commandments, answerable to a poor soul's ability, so long as life may last.

## S. FOLLOW THE LAMB

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FOLLOW THE LAMB by William Dyer

"These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes!" Revelation 14:4

The title of this book tells us, that it is the Revelation of John. And John tells us in the first verse, that it is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ!" It is Christ's Revelation to John—and John's Revelation to us. The command of this book is set forth: "Write what you have seen, what is, and what will take place after this." Revelation 1:19. Into these two parts, this book is divided.

First, A revelation of the things that referred to the seven churches of Asia.

Secondly, A revelation of the general state of the church to come, and from John's time unto the second coming of the Lord. The words of this book are the true sayings—of the true God, "These words are trustworthy and true!" Revelation 22:6. The matter of this book so much concerns the good of the church, that Jesus Christ commanded everyone who has an ear to hear, to hearken to what the Spirit of God says to the church; and to show how earnest Christ Jesus is to have all his members and servants acquainted with the things revealed in this book; this charge he repeats eight times over. A blessing is pronounced upon the reader, hearer, and doer of these things written in this book, "Blessed is the one who reads, and blessed are those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep what is written in it, because the time is near!" Revelation 1:4. Oh! what can be said more, or more effectually to stir us up to hear and read and obey—than blessedness? "Look, I am coming quickly! Blessed is the one who keeps the prophetic words of this book!" Revelation 22:7. But how shall we keep them—unless we read them? The excellency of this book is such as neither man nor angel, none in heaven or earth, or under the earth—was found worthy so much as to look into it, until Jesus Christ went and took it out of his Father's hand to open it to us, chapter 5:7. The holy John could not but weep, for fear lest this book should have been kept closed from him and the church—so earnest was he to know these things, which we neglect to know, "And I cried and cried because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or even to look in it." Revelation 5:4. This book is a most precious jewel which Christ has bestowed upon his church in the latter days; and it is our great duty to look into it, and read it, and study it, open it, and expound it—that all the people may be acquainted with it; especially in these times. For now in this age is the brunt of the battle between God—and Belial; between Christ—and Antichrist; between the Lamb's followers—and the beast's followers. Now this book lays all open, and plainly tells us what shall be the outcome and success in the day of battle; which side shall have the victory, and which side shall go down. And certainly the sons of Belial shall not prevail; their time draws on apace, wherein both they and their beast shall be laid in the dust. This book shows us the rising of the beast, the declining of the beast, and ruin of the beast, Revelation 18:1-24. Our Lord Jesus has showed in this book, the sorrow, and sufferings, and afflictions, and tribulation which the church was to meet with in the latter times. He also shows us, her deadly and her cruel enemies, the whore of Babylon, the mother of harlots, the beast, the false prophets, and the great red dragon, which makes war against her, and and try to destroy her. This book shows us likewise the

true state of the true church upon earth, and what state is now in: where she is, how she is, and what she shall be hereafter; and that before her slaying, under her slaying, and after her slaying.

1. BEFORE her slaying time, the true church is in the wilderness, where she has a place prepared for her of God, "The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, to be fed there for 1,260 days." Revelation 12:6.

Before the slaying of the witnesses, the true worshipers of God are in a low condition, in heaviness and sadness, in sackcloth and ashes, in a mourning and suffering state, being scattered and dispersed here and there, as Israel was of old. But though this is the condition of the poor woman in the wilderness—yet she is not without comfort, she may take comfort in three things.

1. That God prepared a place for her.

2. That God nourished her, and locked her up in his chamber of providence.

3. That God numbered her days of suffering. The tribulation of the saints in the Old Testament is reckoned up still by years; as the bondage of Egypt 430 years, and the captivity of Babylon 70 years. But under the New Testament, the tribulation of the saints is reckoned up by days, "You shall have tribulation ten days," Revelation 2:10. "And the two witnesses shall lie dead three and a half days," Revelation 11:9. So the woman was to be in the wilderness 1,260 days. The church is compared to a woman for four reasons:

1. As a woman is weak and feeble, so is the church. She can do nothing without Christ, John 15:5.

2. As a woman is useful and fruitful, so is the church, John 15:2.

3. As a woman is fair and beautiful, so is the church, Ezekiel 16:13.

4. As a woman is full of love and affection, so is the church, Song of Song of Solomon 2:5.

2. UNDER her slaying times. The worshipers of God, and witnesses of Jesus Christ, lay dead on the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, "Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt." Revelation 11:8. She is called Sodom, for her filthiness, and wickedness; and Egypt for her cruelty and oppression. That is, in antichrist's kingdoms and dominions. The true servants of God and members of Jesus Christ, who bear witness for him against the evils of the beast and against the evils of the world, are here called 'two witnesses':

1. Because of the fewness of them.

2. Because two is a number sufficient to bear witness, John 8:17.

3. Because antichrist's beasts are called two, John 13:4.

They are called 'witnesses' for six reasons:

First, Because their work is to bear witness for Christ and his truth—against the world, the flesh, and the devil. A true believer is to bear a threefold testimony to, and for Christ: a word-testimony, a life-testimony, a blood-testimony, Hebrews 12:1-29, John 5:33.

Secondly, Christ's members are called witnesses, because they stand up for Christ to maintain his name, his honor, his cause, his truth, his worship, and his glory in the world, Daniel 3:1-24 and Daniel 6:1-28. "And you killed the Prince of Life, whom God has raised from the dead. We are witnesses of this." Acts 3:15. "It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed!" Acts 4:10.

Thirdly, the Lamb's followers are called witnesses, because they keep the testimony of Jesus Christ; Revelation 12:16 and Revelation 6:9. A testimony of all the offices, works, and kingdoms of Jesus Christ—as King of saints and King of nations.

Fourthly, God's chosen and precious ones are called witnesses, because they appear boldly and openly for his truth! They own it, they love it, they publish it, they hold it fast, and suffer for it. They, through the teaching of the Spirit in the Word, and by the power of the same Spirit, are found in the practice of Christ's appointment; they cannot deny the truth which is a testimony of it, Acts 24:14.

Fifthly, the true worshipers of God are called witnesses, because they bear witness against the beast, and the whole mystery of iniquity; against the whore of Babylon, who has committed fornication with the kings of the earth, and made herself drunk with the blood of the saints, Revelation 17:6.

Christ's faithful witnesses bear an eminent testimony against all her abominations, and filthiness, and wickedness; against the Pope, his government, his clergy, his doctrine, his worship, his religion, and his abominable proceedings, Revelation 19:7.

Sixthly, Christ's redeemed ones are called witnesses, because in dying they bear witness for him; for to die for the truth is a living standing testimony to it. Those who for Christ's sake, do not love their lives so much as to shrink from death—die as most glorious witnesses of Christ! "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." Revelation 12:11. "Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them!" Revelation 11:7.

Antichrist rises in a double beast, in his civil power, and in his ecclesiastical power:

First, In his civil power; so he makes up one beast with the ten kings, Revelation 17:12. And this is the beast that rises out of the sea, which had seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy. "And now in my vision I saw a beast rising up out of the sea. It had seven heads and ten horns, with ten crowns on its horns. And written on each head were names that blasphemed God. This beast looked like a leopard, but it had bear's feet and a lion's mouth! And the dragon gave him his own power and throne and great authority." Revelation 13:1-2.

Secondly, In the ecclesiastical power; so he makes up another beast, the clergy; and that is that beast that rose up out of the earth. "Then I saw another beast come up out of the earth. He had two horns like those of a lamb, and he spoke with the voice of a dragon." Revelation 13:11.

Now these two monstrous beasts, antichrist's magistrates and ministers, slay the faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ, and rejoice over their dead bones, and make merry, and send gifts one to another! "All the people who belong to this world will give presents to each other to celebrate the death of

the two prophets who had tormented them!" Revelation 11:10. Oh, how do graceless, faithless, and Christless men, rejoice at the afflictions and calamities of God's people, saying, "Where is now your God, and Christ your king?" Psalms 42:10. As touching the nature of the witnesses death, we are not only to conceive thereof, as only being abodilykilling or slaying—but also acivilkilling or slaying! Not only the killing of theirbodies—but also theirtestimonies, depriving and stripping them of their liberty, worship, ordinances, religion, and the free exercise of their gifts; not allowing a servant of Jesus Christ to bear a testimony against the abominations of the beast, nor against her national wickedness; making laws against them, and lying in wait for them, stopping their mouths, and imprisoning them, beating and hunting them up and down, afflicting and tormenting them, and taking possession of their possessions, killing and slaying them all the day long, and accounting them as sheep for the slaughter! Romans 8:36. This is to be killed all the day long—and upon this account the witnesses are said to beslain.

"But after three and a half days, the spirit of life from God entered them, and they stood up! And terror struck all who were staring at them!" Revelation 11:11. They had a spirit of boldness and courage, zeal and undauntedness, and resolution to appear for Christ and his cause—against antichrist, and the whole brood!

Therefore rejoice all you saints, and be glad all you upright in heart; though the witnesses are dead, they will not be always dead—but rise again!

3. AFTER the slaying time, the church is with the Lamb on Mount Zion, "Then I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads." Revelation 14:1. This denotes a fixed state, "Those which trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved," Psalms 125:1.

Beforethe slaying time, the church is very low; butunderthe slaying- time lower; butafterthe slaying time the church is very high—she is rejoicing and shining, and triumphing on Mount Zion! "And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth." Revelation 14:3 The true church having gotten the glorious presence of the Lamb, and the Lamb in the midst of her; and having gotten the victory over the beast, they rejoice mightily. "And I heard a sound from heaven like the roaring of a great waterfall or the rolling of mighty thunder. It was like the sound of many harpists playing together!" Revelation 14:2 But this was not until after the resurrection of the witnesses; and when the witnesses are risen, the church is exceeding joyful. This chapter out of which my text is taken, contains six principal things:

First, A lovely description of Jesus Christ; and he is described by the similitude of a Lamb, "Lo, a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion," Revelation 14:1. "Behold the Lamb of God," John 1:29.

He is called a Lamb in a double respect:

1. In respect of his innocence, 1 Peter 1:19.
2. In respect of his meekness and patience, Acts 8:12.

Secondly, A lively description of the church, the Lamb's wife, and that from Revelation 14:1-5.

Thirdly, A glorious description of the church's ministers. As the church is in this book called heaven, so her ministers are called angels, "Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people," Revelation 14:6. "A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries!" Revelation 14:8. "A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb!" Revelation 14:9-10.

Fourthly, Here is set down the doctrine which these angels preach and publish: The first angel published the free grace of God in Jesus Christ openly against all the inventions of men, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water!" Revelation 14:7. Namely, that man should only fear God and worship him, and give all glory to him: none to creatures, none to images, none to antichrist; none to he who worships the beast and the devil, Revelation 13:1-52. The second angel proclaims utter ruin to Babylon, and the destruction thereof over the world, saying, Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries!" Revelation 14:8. The third angel does seriously and solemnly give warning to all those who shall adhere to the beast, showing the danger and misery of it, "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb!" Revelation 14:9-10.

Fifthly, A sweet word of heavenly consolation to the saints and people of God: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." Revelation 14:13.

Sixthly, the judgment and vengeance which shall be executed upon the false church; the Spirit does set it forth by a double similitude: the one by reaping, and the other by gathering. "So the one sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the whole earth was reaped. After that, another angel came from the Temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. Then another angel, who has power to destroy the world with fire, shouted to the angel with the sickle, "Use your sickle now to gather the clusters of grapes from the vines of the earth, for they are fully ripe for judgment." So the angel swung his sickle on the earth and loaded the grapes into the great winepress of God's wrath. And the grapes were trodden in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress in a stream about 180 miles long and as high as a horse's bridle!" Revelation 14:16-20. God will, as it were, rain hell out of heaven upon Babylon! He has fire and brimstone for his spiritual Sodom, judgment without mercy, and fury without compassion!

I shall now come to the words of my text, "These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were redeemed from among men, and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb!" Revelation 14:4. This text is one of the golden characters, of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who stood with the Lamb upon Mount Zion. In these words, are three things.

1. The subject—These.

2. Theact—Follow, 3. Theobject—The Lamb wherever he goes.

I shall gather this observation from the words, that it is the sweet temper and frame of a soul truly gracious, to "follow the Lamb wherever he goes." In the handling of this point I shall show you five things.

First, What it is to follow the Lamb?

Secondly, Why they follow the Lamb.

Thirdly, the excellency of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, the misery of those who do not follow the Lamb.

Fifthly, How the Lamb's followers may be distinguished from the beast's followers.

First, WHAT it is to follow the Lamb?

First, to follow the Lamb wherever he goes, is to follow him in four things:

1st, We follow the Lamb in his COMMANDMENTS. "If you love Me—you will keep My commandments!" John 14:15.

"You are My friends—if you do what I command you." John 15:14

"Blessed are those who do his commandments—that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates!" Revelation 22:14. Oh, beloved, we cannot follow the Lamb wherever he goes, unless we follow him in his commandments! "Then shall I not be ashamed," says David, "when I have respect unto all your commandments," Psalms 119:6. True Christians take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness, as in those promises that assure happiness.

2ndly, We follow the Lamb in his TEACHING. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me! But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." John 10:5, John 5:27.

3rdly, We follow the Lamb in his PROVIDENCE. Through all afflictions, all straits, all discouragements and sorrows whatever, though it be the way of death—we must forsake all to follow a crucified Christ, a condemned Christ, in bloody paths of sufferings—if he calls us to it! "Yes, though I walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me," Psalms 23:4. "For," says Paul, "I am ready not to be bound only—but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." We must be willing to venture the loss of all for him: our liberty, estates, relations, and life itself! "We have forsaken all and followed you," Matthew 19:27.

4thly, We follow the Lamb in his EXAMPLE. "I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you." John 13:15. "Christ has suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps," 1 Peter 2:21. To follow Christ's steps—is to take him for our example. We must walk in the same spirit, the same steps, and in the same obedience. We must not follow wicked men's example, who walk in the broad way that leads to death. "They are the children of their father the Devil, and they love to do the evil things he does!" John 8:44. But we must follow

our head Christ, who went about doing good, Acts 10:38. Now this is to follow the Lamb wherever he goes: in his commands, in his teaching, in his providences, in his examples.

Secondly, to "follow the Lamb wherever he goes," is to follow him TRULY, without hypocrisy; and CONSTANTLY, without apostasy.

1st, A believer follows the Lamb TRULY, without hypocrisy. Many follow the Lamb, as beggars follow a rich man—only for his money. They prize the wages of religion above the works of religion! "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me . . . because you ate the loaves and had your fill!" John 6:26. Oh, beloved, God abhors a hypocrite more than a Sodomite! Hell is provided on purpose for hypocrites, "He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!" Matthew 24:51. My beloved, following the Lamb fully, is to have the heart fixed and resolved for God, "My soul follows close to you," says David in Psalms 63:8. "As a deer longs for streams of water, so I long for You, God. I thirst for God, the living God!" Psalms 42:1-2. And the faculties of his soul are working after God, "My soul, and all that is within me, praise the Lord," says holy David.

2ndly, A believer follows the Lamb CONSTANTLY, without apostasy. A true believer after he begins to follow the Lamb—he never stops following him—but follows him wherever he goes! "Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than victorious through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will have the power to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!" Romans 8:35-39

Oh, beloved, he does not follow the Lamb wherever he goes—who follows the Lamb earnestly for a while—but afterwards forsakes him, when the storm arises! "Since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the Word—he quickly falls away!" Matthew 13:21.

He does not follow the Lamb wherever he goes—who follows the Lamb in some things, and the beast in other things! "They worshiped the Lord—but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought." 2 Kings 17:33

He does not follow the Lamb wherever he goes—who follows the Lord in a dull heavy manner, and lukewarm temper. "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth!" Revelation 3:15-16. "Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the Lord. "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water!" Jeremiah 2:12-13.

Oh! this is not following the Lamb! Those who follow the Lamb—abide in the Lamb, and cleave to the Lamb, and continue constantly in the Lamb's ways, unto the end of their days. "Yet the righteous person will hold to his way!" Job 17:9. The righteous man follows the Lamb wherever he goes. "Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him!" Hosea 6:3. This is to follow the Lamb wherever He goes:

1. Speedily
2. Sincerely 3. Whole-heartedly
4. Zealously
5. Humbly
6. Cheerfully
7. Diligently
8. Constantly
9. Faithfully
10. Supremely

2. Now I shall show you WHY believers follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

First, Because they are REDEEMED by the blood of the Lamb. "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect!" 1 Peter 1:18-19. He paid a price for our redemption—so that he might discharge the debt of our sins.

"And they sang a new song: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation!" Revelation 5:9.

There are three things called precious in the Scripture.

First, Faith is called precious, 2 Peter 1:1.

Secondly, the promises are called precious, 2 Peter 1:4.

Thirdly, the blood of Christ is called precious, 1 Peter 1:9.

Oh! Christ's precious blood has redeemed us from six enemies.

First, From the world. Galatians 4:3, Revelation 14:2-3.

Secondly, From the curse. Galatians 3:13, Galatians 4:5.

Thirdly, From sin. Romans 6:18-22.

Fourthly, From the devil. Hebrews 2:14. Acts 26:17-18.

Fifthly, From the sting of death. 1 Corinthians 15:25-26.

Sixthly, From hell. 1 Thessalonians 1:10. Revelation 2:12.

Oh! What precious blood! His blood has slain our enemies; he has purchased by his blood: reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, communion with the Holy Spirit, "You who were once far off, are now made near by the blood of Christ," Ephesians 2:13-16.

Secondly, they follow the Lamb, because they are WASHED in the blood of the Lamb! "He who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood!" Revelation 1:5. "These are those who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!" Revelation 17:4. "The blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin," 1 John 1:7. Christ's blood washes away our bloody sins! "I said unto you, when you were in your blood, Live!" Ezekiel 16:6. For as we were united with Christ—our sins are upon him, and his righteousness is upon us. It is Christ who gives us life, and puts excellent ornaments upon us, to cover our nakedness, and decks us with jewels, and gems of gold, so we become beautiful in his sight!

"That he might present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless!" Ephesians 5:27.

Thirdly, Believers follow the Lamb, because they are RISEN with the Lamb! "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." Colossians 3:1

"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life," Romans 6:4.

Every man, besides a believer—is a dead man in trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2:1. Therefore they are exhorted to rise from the dead, Ephesians 5:4. They must rise from evil to do good, from earthly mindedness to heavenly mindedness. But now, by faith believers are risen from darkness to light, "For you were once darkness—but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light," Ephesians 5:8, "Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you," Isaiah 9:1. When the Lord shines forth upon his people in glorious discoveries of himself, he calls them away from their former condition; when the Lord revealed himself in a gospel dispensation, his people were no longer to sit under dark clouds of legal ceremonies—but to follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Fourthly, they follow the Lamb, because they are ENLIGHTENED by the Lamb! "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Corinthians 4:6, "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass 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. "Yes, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ," Php 3:8.

Divine and heavenly knowledge brings men near to God, it gives a man the clearest and fullest sight of God. The nearer any man comes to God—the clearer vision we have of God, and the more communion with God. The reason why others do not follow the Lamb, is because they do not see the worth and need of the Lamb, "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts," Ephesians 4:18. Where there is a veil cast before the eyes of knowledge—there is a bar set before the hands of practice. An ignorant person neither knows what he is doing, nor does he know where he is going! He does nothing—but undo himself. Carnal men see no preciousness nor loveliness in Christ. "Oh! What is your beloved more than another beloved!" Song of Song of Solomon 5:9. "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he

would have given you living water!" John 4:10.

Christ goes undesired by the world—because he goes unknown by the world. "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14. But now, believers being enlightened by the Spirit of God, and by the Word of God—they see what they themselves were before faith, and what they are by faith, and what they shall be at the end of faith. They see Christ to be—all precious in his ordinances, all precious in his discoveries, all precious in his graces, all precious in his gifts, all precious in his promises, all precious in his members, all precious in his ministers, and all precious in himself, 1 Peter 2:7.

Therefore believers cannot but love him, and follow him.

Fifthly, they follow the Lamb, because they LOVE the Lamb!"Grace be with all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Ephesians 6:24. They love him with a superlative love, "Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth!" Psalms 73:25. The Christian looks upon what he is—as not great enough for Christ's remembrance; and what he does—as not good enough for Christ's acceptance! "Look not upon me—because I am black!" Song of Song of Solomon 1:6. The Christian is never more lovely—than when he judges himself to be the most deformed! The Christian is never more happy—than when he reckons himself most miserable! The Christian is never more holy—than when he accounts himself most polluted! The Christian is never more rich—than when he sees himself to be poorest of all. The soul that loves much—is a soul that works much! The commands of the gospel are not grievous to him—but precious to him! "Tell me, O you whom my soul loves, where you feed?" Song of Song of Solomon 1:7. A soul who loves Christ, has his eyes upon Christ, and his desire is after Christ! "All night long I search for you; earnestly I seek for God." Isaiah 26:9

True believers love Christ more than they love themselves, "They loved not their own lives unto the death," Revelation 12:11. Christ is dearer to them than their lives. They slighted and despised their very lives—when they stood in competition with Christ, and his glory! They chose rather to suffer the greatest misery—than he should lose the least grain of his honor. The love of Christ has made the saints yield all the members of their bodies to the cruel and merciless treatment of bloody persecutors: their backs to be whipped, their eyes to be bored, their tongues to be cut out of their mouths! Hebrews 11:1-40. Oh! how strongly did these love! The measure of loving Christ, is to love him without measure, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation shall not, persecution shall not, famine and nakedness shall not, peril and sword shall not. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!" Romans 8:35-39.

Sixthly, they follow the Lamb, because they are MARRIED to the Lamb. Jeremiah 3:14, "I am married unto you." Revelation 21:9, "I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." Song of Song of Solomon 2:16, "My beloved is mine—and I am his." Here I will show you two things:

1. How Christ comes to be ours.

1st, Christ comes to be ours—by free donation and gift of the Father, "God so loved the world—that he gave his only begotten Son," John 3:16.

2ndly, Christ freely gave himself unto us, so that Christ is ours by his consent. He has, as it were, passed over himself unto us, "Christ loved me, and gave himself for me!" says the apostle, Galatians 2:20.

3rdly, Christ has given Himself to his church by marriage, and therefore she is called—his queen, his spouse, his bride, and his wife. Although we had nothing to bring to Christ, but poverty, shame, sorrow, and misery—yet he took us, and loved us, and married us!

4thly, Christ is ours, by communicating his own Spirit to us.

2. How we come to be Christ's. The saints are Christ's four ways:

1st, We are Christ's by the donation of the Father, "God has made him both Lord and Christ," Acts 2:26. "And has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church." Ephesians 1:20. "And now," says Christ, "Behold I and the children whom you have given me! Yours they were, and you gave them me," John 17:6. God the Father gave us to God the Son, that he might redeem us; and God the Son gave us to God the Father, that he might sanctify us, and keep us from the evil of the world, John 17:17.

2ndly, We are Christ's by divine choice, "You only have I chosen, out of all the families of the earth!" Amos 3:2. The saints are said to be "chosen in Christ," Ephesians 1:4. "But you are a chosen people," 1 Peter 2:9. "His people are the called and chosen and faithful ones," Revelation 17:14.

3rdly, the saints are Christ's by purchase. We were in our enemies hands, and under their power, and could not free ourselves from the bondage of the law, sin, Satan, death, and hell. Therefore, says the apostle, "We are bought with a high price," 1 Corinthians 6:20. For in respect of God's justice, we are bought by Christ.

4thly, We are Christ's by covenant. "I entered into covenant with you—and you became mine," Ezekiel 16:8. That is, I did make a solemn covenant of stipulation with you, that I would take you to be my people. So it is no wonder that believers follow the Lamb wherever he goes—they are married to him, he is their Head and Husband.

Seventhly, they follow the Lamb, because they have the SPIRIT of the Lamb. "Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, in order to know what has been freely given to us by God. We have the mind of Jesus Christ," 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 2:16. "You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ." Romans 8:9. The Spirit that the Lord Jesus gives to believers, is a sealing Spirit, a lively Spirit, an enlightening Spirit, a leading Spirit. The Spirit leads from all evil to—all good. All the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb; and therefore, they pray in the Spirit, and with the Spirit, and by the Spirit, and for more of the Spirit. Those who have this Spirit, do not need a book to pray by. Now, all true believers have the Spirit of the Lamb; therefore they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Eighthly, Believers follow the Lamb, because all their PRIVILEGES come from the Lamb. They are all "kings and priests!" Revelation 1:6 and Revelation 5:10, "And sons and heirs." "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we

are!" 1 John 3:1. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Romans 8:17.

Though believers have not a crown of life—yet they are heirs to a crown of life. God puts the greatest honor upon his own people, "The righteous man is more excellent than his neighbor." Proverbs 12:26. All the honor that other men have—is not worth the having. That which makes a man great in the eyes of the world—makes a man nothing in the eyes of God. Men are never the better for their greatness, if they are not the better by their greatness. But now, believer's greatness and honors come by Christ, the faithful and true Witness, the First begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. "He has made us to be kings and priests unto our God!" Revelation 5:10. All the light, and life, and hope, and joy, and peace, and beauty, and honor, and riches believers have—they have it all by Christ, and from Christ! He gave them rich grace, and rich glory, and all things richly to enjoy! 1 Timothy 6:17.

Take a man that is out of Christ, and he has none of all this! Ephesians 2:12, "Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world!" Yes, he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Revelation 3:17. Oh! this is the condition of every graceless, faithless, and Christless person. But now, a believer, though he is ever so poor in the world's eye, he is rich in God's eye, "For all things are his, and he shall inherit all things!" 1 Corinthians 3:22. "He who overcomes shall inherit all things!" Revelation 21:7. But how does it come to pass—that a believer has so much, and all others so little? He has it all from Christ, "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another," John 1:16. Therefore believers glory in Christ, because they have all their glory by and from Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:31. He has enough to glory in—who has Christ to glory in. Now believers cannot but cleave to him, and follow him, because all their good things come by him.

Ninthly, they follow the Lamb, because their names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 13:8, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whoever works abomination, or makes a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life; Revelation 21:27.

"And the rest of the worshipers of the beast, and all unbelievers, shall be cast into the lake of fire which burns and flames forever," Revelation 19:10.

There be a great many that follow the beast, worship the beast, receive the mark of the beast, and admire the beast, Revelation 13:16. But what are they, are they many that have their names written in the Lamb's book of life? No, no; for this see, Revelation 17:8, "The beast which you saw, was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and shall go into perdition; and those who dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the book of life." So that you see what that cursed crew are that follow Babylon, they are such whose names are not written in the book of life. But those who have their Father's name written in their forehead, and their names written in the Lamb's book, they follow the Lamb wherever he goes; And those who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful, Revelation 17:14.

Tenthly and lastly, Precious ones follow the Lamb, because they shall be forever with the Lamb, "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort you one another with these words," 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18.

"Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in the temple; and he who sits on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Revelation 7:15-17. How troublesome soever a saint's beginning is, his end is joyful. When believers change earth for heaven, they do not lose their happiness—but complete their happiness. John 17:24, "Father, I will that they also whom you gave me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which you have given me; for you love me before the foundation of the world." Not only with me forever—but with my saints, with my angels, and with my Father, and with all that are with me. To be with God and Christ forever, implies these seven things:

1. The presence of God.
2. The happy union with God.
3. The blessed vision of God.
4. The glorious communion with God.
5. The fruition of God.
6. The rest that the saints shall have in God.
7. The enjoyment of themselves in God.

Oh! how unspeakable is the glory of heaven! Oh! how infinitely glorious is the Lamb! Now true believers follow the Lamb wherever he goes, because they shall be forever with the Lamb, in fullness of glory, and endless felicity, Romans 8:17.

Thus have I showed you WHY believers follow the Lamb.

3. Now I shall show you the EXCELLENCY of following the Lamb. The first excellency is, those who follow the Lamb, have the PRESENCE of the Lamb with them. The hundred forty and four thousand that stood upon Mount Zion, had the Lamb with them. Psalms 46:5, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early; the Lord Almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge," Psalms 46:8. God is in the midst of his church, not only to behold her—but uphold her; though the church's enemies may be waves to toss her—yet they shall never be rocks to split her; because God is in the midst of her. This is that which comforted and strengthened David, "Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me," Psalms 22:4. "When you pass through the waters I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon you," Isaiah 43:2. Oh! Those who follow the Lamb, who stand for the Lamb, have the presence of the Lamb, his glorious presence, his gracious

presence, his comforting presence, his protecting presence, his quickening, sanctifying presence. The second excellency is, that those who follow the Lamb, shall know the mind of the Lamb."It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—but to them it is not given." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;" Matthew 13:11, Matthew 13:16, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his Lord does; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you."

Jesus Christ, who lies in the bosom of the Father, he unbosoms and unveils the heart of his Father to believers; they know his secrets, his mind, his counsel, and his will, and none knows it but them. "I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes;" Matthew 11:25. Those who walk with God, know much of the mind of God, and the mysteries of the gospel. The third excellency of following the Lamb is, those who follow the Lamb, may come boldly to the Lamb."Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Hebrews 4:16. A soul that has a saving interest in Christ, may come boldly to Christ, and speak boldly to him, and to his Father, for any mercy he needs! He may go to the throne of grace for grace, and open his heart to God, as one friend to another. Oh! what liberty have believers! Oh! what a privilege have they, that they may go to God with a holy boldness! The wicked proud ones of the earth are so high—that the poor saints cannot come boldly and freely unto them; but they may come boldly and freely unto the Lord their God. Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The fourth excellency is, that those who follow the Lamb, shall have all their needs supplied by the Lamb.Php 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Those who follow the Lamb shall lack no good thing!" "Oh, fear the Lord you his saints; for there is no lack to those who fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger—but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing," Psalms 36:9-10. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," Psalms 23:1. "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he shall give you the desire of your heart!" You shall have whatever you desire to have. He who has the chief good—shall lack no good.

"Whoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; and he who comes unto me shall never hunger!" John 6:35. Oh! who would not follow and believe in the Lamb! Oh happy are all who love the Lamb! The fifth excellency is, those who follow the Lamb, shall share with the Lamb.

First, They share with Christ in his divine nature. "Whereby are given unto us, exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," 2 Peter 1:4. That is, "of those divine qualities whereby we are made like unto God, in wisdom, righteousness, and true holiness," John 4:24.

Secondly, they share with Christ in his conquests. The poor saints share with Christ in all his noble and honorable conquests, 1 Corinthians 15:55, over all the world, death, and hell, and over sufferings, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us," Romans 8:37.

Thirdly, they share with Christ in his graces. "Of his fullness have we all received, grace for grace," John 1:16. As the paper from the press receives letter for letter, as the wax from the seal receives

print for print, or as the looking-glass from the image receives face for face, so do believers receive from Christ grace for grace; that is, for every grace that is in the Lamb—there is the same grace in us, in some measure.

Fourthly, Believers share with Christ in his glorious titles. He is called a Son, so are they. He is called a King, so are they. He is called a Priest, so are they. He is called an Heir, so are they, Romans 8:17, Revelation 5:16 and Revelation 1:5-6.

Fifthly, they share with Christ in his glory. "I go to prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also," John 14:3. "And the glory which you gave me, I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one," John 17:23. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life," John 10:27-28. The saints shall have the same glory which Christ himself has! The saints in heaven are not only glorified with Christ (which is the great exaltation) but they do enjoy the very same glory which Christ himself does, the same for kind, though not for degree. The head and members are glorified together with the same kind of glory. God has not one heaven for his Son, and another for his saints; but one and the same for both! Believers shall be as truly glorious as Christ is—as eternally glorious as he is, "Our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body; and we shall be glorified together with him, and appear with him in glory," Romans 8:1-39. Colossians 3:1-25. Oh! here is the excellency of following the Lamb; those who follow him, shall share in his glory! The sixth excellency of following the Lamb is, those who follow the Lamb shall be protected by the Lamb. "He allowed no man to do them wrong; yes he reprov'd kings for their sakes; saying, touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm," Psalms 105:14-15. which are his saints. "Who is he who will harm you, if you are followers of that which is good? And if you suffer for righteousness sake, happy are you, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled," 1 Peter 3:13-14. "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; yes, I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, yes, I will uphold you with my righteousness omnipotent hand," Isaiah 41:40. "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget—yet I will not forget you," Isaiah 49:15. Who can harm a man if God is with him and for him? He who has the love of God—needs not be concerned about the anger of man. A true believer has the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of good angels, the love of good men, and the love of all whose love is worth the having. God protects men in his way—but none out of his way. He is good to them in affliction, and he does good to them by affliction. The seventh excellency is, those who follow the Lamb, shall not feel the wrath of the Lamb. Revelation 2:11, "He who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death!" 1 Thessalonians 1:10, "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come!" "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh—but after the Spirit," Romans 8:1.

Oh, how sad is the condition of those who live and die without Christ; They are sent to hell, Psalms 9:17, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forsake God!" "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction, away from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power!" 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

They shall feel and suffer the wrath of the Lamb, because they despised the truth and love of the Lamb, "But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my

hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you— when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you. "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me. Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord, since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes!" Proverbs 1:24-31. Do you hear this, sinners? And will you still die in your sins? Be sure of this—hell will show you no mercy!

Now the believer will feel and suffer none of this; he is in an eternally happy state and condition. The eighth excellency is, those who follow the Lamb shall reign with the Lamb! This is another excellency of following the Lamb. True believers now reign over the pomp and pride of the world, over evil spirits, over sin, and over sufferings; but besides all this, they shall reign with Christ, and over those who now reign over them, Revelation 5:10, "And we shall reign on the earth," chapter 20:4, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." And as the wicked tread down the saints under their feet now—so shall the saints then tread down the wicked under their feet, Malachi 4:3. The Lord has promised that the meek shall inherit the earth. Do not the Scriptures say, that "In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be lifted up above the hills, and shall be established in the top of the mountains." Isaiah 2:2; and that the kingdoms of the world must become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ? Revelation 11:15. And he who loves to see the face of the church beautiful, will before long wipe away all her bloody tears. It is not long before you will triumph and say, "Lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come." Song of Song of Solomon 2:11-12 The ninth excellency is, those who follow the Lamb shall sit on the throne with the Lamb. Revelation 3:21. "To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father upon his throne." "You also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matthew 19:28. Oh! what an honor is this, what a glory is this, to sit upon the throne with Christ! Is it not honor and glory enough for us to be in heaven with God, and Christ, and angels—but we must sit upon Christ's throne there! Oh, what an honor is this! And yet this honor shall all the Lamb's followers have. The tenth excellency of following the Lamb is, those who follow the Lamb shall judge the world with the Lamb. If you consult the sacred records, you will find that God, and Christ, and the saints—are all said to judge the world. The ordination is God's, the execution is Christ's, the approbation is the saint's. When the apostle would stop the sinful lawsuits among the Corinthian brethren, who did not want men of piety to put an end unto their controversies, he says, "Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" 1 Corinthians 6:2. "Behold the Lord comes with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude 1:14-15. "When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matthew 19:28.

Now the world judges the saints—but then the saints shall judge the world. Now they judge and condemn Christ and his members—but then they shall be judged and condemned by Christ and his members. For as the world cannot endure God himself, so neither can they endure God in the saints! The more God dwells in the saints, the more the world afflicts the saints; but those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes, shall then sit in judgment upon those who now sit in judgment

upon them.

Thus I have showed you the excellencies of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, I will show you the misery of those who do not follow the Lamb—but follow the beast! Oh, their misery is great in this life—but it will be greater in the eternal world! The first misery of those who follow the beast is, those who follow him, shall share with him in all his plagues! "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name." Revelation 14:9-11.

Oh, the plagues, the terrible plagues that shall fall upon the beast! "Death, and mourning, and famine, and fire," chapter 18:8. The judgment shall come upon all those who join with the beast; all those who partake of his sins—shall share of his plagues!

There is, First, "A vial poured out upon the earth;" that is, upon the common people, Revelation 16:2.

Secondly, "Another vial upon the sea," that is, the jurisdiction of Rome, Revelation 16:3.

Thirdly, "Another vial upon the rivers," that is, their ministers, Revelation 16:4.

Fourthly, "Another vial is poured out upon the sun," that is, princes and magistrates, Revelation 16:8.

Fifthly, "Another vial upon the throne of the beast," that is, Rome itself, the throne of the beast, Revelation 16:10. So that all that worship the beast, and receive his mark, and belong to him, whether they be high or low, rich or poor—they shall all share with him in all his plagues.

"Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not her plagues," Revelation 18:4. The second misery of those who follow the beast is, they shall cry to the rocks, and to the mountains of the earth! "Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand!" Revelation 6:15-17. The wicked, though here clothed in silk and velvet, shall wish for the mountains to cover them, which would be but a poor shelter; for the mountains melt at the presence of the Lord, and the rocks rent asunder when he is angry. Those who made others flee away from them, as innocent lambs from devouring wolves, shall be afraid of the wrath of the Lamb, who sits on the throne.

Oh! how will these great men dare to appear before his tribunal, who have stained the sword of authority with the blood of innocency, by turning its back against the wicked, and whetting its edge against the righteous! Many an unjust judge, who now sits confidently upon the bench, shall then stand trembling at the bar. Oh! how will they be able to lift up their heads before Christ, who have lifted up their hands against Christ! "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered

together against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts 4:26. Revelation 17:14. Instead of helping the Lord against the mighty, they help the mighty against the Lord, "The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One!" Psalms 2:2.

Oh! how many great men are there, who make no other use of their greatness—but to be great in wickedness, great swearers, great drunkards, great persecutors, great adulterers, great atheists—who instead of denying or forsaking the devil and all his works, follow the devil and all his works; who sin with delight, and are delighted with their sins!

"The princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves," Isaiah 1:2. But the great God against whom the sin is committed, is greater than the greatest, "before whom all nations of the world are but as a drop of a bucket, and as the smallest dust of the balance," Isaiah 40:15. "No one is like you, O Lord; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like you!" Jeremiah 10:6-7. He touches the mountains, and they smoke! The devils fear and tremble before him. Therefore, woe, woe, be to those who forsake him, and follow the beast; they shall cry and call for help—but there will be none to help them! The third misery of those that follow the beast is, they shall be cast into a lake of fire with the beast.

"And the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who did mighty miracles on behalf of the beast—miracles that deceived all who had accepted the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue. Both the beast and his false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur!" Revelation 19:20. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, away from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

Oh what a dreadful thing it is to lie under the wrath of God—to lie in burning flames, and forever to be banished from the presence of God, and his holy angels! This will be the portion of the beast's followers. Oh, will they not wish they had never been born, or that they might be turned into stocks and stones! But, alas! their wishes will do them no good; Christ will say to them, "Depart, you who are cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25:41.

Oh, you rulers and great ones of the earth! It will be no dishonor to your honors—to lay your honor at his feet; in whose presence "the angels veil their faces, and before whose throne the elders cast their crowns!" Isaiah 6:2. Revelation 4:10. Oh! it is better with patience to suffer with Zion and the church's party a while—rather than join with the Romish party, and be ruined with them at the end. Revelation 14:12, "Here is the patience of the saints." You shall suffer a while, and be trodden down by them—but I will surely come, and I will recompense all your patience! And therefore be not discouraged, and faint in your minds; let not your hearts turn back into Egypt, and hanker after Rome, those remnants of Baal, which God will surely destroy.

Fifthly, I will show you now how the Lamb's followers may be known discerned from the beast's followers.

1st, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their NUMBER—they are in number the fewest. "Many are called—but few are chosen" Matthew 20:19. The Lamb's followers may be known discerned

from the Beast's followers, by fewness of their number. Christ calls his flock, a little flock, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!" Luke 12:32. Truly, beloved, there are but a few who follow the Lamb, and believe in Him. The Heathen follow Satan, the Turks follow Mohammed, the Jews follow Moses, the Papists follow the Pope, and the loose Protestants and carnal professors follow the world, the flesh, and the devil; and false teachers, false doctrine and false worship! "The whole world was astonished and followed the beast!" Revelation 13:3

Believers, though their nature is the sweetest—yet their number is the smallest. In heaven are the best—but in hell are the most! Oh, there are but few sincere Christians! There are many thorns—but few lilies; many almost Christians—but few altogether, Christians.

2ndly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their CHARACTERS.

You have nine lovely characters of them in Revelation 14:1-20 :

1. They stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion.
2. They have their Father's name written on their foreheads.
3. They sing a new song, which none can learn but only the hundred forty and four thousand.
4. They are redeemed from the earth.
5. They keep themselves pure.
6. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes.
7. They were purchased from among men.
8. They bring their first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.
9. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless; for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Oh! how holy, how heavenly, how gracious, how glorious, how lovely and spiritual are these! They live in the Lord, on the Lord, to the Lord, and with the Lord, "They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Peter 2:9.

3rdly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their SPIRITS. They have another spirit, Numbers 14:24. All the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb, Romans 8:9. And by the Spirit they are led and taught; a spirit of holiness, a spirit of meekness, a spirit of love, a free spirit, and a true, humble, and faithful spirit, to and for the Lord. Now, as the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb—so the beast's followers are in the spirit of the beast, which is no other than the spirit of the devil! Ephesians 2:2, "According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience." This is a spirit of lording and domineering, a spirit of cunning and craftiness, a spirit of deceit, a spirit of superstition, a spirit of persecution and cruelty! And in this spirit, are all the followers of the beast. Now, by this you may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers.

4thly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their NAME. They have another name, a new name, Revelation 3:12. God gives his people honorable titles, though the beast gives them reproachful titles! God calls them the dearly beloved of his soul, Jeremiah 21:7; the apple of his eye, Zechariah 2:8, his jewels, Malachi 3:17; his glory, his portion, his bride, his friends and children. But the beast calls them seditious, heretics, deceivers, and deluders, and blasphemers, and fools, and madmen—as if they were not worthy to have a being among men! But though they are ravens in the world's eye—yet they are doves in God's eye! Yes, they are such worthies of whom the world are not worthy! Hebrews 11:38.

Now, dear Christians, by this you may know the Lamb's followers from others—by the nicknames the world gives them, and by the glorious names that God gives them.

5thly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their GRACES. The Lamb's followers, are full of faith, full of love, full of grace and goodness. They are very fruitful, and bring forth much fruit, John 15:5. They are called heavenly, because of their heavenliness. They are called holy, because of their holiness. They are called spiritual, because of their spiritualness. They are called faithful, because of their faithfulness. There is much of God to be seen in them—in their words, works, duties, and conversations.

Php 3:20, "For our conversation is in heaven." They seek heavenly things, and walk by a heavenly rule. They eye heavenly objects, and are led by an heavenly spirit; they submit to a heavenly government, and imitate heavenly ones. There is much of heaven in them—and much of them in heaven, "When I awake—I am still with you," says David. But now the beast's followers they are full too—but it is with blood, swearing, cursing, stealing, lying, blasphemy, rebellion, and all manner of abominations and filthiness! "There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed." Hosea 4:2, Romans 3:1-31. Now, beloved, by this you may know Christ's precious ones—from the beast's filthy ones!

6thly, the Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's, by their keeping the commandments of God, and faith of Jesus Christ. Revelation 14:12. "This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus." So in Revelation 12:17, "The dragon was angry at the woman and declared war against the rest of her children—all who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony for Jesus." True believers cleave to the Lord, and follow him fully, "But my servant Caleb has followed me fully," Numbers 14:24.

Enoch walked with God, Genesis 5:34. Noah walked with God, Genesis 6:9. "Let us walk in the Spirit," Romans 5:25.

They follow the Lamb wherever he goes: they hear his voice, they profess his worship, and obey his doctrine. They abhor antichrist, they do not follow the beast, nor receive his mark; but keep the beautiful garments of gospel innocency, and will not touch beastly Babylon!

7thly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their COMPANY. The Lamb's followers keep company together, "On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people," Acts 4:23. So they are said to stand upon a sea of glass together, " And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God," Revelation 15:2. So those who are with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, are together, keep together, and follow the

Lamb together.

Christ's faithful witnesses do not hear with antichrist's teachers, nor worship with those who worship the beast—for they have come out of Babylon, chapter 18:4, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes!" "Therefore come out from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, says the Lord," 2 Corinthians 6:17. The children of God will not keep company with the children of the devil, for they cannot agree, "for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness. and what communion has light with darkness? and what concord has Christ with Belial? or what part has he who believes with an infidel? and what agreement has the temple of God with idols?" 2 Corinthians 6:14-16. Therefore believers keep together, walk together, and worship God together. "And those who believed, were of one heart, and of one soul, and continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," Acts 4:34 and Acts 2:42. By this the Lamb's followers are known—by their company.

8thly, You may know the Lamb's followers, by their LANGUAGE. True believers speak the language of Canaan; their language is Scripture language. You may know them by their speech, as Peter was known by his speech, "Surely you are one of them, for your speech betrays you," Matthew 26:73. Their words are holy and heavenly; they speak of God, and to God, and for God—and he hears them! Malachi 3:10. But the beast's followers speak wickedly, proudly, daringly and blasphemously! The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God!" Revelation 13:5-6. Men are known who they are, and what they are, and to whom they belong—by their language. If they are of God, and in God—they cannot but speak much of God.

9thly, the Lamb's followers are known by this—they are more afflicted with the church's heaviness, then they are affected with their own happiness. "So the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" Nehemiah 2:2-3. How can Zion's sons be rejoicing, when their mother is mourning? Though they were the Jews desolation—yet they were Jeremiah's lamentation. How can such rejoice in her standing—who do not mourn for her falling? When the church's adversaries make long furrows upon her back—we should cast in the seed of tears.

"Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." Hebrews 13:3. Sympathizing with others, makes an estate that is joyful more happy, and an estate that is doleful less heavy.

"The righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart!" Isaiah 57:1. We may draw up the charge against many now, "How terrible for you who sprawl on ivory beds and lounge on your couches, eating the meat of tender lambs from the flock and of choice calves fattened in the stall. You sing trivial songs to the sound of the harp and fancy yourselves to be great musicians like David. You drink wine by the bowlful and perfume yourselves with fragrant lotions. You care nothing about the ruin of your nation!" Amos 6:4-6. Oh! that there were not so many such now-a-days, who eat the fat and drink the sweet, and are not troubled for Zion's troubles! Instead of sympathizing with them

in their misery—they are censuring them for their misery. But the true servants of God are tender and broken-hearted; they weep and mourn, and wring their hands for Zion's sins, for Zion's breaches, for Zion's calamities, for Zion's grievances! And thus they do, and will do, until they arrive on Mount Zion with the Lamb.

10thly, the Lamb's followers are known by their love to Christ, and sufferings for Christ. They choose the worst of sorrows, before they will commit the least of sins, "For your sake we are killed all the day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter!" Romans 8:36. "And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," Matthew 10:22. "Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake," Matthew 5:11. Love can walk on the water without drowning, and lie in the fire without burning. How shall we land at the haven of rest—if we are not tossed upon the sea of trouble? A believer should live above the love of life, and the fear of death. Though we cannot live without afflictions—yet let us live above afflictions! None are so welcome to that spiritual Canaan, as those that swim to it through the red sea of their own blood! In suffering—the offence is done to us; in sinning—the offence is done to God. In suffering—we lose the favor of men; in sinning—we lose the favor of God. Therefore Daniel chose the den of lions, rather than he would forsake the cause of the Lamb, Daniel 6:6. And the three Hebrew children chose rather to suffer sadly, than to sin foully, Daniel 3:1-30. And "Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Hebrews 11:25. It is better to be a martyr than a monarch; it is better to be a prisoner for Jesus Christ, than to be a prince without Christ or against Christ.

Oh, how precious how glorious, how lovely, and how sweet is Jesus Christ to believers! Oh, they love him entirely and sincerely. They love his glorious person and the beauty of his holiness, and his name, his honor, his cause, and his members. They will suffer for him, and die for him—because he suffered and died for them. Revelation 21:11, "And they loved not their lives unto the death." Now by this all men may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers, namely—by their sorrows and sufferings for Christ, for truth, for righteousness, and for conscience sake, Hebrews 10:34, "You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever." "Others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground." Hebrews 11:35-38

Eleventhly, the Lamb's followers are known by this—they seek the public good of others, above the private good of themselves. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh," Romans 9:2-3, "And now, O Father, glorify your Son—that your Son may glorify you," John 17:1. He prayed for glory, more for the Father's sake who bestowed it, than for his own sake who received it. A true Christian does not desire grace only for this end—that God may glorify him; but he desires grace for this end—that he may glorify God. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for our sakes, he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich," 2 Corinthians 8:9. Oh! that the Lord Jesus should not only in pity, save

us—but in love, die for us! And David, after he had served his own generation, by the will of God, fell asleep, Acts 13:36. His generation did not serve him—but he served his own generation; and not by his own will, but by the will of God. Old Eli mourned more for the loss of his religion, than for the loss of his relations, 1 Samuel 4:18. "Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. "O Lord," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Exodus 32:10-11. Moses was no self-seeker, but a nation preserver.

Reason makes a man a man—but grace makes a man a Christian. Every gracious spirit is concerned for the public good—though everyone who is concerned for the public good is not gracious. As we are not born by ourselves, so we are not born for ourselves. But the beast's followers and Babylon's merchants are for themselves, and seek themselves, "Like greedy dogs, they are never satisfied. They are ignorant shepherds, all following their own path and intent on personal gain." Isaiah 56:11. "They teach things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake," Titus 1:11. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees; for you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers! Therefore you shall receive the greater damnation," Matthew 23:14. These make not gain stoop to godliness—but godliness stoop to gain.

12thly, and lastly, the Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's followers by this—they are more for the power than form; for heart than art; for matter than method; for substance than show. "Having a form of godliness—but denying the power thereof, from such turn aside," 2 Timothy 3:5. As they who have the power of godliness cannot deny the form, so they who have the form of godliness should not deny the power. Alas! what is hearing without doing, and praying without practicing, and teaching without reforming? God loves to see his plants of righteousness; he bears greater respect to our hearts, than he does to our works, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God," Romans 12:1. The formalist is all outward actions, and for nothing of inward sincerity; he is for a body without a soul, and a show without a substance. But it is not a show of outward piety—which will excuse inward hypocrisy, "A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God." Romans 2:28-29, "I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not—but are the synagogue of Satan," Revelation 2:9.

They are better in their outsides, than they are in their insides; but believers are better in their insides than they are in their outsides. "The King's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold," Psalms 45:13. The one bows but his knee at the name of Jesus, the other bows his heart to the truth of Jesus. The one only signs with the cross, the other carries the cross. Oh, what would not hypocritical men do for heaven—if they might have heaven for their so doing? But those who sail in this rotten bottom—will surely sink!

"The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?" says the Lord. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies!" Isaiah 1:11-13

It was not the clay and spittle that cured the blind man—but Christ anointing his eyes. It was not the troubling of the waters in the pool of Bethesda that made them whole—but the coming down of the angel. Alas! the dish without the meat will not feed us. Men may spread the net of duty—but it is God must take the draught of mercy.

Now by these twelve marks, beloved, you may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers. And thus I have briefly and clearly showed you these five things:

First, WHAT following the Lamb is.

Secondly, WHY gracious souls follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Thirdly, the EXCELLENCY of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, the MISERY of following the beast.

Fifthly, How the Lamb's followers may be distinguished from the beast's followers.

I shall now make some Practical Application of this:

First, For self-examination and trial. Oh, friends, for the Lord's sake, and for your souls' sake—examine yourselves, try yourselves by this, that you may know whose you are, and to whom you do belong. "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?" Romans 6:16.

Oh! who do you follow? If you follow men—truly you have your reward. If you follow sin—you shall have your sins' wages, which is woe and misery in this life, and eternal death, hell and destruction in the next life. But if you follow God—then you shall have eternal life. Therefore be not deceived, mistake not yourselves! "God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that shall he reap!" Oh! beloved, examine yourselves, and try yourselves—what do you mind, what do you seek, what do you do. Do you follow the Lamb in his commandments, in his teaching, in his appointments, and in his examples, and through suffering and reproaches? Have you forsaken all, and followed him? Matthew 19:29. Have you taken up his cross and denied yourselves? Matthew 16:24. Have you learned of him to be meek and lowly? Matthew 11:29. Have you visited and clothed his members? Matthew 25:35. Have you kissed the Son, and made your peace with him? Oh, beloved, are you new creatures? Are you in Christ? Are you in faith? "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you are reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5. The Second use is exhortation.

First, Oh, beloved, let me beseech you for your precious and immortal soul's sake—to come out of Babylon, from the beast's image, and from his worship, and from his mark, that you may be not defiled.

Oh! come away to Jesus Christ, "Arise, my love and come away!" Song of Song of Solomon 2:10. "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden—and I will give you rest," Matthew 11:28. Oh! sinners, he calls you to come to him—will you not go? We must forsake sin, and embrace virtue. We must put off the old man, and put on the new man. We must have repentance and

mortification of sin, a dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness. We must put off the love of earthly things—and desire heavenly things. Our bodies and our souls must come away unto Christ: our souls, because they are the spouse of Christ; our bodies, because they are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

"Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes!" Revelation 18:4-5. We must come away from the enticements of the flesh, and the allurements of the world, and suggestions of the devil, and from the whore of Babylon, and from all the inventions and traditions of men—that we may walk with God, before God, after God, and in the name of God, and in the Spirit of God; and that we may live in Christ—as Christ lives in the Father.

Oh, what more happy, than to live forever; and so to live forever as Christ himself lives! Surely this is a blessed and glorious life. This is a believer's life.

Secondly, Labor more and more to be like those who follow the Lamb fully. They are very holy and pure, they are called virgins:

1st, For their chastity. "That I may present you as chaste virgins unto Christ," 2 Corinthians 11:2. These love Christ with a chaste love—but not with an adulterous love.

2ndly, For their purity. They are virgin saints, they have not dined with the whore of Babylon—but have kept themselves from her idolatry and superstition, and from her sin and wickedness; and in their mouth was found no deceit.

Believers are called heavenly; Christ's members are glorious members. They are called heavenly for two reasons.

First, Because there is much of heaven in them.

Secondly, Because there is much of them in heaven.

1st, there is much of heaven in believers—much of God, much of Christ, and much of the Spirit. "Of his fullness have we all received, and grace upon grace," John 1:16. The glory of God, the knowledge of God, the presence of God, the love of God, the holiness of God, the joys of God, these are the things that make heaven to be heaven. Now there is much of these things in believers, therefore they are called heavenly.

Believers are holy ones, and they have glorious titles:

1. The Lord's portion, Deuteronomy 32:9.
2. The Lord's pleasant portion, Jeremiah 12:10.
3. The Lord's inheritance, Isaiah 19:25.
4. The dearly beloved of his soul, Jeremiah 12:7.
5. God's treasure, and peculiar treasure, Exodus 19:5.
6. His glory, Isaiah 46:13.

7. The house of God's glory, Isaiah 60:7.
8. A crown of glory, Isaiah 62:3.
9. A royal diadem, Isaiah 62:3.
10. The glory of God, Jeremiah 3:17.
11. Golden candlesticks, Revelation 1:12.
12. Kings, Revelation 5:10 13. And in my text, heavenly.

There is as much difference between the Christian and other men, as there is between gold and dirt, as between diamonds and bubbles, in the Lord's esteem. They are to God—above all people, "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor." Proverbs 12:26. Oh! how precious, how happy, how blessed and glorious are believers! They are called heavenly.

2ndly, Believers are called heavenly, because there is much of heaven in them.

1. Their thoughts are in heaven, Psalms 139:17.
2. Their desires are in heaven, Psalms 73:25.
3. Their affections are in heaven, Colossians 3:2.
4. Their hopes are in heaven, Titus 2:13.
5. Their conversations are in heaven, Php 3:20.
6. Their hearts are in heaven, Matthew 6:21.
7. Their aims are in heaven, Luke 10:20.

Oh! there is much of believers in heaven! Their souls are in heaven, when their bodies are walking upon the earth. They live in heaven, while they are on the earth. Ephesians 2:6, "And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." The saints are set in heavenly places, with heavenly dignities, heavenly privileges, heavenly prerogatives. The saints of the most high God are set on high places. The true church is that spouse that is fair and beautiful, Song of Song of Solomon 2:14. Oh! the church of Christ is lovely and glorious!

1. Glorious in her head.
2. Glorious in her titles.
3. Glorious in her gifts and graces.
4. Glorious in her offices.
5. Glorious in her privileges.
6. Glorious in her members.

Oh, the church of Christ is a holy church, and a glorious church! "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy without blemish," Ephesians 5:27. "These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for

they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless." Revelation 14:4-5.

Now, he who has an ear to hear—let him hear!

I shall exhort you who are members of this heavenly church:

1st, Seek heavenly things, before and above all things else! Let your hearts be filled with knowledge and heavenly riches!

2ndly, Delight in heavenly things! Let it be your heaven upon earth, to serve the God of heaven.

3rdly, Act by heavenly principles.

4thly, Have a holy dependence upon God—for direction, for protection, for assistance, for a blessing.

5thly, Eye heavenly objects—God, Christ and the Spirit.

6thly, Imitate heavenly ones—follow those who follow Christ.

7thly, Walk by a heavenly rule; walk according to the law of heaven.

8thly and lastly, Live much in heaven. Your Father is in heaven, your Head is in heaven, your Husband is in heaven, your King is in heaven, your treasure is in heaven, your crown is in heaven, your wages are in heaven! So where should you be—but in heaven?

"You know that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions." Hebrews 10:34. "Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands!" 2 Corinthians 5:1.

Oh! these are blessed and holy ones! "And those who were with him, are called the chosen, and faithful," Revelation 17:14. Oh! labor to be like those in purity and piety, in holiness and humbleness, in meekness and patience, in faithfulness and uprightness, in spiritualness and in all godliness.

Thirdly, Follow the Lamb out of Babylon.

"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Revelation 6:10. "Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle." Revelation 14:15-17. The whore of Babylon shall be destroyed with a double destruction. Her walls shall fall down, her wall of power, her wall of polity, her wall of superstition, her wall of maintenance. And that for these reasons:

1st, Because she has a corrupt religion, both in doctrine and worship, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,"

Revelation 14:8, and Revelation 18:3.

2ndly, Because she has poisoned the kings of the earth. The whore of Babylon has been the great corrupter of kings. "Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty!" Revelation 16:13-14, and Revelation 17:2.

3rdly, For her cruelty. "In her was found the blood of the prophets, and all the saints that were slain upon the earth," Revelation 18:24. "And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," Revelation 17:6.

4thly, Because her ruin and destruction is published and proclaimed over the world, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils!" Revelation 18:2 and Revelation 14:8.

5thly, This is the great design that Christ has in the latter days of the world—to destroy Antichrist, "The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings," Revelation 17:14.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name was called the Word of God; and out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations!" Revelation 19:12-13, Revelation 19:15.

6thly, Because he has greatly insulted and triumphed over the Lord's people in their miseries and calamities, "All the people who belong to this world will gloat over them and give presents to each other to celebrate the death of the two prophets who had tormented them." Revelation 11:10.

7thly, Because of all the church's enemies that ever were, this is the crudest enemy—the fourth beast is worse than any of the former beasts. "And behold a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns," Daniel 7:7, Revelation 18:14.

8thly, It is the expectation of all the saints, that Babylon is to be destroyed, and thrown like a millstone into the sea, Revelation 18:21. Now, that God has raised this expectation in the hearts of his people, he will not frustrate their expectation, he will fulfill their petition.

9thly, God has promised to destroy the scarlet whore, because she has destroyed his saints, and she is to be punished as she has punished others, Revelation 15:5 and Revelation 18:8.

10thly, the whore of Babylon shall be destroyed, because she trusted in the arm of flesh, and gloried in her strength and riches, "Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, 'I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.' Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her!" Revelation 18:7-8.

Now, beloved, consider this, and think of this, and keep yourselves from Babylon, that you do not partake of her sins, lest you receive of her plagues! Oh, poor sinners! if you have any love to your

souls, if you have any mind to be saved—follow the Lamb, that you may be saved by the Lamb! He leads poor souls: From darkness to light. From death to life. From vice to virtue. From poverty to plenty. From sorrow to joy. From misery to glory. From Satan to God. From an earthly kingdom to a heavenly kingdom.

"Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," Matthew 25:24. Oh! the kingdom which Christ leads poor souls to is:

1. A rich kingdom.
2. A peaceable kingdom.
3. A righteous kingdom.
4. A blessed kingdom.
5. A glorious kingdom.
6. A satisfying kingdom.
7. A universal kingdom.
8. An everlasting kingdom.

Oh! follow the Lamb, follow the Lamb—that you may be ever glorified with the Lamb, and by the Lamb!

## S. The Great Day of God's Wrath!

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The Great Day of God's Wrath! by William Dyer

"For the great day of His wrath has come—and who shall be able to stand!" Revelation 6:17

Every man's thoughts run now like Nebuchadnezzar's—with a desire to know what shall come to pass hereafter, or what things the future will bring forth, "As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen." Daniel 2:29

There is nothing in the womb of time—but what was first in the womb of God. Now, this book of the Revelation shows us these three things:

1. The state and condition of the true church of God upon earth, under the power and reign of antichrist.
2. The rise, the reign, and the rage of antichrist in the world.
3. The quiet, blessed, and glorious state and condition of the true church here below, after the ruin and downfall of antichrist, "whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming!" 2 Thessalonians 2:8 This chapter out of which my text is taken (Revelation 6:1-17), shows us seven things:

1. You may see what God's dreadful judgments are, by which he cuts off and destroys the inhabitants of the earth, for their sin and wickedness; they are likened and compared to horses, as you may see from verse 4 to verse 8. Here you have: a white horse, war; a red horse, the sword; a black horse, the famine; a pale horse, the pestilence, or plague, which leads to death.

Horses are creatures which run to and fro—and so do God's judgments from house to house, from street to street, from city to city, from town to town, and from one place to another. "Show no mercy; have no pity!" Ezekiel 9:5

Horses are creatures which are very swift in their motion, they run many miles in a little time. Likewise, God's judgments are also very swift, they do much execution in a little time, "So the Lord sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead." 1 Chronicles 21:14 You may also see a proof of this, by what God has done to London, where more than a thousand died in one day.

2. You may see here where all the holy martyrs and witnesses of Jesus Christ are, who have been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus; they are under the altar, (Revelation 7:9) that is, under the glorious protection of Christ in heaven, "They are before the throne of God, serving him day and night; and the Lamb leads them to the living fountain, and God wipes away all tears from their eyes," Revelation 7:15, Revelation 7:17.

3. You may see also the cause for which these blessed saints were slain; it was "for the Word or God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 6:9.

4. Here you may see that all the saints' precious blood, which has been spilt from time to time by the whore of Babylon, cries aloud, day and night, to God for vengeance upon Babylon, Revelation 6:10.

5. You have here the answer of God in relation to the saints' cry, "And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled," Revelation 6:11.

6. You may here see what dreadful and terrible things followed upon the opening the sixth seal, Revelation 6:12, Revelation 6:14. "And lo, there was a great earthquake. The sun became as dark as black cloth, and the moon became as red as blood. Then the stars of the sky fell to the earth like green figs falling from a tree shaken by a strong wind. The sky was rolled up like a scroll, and all of the mountains and islands were moved from their places." These are the visible judgments of God, which are come upon the anti-christian crew.

And, lastly, this chapter shows us what will be the state and condition of those men at that day, who are found enemies to God and his people, "Then everyone—the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, and every slave and free person—all hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" Revelation 6:15-16

Now this brings me to the words of my text, which shows us the reason of this great out-cry, "For the great day of His wrath has come—and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:17 The words of my text contain two things—a reason and a question.

1. The former part is the ground or reason of this outcry here made by the kings and great men of the earth, together with every bond man and every free man, "For the great day of his wrath has come!"

2. The latter part is a question proposed about standing at that day, "And who shall be able to stand?" The point of doctrine, which I shall lay down from these words, is this:

DOCTRINE: That the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath. In handling of this point, I shall show you four things:

1. There are some days greater than others.
2. The nature and property of this great day.
3. Who they are that will not be able to stand in the day of God's wrath.
4. The use and application.

In the first place I shall show you, beloved—that there are some great days spoken of in the Scripture.

The first great day you have in Jeremiah 30:7, "How awful that day will be! None will be like it! It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it."

The second great day you have in Hosea 1:11, "What a great day that will be—the day of Jezreel—when God will again plant his people in his land."

The third great day you have in Joel 2:31, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes."

The fourth great day you have in Malachi 4:5. "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

The fifth great day is this in my text, "For the great day of his wrath has come—and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:17

The sixth great day you have in Revelation 16:14, "They are demonic spirits who work miracles and go out to all the rulers of the world to gather them for battle against the Lord on that great judgment day of God Almighty." The seventh and last great day you have in the Jude 1:6, "And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day"

Thus, beloved, you see, that there are some days which are greater than others, which the Scripture calls 'great days', because of the greatness of the work which God does, and will do, in those days.

2. I shall now show you the nature and properties of this great day in my text, which is called "The great day of God's wrath!" Oh, my brethren! this will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and put far from them the evil day, which is now hastening upon them.

1. First of all, this day will be a day of ASTONISHMENT to the wicked and ungodly, as it is said, Deuteronomy 28:28, "The Lord shall smite them with madness and blindness, and astonishment of heart!" Oh, it will be with the wicked, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, who was astonished to behold the works and wonders of God which the Lord wrought for the deliverance of those that put their trust in him, "Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." Daniel 3:24-25.

Oh, sinners! do but see here how this proud Nebuchadnezzar was astonished at the beholding of this sight! Here are three things which astonished this great king:

First, to see the fire, whose nature is to burn and consume, to have no power to seize upon the bodies of these men. Fire is one of the cruelest creatures; it is a merciless creature, and therefore the torments of hell are set forth by fire, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!" Matthew 25:41.

The second thing which astonished Nebuchadnezzar, was, to see the servants of the Lord walking in the fiery furnace, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men

loose, walking in the midst of the fire." These were cast in bound—but now they are loose; now, that the fire should have power on their bonds, and not on their bodies, oh, this caused astonishment in Nebuchadnezzar.

The third thing that astonished him, was, to see their number not decreased—but increased, "Did not we cast in three men bound into the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God." Now this astonished this great king. Now, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar here, so will it be with the wicked in this great day. Oh, you who now speak proudly, look highly, and walk contemptuously, it will astonish you to see God's judgments poured out upon you, and his wrath wax hot against you, until there is no remedy. Oh, do but see that text, "Babylon will be a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn!" Jeremiah 51:37. Thus it will be with the ungodly at that day.

2. It will be a day of **TERROR** to those who know not God, and that obey not the gospel of Christ! The terror of God will be upon such, as it was upon those cities, Genesis 35:5, "Then they set out, and the terror of God fell upon the cities all around them so that no one pursued them." Oh, you graceless people who now have no fear of God, nor tremble at his Word—he will make you then tremble, as he did Belshazzar, when he beheld the hand-writing on the wall, Daniel 5:6, "His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way!" Oh, you drunkards and swearers, you who despise reproof, and hate instruction, and scorn all God's counsel; know this, that the day of God's wrath will be a day of terror to you, which will make your hearts to sink within you, your countenance to change, your joints to be loosed, and your ears to tingle, when the terrors of the Almighty God set themselves in array against you! Therefore, says the apostle, 2 Corinthians 5:11, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

3. This day of God's wrath will be a day of **DISTRESS** to the wicked. "I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you—when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you!" Proverbs 1:26-27.

"The great day of the Lord is near—near and coming quickly. Listen! That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. I will bring distress on the people and they will walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. Their blood will be poured out like dust and their entrails like filth. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath. In the fire of his jealousy the whole world will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth!" Zephaniah 1:14-18

Oh, the distress that ungodly men will be in, in that day, which will make them cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! The God of heaven will bring distress upon all the ungodly, and their honor shall not deliver them, nor their gold deliver them, nor their silver deliver them, nor the greatness of their multitudes deliver them—but distress will come upon them, as it did upon Saul, 1 Samuel 28:15, "I am in great distress!" See Luke 21:23, "And there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people!" Can you hear this, and not tremble at it, oh you who are profane?

Fourthly, this day of God's wrath will be a day of great CONTEMPT to the ungodly. "The Lord Almighty has purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth!" Isaiah 23:9.

Oh, the enemies of the Lord, and such as oppose his truth, will be then hissed at. Oh, do but see that place, Jeremiah 11:37, "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and a hissing!" The Lord will pour contempt upon all ungodly men, who have sided with the whore of Babylon, and drunk of her cup; they will not know where to go, nor where to hide their heads—but everyone will hiss at them, and have them in derision, saying, these are those who said, "It is in vain to serve the Lord; and what profit is there in keeping of his ordinances, and in walking mournfully before the Lord Almighty?" who counted saints to be sots, and godliness to be madness. Therefore will they be contemptible before the Lord, angels, and holy men. Oh, think of this, you who speak proudly and blasphemously against God and his people! Know assuredly, that God will speak to you in his wrath, and vex you in his sore displeasure, "The One enthroned in heaven laughs! The Lord scoffs at them!" Psalms 2:4.

Fifthly, this day of God's wrath will be a day of great DESTRUCTION. "The wicked are reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath!" Job 21:30. In this day the Lord will destroy both evil people, and evil things, men and their idols, men and their inventions. Every plant which is not of God's planting, shall be plucked up, "Human pride will be humbled, and human arrogance will be brought down. Only the Lord will be exalted on that day of judgment. Idols will completely disappear. When the Lord rises to shake the earth, his enemies will crawl into holes in the ground. They will hide in caves in the rocks from the terror of the Lord and the glory of his majesty. On that day of judgment they will abandon the gold and silver idols they made for themselves to worship. They will leave their gods to the rodents and bats—while they crawl away into caverns and hide among the jagged rocks in the cliffs. They will try to escape the terror of the Lord and the glory of his majesty as he rises to shake the earth!" Isaiah 2:17-21.

All false ways, false worship and false doctrines, shall fall in that day! This will be a reaping day; God will empty the earth, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, "Look! The Lord is about to destroy the earth and make it a vast wasteland. He devastates the surface of the earth and scatters the people. Priests and people, servants and masters, maids and mistresses, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, bankers and debtors—none will be spared! The earth will be completely emptied and looted. The Lord has spoken!" Isaiah 24:1-3

"Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe! Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow—so great is their wickedness! Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision!" Joel 3:13-14 So in Revelation 14:15 the angels are appointed to reap down the earth. "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe!" Oh, let everyone who hears or reads these sayings, let them hear and fear, and tremble at them! for this will be a day of great destruction to the wicked and ungodly.

Sixthly, and lastly, this will be a GREAT day of wrath, as it is said in the words of my text. "For the great day of his wrath has come!" Who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire. Oh, beloved! this is not the day of man's wrath. Men have had their day of reigning and raging, and despising God—but that is over and gone, and now

God's day has come! This is the day of his wrath—and woe to wicked, and woe to the whore of Babylon, for the hour of her judgment has come.

Oh, beloved! God's GREAT wrath will be very terrible to the wicked!

1. God's great wrath will tear them in pieces like a lion! "I will be like a lion to Israel, like a strong young lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces! I will carry them off, and no one will be left to rescue them!" Hosea 5:14. "Consider this, all you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue you!" Psalms 50:22

2. God's great wrath will consume them like fire! "The Lord Almighty says—The day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace. On that day the arrogant and the wicked will be burned up like straw. They will be consumed—roots, branches, and all." Malachi 4:1. "I will pour out my wrath upon you and breathe out my fiery anger against you!" Ezekiel 21:31

3. God's great wrath will swallow up all his enemies! "You will capture all your enemies. Your strong right hand will seize all who hate you. You will throw them in a fiery furnace when you appear. In his wrath the Lord will swallow them up, and his fire will consume them!" Psalms 21:8-9

Oh! the wrath of the Almighty is that which tears like a lion, consumes like a fire, and swallows up like a dragon; and therefore it is called in the Scripture, "the fierceness of his great wrath!" 2 Kings 23:26. "The fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation!" Psalms 78:49.

"The fury of his wrath!" Revelation 16:19.

Thus, beloved, I have showed you the nature and property of this great day, spoken of in my text:

1. A day of astonishment.
2. A day of terror.
3. A day of distress.
4. A day of contempt.
5. A day of destruction.
6. A day of wrath.

3. I shall now come, in the third place, to show you—WHO they are, who will not be able to stand in this great day.

First, such as are openly wicked and profane, will not be able to stand in this great day. "They will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'" Luke 23:30. "There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil." Romans 2:9.

Oh, you profane ones! You who now wallow in your sins, as the pig in the mire, and eat up sin, as they eat bread, and drink up iniquity like water; Oh! let me tell you, you will not be able to stand in the day of wrath, nor in the day of judgment—but destruction will be your end, and everlasting misery your portion! Oh! that such would but consider these two places of Scripture, "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." Php 3:19. "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be

deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

These men may now live with a high hand, and boast, "We have struck a bargain to cheat death, and have made a deal to dodge hell. The coming destruction can never touch us, for we have built a strong refuge made of lies and deception!" Yet, "I will test you with the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of righteousness. Since your refuge is made of lies, a hailstorm will knock it down. Since it is made of deception, a flood will sweep it away. I will cancel the bargain you made to cheat death, and I will overturn your deal to dodge the grave. When the terrible enemy sweeps through, you will be trampled into the ground!" Isaiah 28:15-18

Secondly, such as are ignorant, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath. "When the Lord Jesus appears from heaven, he will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who do not know God and on those who refuse to obey the Gospel our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power!" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Oh, you who are ignorant of God and his gospel—but do you hear this? You are some of those who will not be able to stand in this great day—but say to the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

Beloved, ignorance is one of those cursed sins that bars and bolts Christ out of the heart; it is that which shuts them out from having mercy and favor with the Lord. Isaiah 27:11, "They are a foolish and stupid nation, for its people have turned away from God. Therefore, their Maker has no compassion on them, and their Creator shows them no favor."

Thirdly, such as have sided with antichrist against Christ, will not be able to stand in this great day. Such as have drunk of the whore's cup of fornication, shall drink of the cup of God's indignation, which is poured out without mixture! "A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath! He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name!" Revelation 14:9-11 . Oh, beloved! all those who have been partakers with her in sinning—shall be partakers with her in suffering! Therefore, "come out of her my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues!" Revelation 18:4.

All that cursed brood of Rome, with all its hellish crew, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath—but will be consumed like fuel, and devoured as fully dry stubble! "Why are you scheming against the Lord? He will destroy you with one blow; he won't need to strike twice! His enemies, tangled like thornbushes and staggering like drunks, will be burned up like dry stubble!" Nahum 1:9-10. So that all who have assisted antichrist against Christ, against his government, against his gospel, against his Spirit, against his worship, against his ministers, against his members, and against his glorious cause—I say, they will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath—but "cry to the rocks and the mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!" Revelation 6:16.

Fourthly, such as have only a form of godliness, but deny its power, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath! 2 Timothy 3:5. All idle and slothful professors, who have nothing of God, nor anything of Christ, nor anything of the Spirit, nor anything of the power of the Word in them—who having only a notional or formal profession; such, I say, will not be able to stand in this great day.

Romans 2:17-20, "Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God; if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth." But mark what God says to such, "You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. No wonder the Scriptures say—the Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you!" Romans 2:23-24

Oh! are there not many among us who profess God in words—but deny him in works; who have a name to live—but are dead; who have a form of godliness—but not the power; who have an external religion—but not an internal piety! Like those spoken of by Christ, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:21-23

Fifthly, such as are idle shepherds, and blind guides, will not be able to stand in that great day of God's wrath—but will "cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the wrath of him who sits on the throne, and from the face of the Lamb!"

"Prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel. Give them this message from the Sovereign Lord: What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks. Should not the shepherds feed their sheep? You drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals—but you let your flocks starve! You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost!" Ezekiel 34:2-4.

"Even the priests and prophets are ungodly, wicked men. I have seen their despicable acts right here in my own Temple, says the Lord. Therefore, the paths they take will become slippery. They will be chased through the dark, and there they will fall. For I will bring disaster upon them at the time fixed for their punishment. I, the Lord, have spoken!" Jeremiah 23:11-12.

"The more priests there are—the more they sin against me. They have exchanged the glory of God for the shame of idols. When the people bring their sin offerings, the priests get fed. So the priests are glad when the people sin! Like people—like priests. So now I will punish both priests and people for their wicked deeds!" Hosea 4:7-9.

Mark also what our Lord Jesus Christ says of idle shepherds, and blind guides, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to! For a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you shall receive the greater damnation!" Matthew 23:13-14.

Thus you see, beloved, that the Scriptures with open mouth—speak forth the desolations and calamities which will befall false shepherds, and blind guides in that day. If they cannot stand when his wrath is kindled but a little, oh! what will they do when wrath shall come upon them to the utmost, even the fierceness of his wrath? Then will they not be able to stand.

Sixthly, such as are hypocrites, will not be able to stand in this day of God's wrath—but desire, if it were possible, to hide themselves, in the dens and caves of the earth! "The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling grips the hypocrites! Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?" Isaiah 33:14.

"Such is the destiny of all who forget God; the hypocrite's hope shall perish. What he trusts in is fragile; he is leaning on a spider's web—but it gives way; he clings to it, but it does not hold!" Job 8:13-15.

Oh, you hypocrite, whoever you are, notwithstanding you have got the talking part of religion, and make a show of godliness—yet all this while you are a hypocrite in your heart! God hates hypocrisy, and will punish them with great punishments! "He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!" Matthew 24:51. Do you hear this, you who are hypocrites?

Seventhly, and lastly, all who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity, will not be able to stand in this day of God's wrath! Whether they are Turks or Jews, Papists or Protestants, bond or free—if they do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, they will not be able to stand! 1 Corinthians 16:22, "If anyone does not love the Lord, that person is cursed!" Oh, beloved, all those who shall be found unbelievers, unconverted, and unregenerate in this day of God's wrath—be they kings, or great men, or rich men, or nobles, or mighty men—they shall cry to the mountains, and rocks, saying, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb—for the great day of his wrath has come!"

Thus, beloved, I have showed you briefly, in seven particulars, who they are, who will not be able to stand in the day of God's wrath.

1. The openly wicked.
2. The ignorant.
3. Those who side with antichrist against Christ.
4. The formal professor.
5. The idle shepherds and blind guides.
6. The hypocrites.
7. All who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Objection: But, beloved, it may be you will say, If none of these are able to stand, who then will?

Answer. I answer, All those who shall be found having on their wedding garments, and in the Spirit of the Lamb, will be able to stand in this day, and they are these:

1st, those who overcome, Revelation 2:11, Revelation 3:21, Revelation 12:11, Revelation 21:7.

2nd, those who keep the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, Revelation 12:17, Revelation 1:9.

3rd, those who stand with the Lamb, Revelation 14:1, Revelation 17:14.

4th, those who have their Father's name written in their foreheads, Revelation 14:1.

5th, those who sing a new song, Revelation 14:3.

6th, those who are redeemed from the earth, Revelation 14:3.

7th, those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes, Revelation 14:4.

8th, those who are not defiled with the pollutions of the whore of Babylon, and in their mouths is found no lies, Revelation 14:5.

Now, beloved, these are those who will be able to stand in that great day of God's wrath, when others will not be able—but call "to the mountains and the rocks—Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

I shall now proceed, in the fourth place, to the use and PRACTICAL APPLICATION of the point.

Use 1. INFORMATION.

If it is so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath—then this may inform us of three things:

1. As men have had their day—so God will have his day. Men have had their day of sinning—God will have his day of punishing. Men have had their day of treasuring up wrath—God will have his day of pouring out of his wrath. Men have had their day of defiling—God will have his day of refining. Men have had their day of fornication—God will have his day of indignation. "The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done—so it will be done to you. All your evil deeds will fall back on your own heads!" Obadiah 1:15.

2. Though God bears with sinners in the day of his patience—yet he will not bear with them in the day of his wrath! "Go through the city, and smite. Show no mercy; have no pity!" Ezekiel 9:5. Oh, beloved! in the day of God's patience he bears with you, and waits to be gracious. Oh, how many hundred years has God borne with the whore of Babylon, notwithstanding of her great provocations and wickedness? But now in the day of his wrath, the Lord will not spare her, nor show pity on her—but pour out his wrath and indignation upon her to the utmost! "Therefore, these plagues will overtake her in a single day—death and mourning and famine. She will be completely consumed by fire, for the Lord God who judges her is mighty!" Revelation 18:8.

Oh, see that terrible word, "The Lord will march forth like a mighty man; he will come out like a warrior, full of fury. He will shout his battle cry and crush all his enemies! For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back. But now, I will destroy and devour at once!" Isaiah 42:13-14. Do you see this, sinners, how God is resolved to proceed against you in the day of his wrath, though he bears with you in the day of his patience!

3. This day of God's wrath will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, as appears by what has already been said. Oh, sinners! it will be a day of astonishment, a day of terror, a day of distress, a day of contempt, a day of destruction, a day of wrath! Oh! it will be "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds, and thick darkness," Joel 2:2. "The great day of the Lord is near— near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the Lord will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness!" Zephaniah 1:14-15. Oh, who is able to express the terror of the Almighty, in the day of his wrath! Oh, that every soul that hears me this day, would lay it to heart, and consider with themselves, that they may be able to stand in this day of God's wrath. So much for this use of information.

Use 2. EXAMINATION and self-trial. "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves." 2 Corinthians 13:5. Oh friends! how much does it concern you and I to examine our standing, that we may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, which is coming so fast upon us.

Oh, you see, how that his wrath is but a little kindled, and yet how hard a matter it is for men to stand, and to abide it! Thousands have been sent to their graves by our recent 'plague', and many hundreds have left their habitations because of it, and are fled out of the city into several parts of this kingdom for refuge. Oh, what a sad and doleful place has this city been for several weeks past! The greatest trade which had been here among us, was to bury the dead, and attend the sick. Oh now, my brethren, if this little be so much—what will it be when the great day of his wrath is come? Who will then be able to stand?

Oh, therefore, examine yourselves, and try yourselves!

Examine your faith, whether it is true!

Examine your knowledge, whether it is sanctified!

Examine your hope, whether it is purified!

Examine your love, whether it is sincere!

Examine your evidences, whether they are sound!

Examine your hearts, whether they are gracious!

Examine your desires, whether they are holy!

Examine your ends, whether they are right!

Examine your lives, whether they are heavenly! And all that you may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, in the day of death, and in the day of judgment!

Use 3. EXHORTATION. I hope you will not think the time long—for this may be the last sermon that I may preach, or you may hear. Well, beloved, is it so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath? Let me therefore to exhort you to these three things:

First, Let me therefore to exhort you who are lost sinners, to repent of your sins. "He who conceals his sins shall not prosper—but whoever confesses and renounces them shall find mercy. Blessed

is the man who always fears the Lord—but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble." Proverbs 28:13-14

Oh, sinners! you have grievously sinned against God! You have deserved as many hells as you have committed sins! You have sinned against his mercies! You have abused his patience! You have resisted his Spirit! You have disobeyed his gospel! You have made light of his ministers, and have hated his members. Oh, sinners! all this have you done—and yet the Lord has spared you. And though you have sinned at so high a rate—yet God does give you space to repent. Oh, let his goodness lead you to repentance, that you do not die in your sins. Oh, therefore, consider what I say! Why will you die—seeing God will have you live? Why will you damn yourselves? Why will you go to hell—seeing God would have you go to heaven?

Oh, do but see what the Lord says, "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Isaiah 1:18. Truly, if you have not hearts of stone, methinks these words should melt you—to see the love, the pity, the mercy, and willingness of God to do your souls good.

Secondly, Let me exhort you to get a saving interest in the Lord Jesus, that you may be able to stand in the day of his wrath. Oh, sinners! there will be no standing before Christ without a saving interest in Christ. Oh sinners! go to Christ, his promises are open to you, his arms are open to embrace you, his Spirit is ready to assist you, and his people to own you, and his angels are ready to attend you, and heaven itself is ready to receive you! Oh, sinners! if you will but come to Christ, you shall be reconciled to the Father, justified by the Son, sanctified by the Spirit, delivered from eternal wrath, and made the children of God! And, finally, you shall be received into everlasting glory at the end of your days! Oh, therefore, let this prevail with you to go to Christ, for light, for life, for grace, for strength, and for comfort and peace, that "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another." John 1:16.

Thirdly, and lastly, Let me now exhort you, who have turned from sin, are separated from the world, are espoused to Christ, are reconciled to the Father: to "walk worthy of God, who has called you to his kingdom and glory!" 1 Thessalonians 2:12. Oh, precious saints! let me exhort you to keep your lamps burning, your loins girded, your lives holy, your hearts upright, your judgments sound, your consciences pure, and your garments unspotted! Do not be troubled at God's dealings and dispensations, though he takes your precious godly relations away from you. For as he sends the wicked to hell, that they may dishonor him no more—so he takes away the righteous to heaven, that they may glorify him more. There seems to be four reasons why God sweeps away the righteous with the wicked, by the pestilence:

1. Because they have finished their work.
2. To save them from the evil time.
3. For the humbling the rest who remain behind.
4. For the hardening of the wicked.

Therefore, O precious saints, you ought to be quiet, and to submit to the will of God, and to say as David, "I was silent; I would not open my mouth—for you are the one who has done this!" Psalms 39:9.

Now, I beseech you, both saints and sinners, to consider of these things. May the God of heaven give you understanding in all things which concern his glory, and your eternal good.

## S. The Strait Way to Heaven

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The Strait Way to Heaven by William Dyer

William Dyer (1632-1696) (Non-conformist Anglican) was a godly pastor in London, who was expelled from his church in the 'Great Ejection' of 1662. He is described as a man of great piety, and a serious fervent preacher. This is a brief 1 chapter work with 20 directions for your soul.

Twenty precious directions for your souls 1. First, Loathe sin—and leave sin.

"He who covers his sins shall not prosper—but whoever confesses and forsakes them, shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13.

There must be a falling out with our sins—before there be a falling off from our sins. There must be a loathing of sin in our affections. Oh, is it not a thousand times better to part with sin—though ever so sweet—than to part with God, and Christ, and heaven? One of them, you must part with! One sin will damn a soul out of Christ—but no sin can damn a soul in Christ! Sin is the evil of evils! Sin is worse than the devil—for it was sin which made the devil to be a devil. Oh! the love of sin, and the lack of grace—will ruin and destroy our souls forever. It is better not to be—than to be an unrepentant sinner! Oh, therefore kill sin—that sin may not kill you. Mourn for sin—and flee from sin. Do not commit new sins—but repent for old sins!

"Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices!" Ezekiel 36:31. Oh, poor soul—have you not served the flesh and the devil long enough? Yes! Have you not had enough of sin? Is sin so good to you—or is it so profitable for you? Oh, what a place will you be shortly in—of joy or torment! Oh, what a sight will you shortly see—in heaven or hell! Oh, what thoughts will shortly fill your hearts—with unspeakable delight or horror! What work will you be employed in: to praise the Lord with saints and angels, or to cry out in unquenchable fire with devils! Oh, therefore, die unto sin, confess it, mourn for it, and be ashamed of it; hate and loathe it, and flee from it as from a deadly serpent; and though your sins are more than you can number—yet they are not more than God can pardon! "If we confess our sins—he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 2. Put off the old man—and put on the new man.

"You have put off the old man with his deeds—and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him who created him," Colossians 3:9-10. "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Ephesians 4:24. "For, in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision—but a new creature," Galatians 6:15. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby," 1 Peter 2:2. "Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are past away, behold all things are become new!" 2 Corinthians 5:17. The "new man" is not what he was before; he has new understanding, a new will, new desires, new love, new delights, new thoughts, new words, new company, and a new life.

Oh, dear friends, be new creatures—that you may be glorious creatures. We can call nothing in heaven ours, until Christ is ours. Without regeneration, there is no salvation, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, unless you are converted, and become as little children, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Truly, truly, I say unto you: Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." You have heard much of God, Christ, and heaven, with your ears—but this will not bring you to heaven, unless you have much of God, Christ, and heaven in your hearts! You must be able to say, "I was once a slave of Satan—but now am a son of God! Once I was dead—but now I am alive! Once I was darkness—but now I am light in the Lord! Once I was a child of wrath, an heir of hell—but now I am an heir of heaven! Once I was under the spirit of bondage—but now I am under the spirit of adoption. A true believer lives: IN the Lord, 1 Thessalonians 1:1.

ON the Lord, Romans 1:17, Luke 20:8.

FROM the Lord, John 6:57.

TO the Lord, Romans 14:8.

WITH the Lord, 2 Corinthians 13:4.

3. Make your peace—with the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6, Psalms 2:12, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him!" Oh, do not lift your hands against his Son—but kiss the Son! Let: his will be your rule;

his Spirit be your guide;

his precepts be your practices;

his decrees be your delights;

his chosen ones be your choicest companions.

Submit to his gospel and government. Oh, sirs! make your peace with God. There is a fourfold peace:

First, There is an external peace—that is, peace with men.

Secondly, There is a supernal peace—that is, peace with God.

Thirdly, There is an internal peace—that is, a peace with conscience.

Fourthly, There is an eternal peace—and that is, peace in heaven.

Psalms 37:37, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright—for the end of that man is peace." If you have peace with God—then the world and the devil cannot hurt you. Believers have God for their guide and gain. He who meddles with the saints of God, assaults God himself! Zechariah 2:8, "He who touches you, touches the apple of his eye." He who lifts up his hand against them, lifts up his hand against God! Though they have many enemies—yet they have one friend who has more strength than all their enemies. A ragged saint is dearer to God, than a glittering emperor who lacks grace. Oh, make your peace with the Prince of Peace, that in this life you may have the

assurance of eternal life, and that eternal death may not be your portion in the next life!

4. Make piety your main business—and not a by-business.

"Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure," 2 Peter 1:10. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Php 2:12. "But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness!" Matthew 6:33. Oh! why is the glory of this poor world so much regarded—but because the glory of heaven is so little minded. Oh! what is an earthly kingdom—in comparison of the heavenly kingdom? The angels themselves, though they are glorious spirits—yet they are ministering spirits. Do not most men of the world make light of God, and of Christ, and the Spirit, and heaven, and their precious souls? "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them!" Matthew 22:2-6.

Wretched worldlings make religion a by-business; they will hear, read, and pray, when they have nothing else to do. Oh, that such men did but know what everlasting glory and everlasting torments are! Would they then do—as they now do? Oh, that they did but know the worth of their souls, and their need of a Savior; the shortness of their time, and the greatness of their work! Would they then neglect God and their own souls as they do?

Oh, friends, let me beseech you to whom I write, to make piety your main business! Make hearing, reading, praying, believing, and doing, your main business! "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you!" John 6:27.

5. Do nothing in this world—but what you can answer for in the eternal world.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad," 2 Corinthians 5:10. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel," Romans 2:16. "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained," Acts 17:31. "For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil," Ecclesiastes 12:14.

Oh! for the Lord's sake, my dear brethren, let nothing be done by you in this world—but what may be answered for in the eternal world! Many men do that in this world—which they cannot answer for in the eternal world. Now they despise God, blaspheme God, rebel against God, go a-whoring from God, and persecute the beloved people of God. Instead of protecting the saints—they imprison the saints! They are more for crushing them—than comforting them! Instead of visiting them—they vilify them! And instead of affecting them—they afflict them! "They eat them up as they eat bread," Psalms 14:4, and will not allow them to worship the true God, in spirit and in truth—but despise mock, persecute, banish and kill them! Hebrews 11:1-40. They:

Threaten them, Acts 4:29.

Accuse them, Acts 24:5.

Slander them, Matthew 5:11.

Curse them, Matthew 5:44.

Beat them, Acts 5:40.

Imprison them, Acts 4:3.

Plunder them, Hebrews 10:34.

Murder them, Romans 8:36.

All this, poor innocent Christians suffer—while swearing, cursing, whoring, robbing, blasphemy, drunkenness, gluttony, and all manner of debauchery; yes, murder itself—walks unpunished in the streets! And only he who departs from evil—is a prey! What wonder then, if these ungodly ones shall one day hide themselves in dens and holes, and "cry to the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!" Revelation 6:15-16. Oh, what will persecutors do, when "the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power!" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Will not they be confounded and speechless, and have never a word to say for themselves; as that man who did not have a wedding garment on? Matthew 22:12.

But, oh, beloved, let that "grace that has appeared unto all men—teach us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, that we may live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," following the Lamb, resisting Satan, shunning sin and separating from the world.

6. The Word of God is the Christian's rule—and the Spirit of God is the Christian's guide.

"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word—it is because there is no light in them," Isaiah 8:20. "We have a more sure word of prophecy, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place," 2 Peter 2:19. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Timothy 3:16. "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes—he will guide you into all truth." John 16:13.

Most people walk by false rules:

1. Some walk by popular opinions.
2. Some walk by worldly customs.
3. Some walk by providence.
4. Some walk by conscience.
5. Some walk by their own reason.
6. Some walk by other men's examples.
7. Some walk by their own lusts.

But, oh! my dear friends, let me beseech you to walk by none of these false rules—but keep close to the Word and Spirit of God. The Scripture is a rule outside of us, to show us where we must go; the Spirit is a guide inside of us, to enable us to walk according to the direction of that Word. The Word of God is a compass, by which we must direct our course; the Spirit is the great pilot, who steers us in this course. We have no eyes to see the Word—until the Spirit enlightens them. We have no ears to hear the Word—until the Spirit opens them. We have no hearts to obey the Word—until the Spirit bows and inclines them. By the Word of God—we know the mind of the Spirit of God. And by the efficacy of the Spirit—we feel the power of the Word. The Word of God shows us the way; and the Spirit of God leads us in that way which the Word points out. The Spirit of God is able to expound the Word of God, and to make it plain to our understanding. The Holy Spirit is the Christian's interpreter; he gives the Scriptures, and he alone can reveal unto us the sense and meaning of the Scriptures. The Word is God's counsel, to reveal the path in which we are to walk; the Spirit is God's Counselor—who teaches us to walk in that path. The Word is a looking-glass, which shows us our duty. If God had not put his Spirit into our hearts, as well as his Word into our heads—we would never have arrived at the fair haven of peace. The Scriptures reveal the very heart of God. God Almighty has, in the sacred Scriptures, as it were, manifested himself, unfolded all his counsel to the creatures, as far as is necessary to be known for their direction and guidance to everlasting life.

#### 7. Be faithful—and fruitful.

"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain!" 1 Corinthians 15:58. "Every tree which does not bear good fruit—is hewn down and cast into the fire!" Christians must be fruitful—and not slothful. See that you bring forth good fruit—and much fruit. What are these fruit?

Firstly, Sincerity, which is not a single grace—but the soul of graces, "Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts," Psalms 51:6.

Secondly, Humility is a grace most prevailing with God for the obtaining of all graces, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and humble in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls," Matthew 11:29.

Thirdly, Prudence. The patient Christian is the best for waiting—but the prudent Christian is the best for working, "Be wise as serpents—and harmless as doves," Matthew 10:16. We must have innocence with our wisdom—or else our wisdom is but craftiness. And we must have wisdom with our innocence—or else our innocence is but weakness.

We must have the harmlessness of doves, that we may not wrong others; and must have the prudence of the serpent, that others may not abuse and take advantage of us. Not to wrong the truth by silence—here is the innocence of doves; not to betray ourselves by rashness—here is the wisdom of the serpent.

Fourthly, Patience. "This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus," Revelation 14:12. The way to bring the world under us, is to be patient under its frowns. Be faithful in your promises, and in your purposes. Be faithful to the ways of God, and cause of God. Oh! do not begin with the Lamb—and end with the beast;

"but be faithful unto death—and I will give you a crown of life," Revelation 2:10. Keep your lights burning, and lamps shining, your loins girded, your consciences awakened, your garments unstained, and your spiritual armor constantly on, and closely girt!

Fifthly, Self-denial, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," Matthew 16:24.

8. Beware of believing the world's report—of the people of God.

Those who have a good conscience, have not always a good name. The people of God in this life are called by the wicked: troublers, seditious, rebellious, and what not. This is an old device of that old serpent—to impute the troubles of of the country upon God's Elijahs, "When Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him—Is that you, you troubler of Israel?" 1 Kings 18:17.

Jeremiah, for speaking against their sins and wickedness, and denouncing God's judgments against them—is judged worthy of death. "But when Jeremiah had finished his message, saying everything the Lord had told him to say, the priests and prophets and all the people at the Temple mobbed him. 'Kill him!' they shouted." Jeremiah 26:8.

Just so in Jeremiah 38:4, "These officials went to the king and said, "Sir, this man must die! That kind of talk will undermine the morale of the few fighting men we have left, as well as that of all the people, too. This man is a traitor!"

Just so with Amos: for speaking against the abominations of the king's court, Amos is charged with treason against the king's person! Amos 7:10-13, "But when Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, heard what Amos was saying, he rushed a message to King Jeroboam: "Amos is hatching a plot against you right here on your very doorstep! What he is saying is intolerable. It will lead to rebellion all across the land." Then Amaziah sent orders to Amos: "Get out of here, you seer! Go on back to the land of Judah and do your preaching there!" So Paul and Silas, for preaching up the kingly power of Jesus Christ, are accused by the envious Jews, and crude multitude, as turning the world upside down, and breaking the decrees of Caesar. Yes, Christ himself had this laid to his charge. Mark what the Jews say of him, "And they began to accuse him, saying, We have found this fellow perverting the nations, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a King," Luke 23:2. And for this have the servants of God in all ages been accused and persecuted, killed, and stoned, Matthew 23:37. Now, if the Lord and Master was called an enemy to Caesar, no wonder if those of his household be called so. Our integrity will not secure us from infamy! The choicest of professors have had black marks in the world's calendar. It is usual for those who live in treason and rebellion against the King of heaven—to slander his servants with treason and rebellion against the kings of the earth!

But, my dear brethren, take heed of this; for as the death of the saints is precious, so the names of the saints are precious in God's account. The world will father a hundred lies upon the Lord's people! "Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake," Matthew 5:11. 1 Peter 4:14. Wicked men hate those most—whom God loves most! But God will roll away the reproaches of his people; he will cause their innocence and righteousness to break forth as the sun at noon-day, and their names shall be in everlasting remembrance. Yes, at that great day, God will clear their innocence before men and angels, and all the world.

9. Keep in with God—when men are out with you.

"But it is good for me to draw near to God." Psalms 73:28, "He who dwells under the shadow of the Most High—no plague shall come near him." "He shall give his angels charge over you," Psalms 91:10-11, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior!" Habakkuk 3:18. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous runs into it, and are safe." James 4:8. "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." This is a great comfort to the people of God, though they be as lilies among thorns, and as sheep among wolves, that they have a God to go to! "Come, my people, enter into your chambers, and shut your doors about you; hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is over and past," Isaiah 26:20.

Let the world frown, and friends forsake you—God can sweeten all your enjoyments. Keep in God's way—and you will be sure of God's protection; you keep God's precepts—and God will keep you. Do what God commands, and avoid what God forbids—and then you need not fear what man can do unto you. If you would have God to take care of you—you must cast your care upon God; wait on him, and walk with him, obey his precepts, and believe his promises.

Oh! beloved, let wicked men fall out with us, and hate us, and reproach us, as much as they will, they cannot hurt us, if we keep in with God. Therefore, my beloved, above all things get communion with God, and keep communion with God. All saints shall enjoy a heaven when they leave the earth; some saints enjoy a heaven while they are on the earth. Communion with God will yield you two heavens, a heaven upon earth, and a heaven after death! He enjoys nothing—who does not enjoy communion with God.

10. Live above the love of life—and the fear of death.

"For whoever will save his life shall lose it; and whoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it," Matthew 16:25. "If any man comes to me, and hates not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple," Luke 14:26. He who loves Christ more than his life—will be sure to save and keep both. He who goes out of God's way to avoid dangers, shall certainly meet with danger. "You are not your own, for you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. My dear friends, let us live above sufferings and fears—though we cannot live without sufferings. "In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John 16:33. He who loves Christ above life—will let life go rather than Christ.

Consider, my beloved, Christ and the cloud of witnesses and martyrs that are gone before, and passed over through all these floods, and safely arrived to shore, are now in heaven with God, and Christ—where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore, "You will show me the path of life; in your presence is fullness of joy, and at your right hand are pleasures for evermore," Psalms 16:11. Oh! the joy that they enjoy! Oh! the rivers of consolation that flow from God! "They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from

their eyes." Revelation 7:15-17. Who are those who shall have all this honor, and glory, and joy, and blessedness in heaven? For this see Revelation 7:14, "These are those who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The sweetness of the crown which believers shall receive—will make them amends for the bitterness of the cross which they have carried!

11. Desire better hearts—more than better times.

"O, Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved. How long shall your vain thoughts lodge within you?" Jeremiah 4:14. "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander," Matthew 15:19. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" Jeremiah 17:9.

Oh! beloved, instead of reforming ourselves—we are complaining of wicked men! We complain of their wickedness —more than our apostasy! We complain of their injuries against us—more than our injuries against God. We have been a long time in sinning—and we had need be a long time in repenting. But the times had not been so bad—had we not been so bad; the times would soon be better—if we were but better.

Alas! beloved, we have sinned such sins as unrighteous men could not sin! We have sinned against the clearest light, and dearest love! The better God has been to us—the worse we have been to him! He has loaded us with his mercies—and we have wearied him with our sins. Oh! Let us blame ourselves more, and the times less! Let us turn unto the Lord—that he may turn unto us in love and mercy! Let our hearts go out to him—that his heart may come unto us. Oh! beg and cry for better hearts, that you may serve God better! Beg for broken hearts, for sincere hearts; for it is the heart that God looks at, and calls for. Proverbs 23:26, "My son, give me your heart." Our hearts are always out of tune to serve God—but never out of tune to serve sin; for if we had ever so good times, and not good hearts, it would rather hurt us than bless us.

12. Grow downward in humility—and inward in sincerity.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints," Ephesians 3:8. "Whoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he who humbles himself, shall be exalted," Matthew 23:12. "Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) affections of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering," Colossians 3:12. "Be clothed with humility; for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time," 1 Peter 5:5-6. Be low in your own eyes, and keep a low esteem of yourselves; abhor pride, and flee from it; be inwardly sincere, as well as outwardly humble; do not look heaven-ward by your profession, and hell-ward by your conversation, "He who lives in sin, is dead in sin," Ephesians 2:1. "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Ephesians 6:24. Let your hearts be upright with God, and walk as those that have God for their portion; knowing there are many eyes upon you: the eye of God, the eye of Christ, the eye of angels, the eye of saints, the eye of the world, and the devil's eye upon you too! Therefore walk wisely, and sincerely; be like the king's daughter, all glorious within, Psalms 44:13, "She is all glorious within," though within is not all her glory, "her clothing is of wrought gold." Do you think yourselves good, because others think so? Alas! the best men's confidence of us are poor evidences of heaven; the best testimony is that within us, and above us. See therefore that you

grow in grace, and delight in holiness, bring forth much fruit, and live still as before the living God. Take heed of hypocrisy; make it your daily business to walk with God; be much in the exercise of humility; humility will exceedingly adorn your profession. Do not place religion in a few good words, when the substance is neglected; but live as you would die; live today as if you were to die tomorrow.

13. Do good—to those who are good.

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share." 1 Timothy 6:18. "He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" Micah 6:8. "Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share," 1 Timothy 6:18, "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased," Hebrews 13:16, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world," James 1:27.

Oh! beloved, what an opportunity have you now to do good! Are there not many of Christ's ministers now in need, and members in need? And are there not some in prison for the gospel. "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering," Hebrews 13:3.

There are many men who have a great deal of this world's wealth, and riches, and goods in their hands, and in their houses—but have no grace in their hearts! And therefore they do no good with the goods of this world. They live so unfaithful, that their lives are scarcely worth a prayer, and their deaths scarcely worth a tear. Men may as well go to hell for not doing good—as for doing evil. He who bears no good fruit, is fuel for hell—just as much as he who bears bad fruit. You may not be outwardly bad—and yet not be inwardly good. You may be as far from grace as from vice! The rich glutton was in hell's torments, not for persecuting Lazarus—but for not relieving Lazarus. "I was hungry—and you gave me nothing to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink," Matthew 25:42.

"'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the Lord. 'Curse its people bitterly, because they did not come to help the Lord, to help the Lord against the mighty.'" Judges 5:23. It is one of the greatest mercies in the world—for God to give a man a heart to do good with that good which he has given him.

Oh! beloved, be always doing good—and hating evil. Look not only where you may get good for yourself—but where you may do good to others. Labor to be helpful to the souls of others, and supply the needs of others.

14. Choose suffering—before sinning.

"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time." Hebrews 11:24-25. "You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions!" Hebrews 10:34.

Just so, the three Hebrew children chose burning in the fiery furnace—before bowing to the golden image! "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." Daniel 3:16-18

Just so, Daniel chose suffering before sinning. "Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before." Daniel 6:10 And it is said of those in Hebrews 11:1-40, "Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated." Hebrews 11:35-37

Oh! beloved, there is more evil in the least sin against Christ—than in the greatest suffering for Christ! "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." 2 Corinthians 4:17 1. Our sufferings for Christ are but light.

2. Our sufferings for Christ are short—but for a moment.

3. Christ stands by us in our sufferings.

4. Our sufferings are ordered by the Father.

5. Our sufferings shall not hurt our souls.

6. God gives us the best of comforts in the worst of times. We have most consolation from God—when we have most tribulation from men! As our sufferings do abound—so our consolations do abound. When the burden is heaviest upon the back—then the peace of conscience is sweetest and greatest within. Therefore, my dear brethren, keep yourselves out of the filthy puddle of this world, and from the evil of this world—and if you must sin or suffer—choose suffering before sinning.

15. Do not think the worse of godliness, because it is frowned upon; nor the better of ungodliness, because it is smiled upon.

"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come!" 1 Timothy 4:8. "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ!" Php 3:8. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather reprove them!" Ephesians 5:11. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Romans 6:23.

Oh! friends, think not the worse of holiness because it is reproached, and scorned, and persecuted by wicked men and devils; nor the better of wickedness, because wicked men love it, and follow it, and say, "It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the Lord Almighty?" Malachi 3:14. But there is a time coming, when

ungodly men would give all they had—for that holiness that they now despise. But they shall be as far from obtaining it—as they are now from desiring it.

Let us therefore love holiness—and hate wickedness; for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Hebrews 12:14. Holiness is the only way to happiness. We must not dress ourselves for the heavenly world—by the looking-glass of this vile world.

"You shall not follow the multitude to do evil," Exodus 23:2. "For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things!" Php 3:18-19. The children of God must be harmless in their actings—and blameless in their walkings.

16. Prize the Word of God by the worth of it—that you may never come to prize the Word of God by the want of it!

"How sweet are your Words unto my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psalms 119:103. "They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb!" Psalms 19:10. "I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my daily food!" Job 23:12. "Oh, how do I love your law! I meditate on it all day long!" Psalms 119:97. "Truly, I love your commands more than gold, even the finest gold!" Psalms 119:127. "Your law is more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver!" Psalms 119:72. "As new born babes—desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby!" 1 Peter 2:2. "Let the Word of God dwell richly in you;" not only with you—but in you, Colossians 3:16.

Oh! let us, with Job, esteem the Word of God above our necessary food! Job 23:12; and with David, above our gold and silver! The delight of a saint in God's Word, over-tops all his creature delights. Wicked men can delight in the creatures of God—but not in the Word of God. They can delight in the gifts of God—but not in the God of gifts. Oh! let us love the Word, let us prize the Word! It is the sun of the spiritual world, as the sun is the light of the natural world. Without the sun—the world is but a chaos, and a dungeon full of darkness! Just so, the Word of God is the light of the spiritual world, without which a man is in eternal night.

Take away the Scriptures, and there will be no certain rule to direct men what is to be done, or what is to be believed. In Scripture, all false ways are here unveiled, all sins are here forbidden, all holiness is here commanded; here you may see every action and motion of our lives: as a step to life—or a step to death; as a step heaven-ward—or a step hell-ward. The Word is the savor of life unto life, unto those who believe. Oh! therefore prize and obey the Word.

1. It is a plain word.
2. It is an consistent word.
3. It is a sure word.
4. It is a powerful word.

Oh, beloved! let us read the Word, and abide in the Word, "If you continue in the Word—then you are my disciples indeed." John 8:31.

17. Beware of the whore of Babylon's golden goblet, and sweet wine!

"The woman wore purple and scarlet clothing and beautiful jewelry made of gold and precious gems and pearls. She held in her hand a golden goblet full of obscenities and the impurities of her immorality." Revelation 17:4. "Then the dragon tried to drown the woman with a flood of water that flowed from its mouth!" Revelation 12:15. Let me beseech you to beware of this, and keep yourselves from this! Be like the virgin spouse of Christ—who follows him wherever he goes. My dear friends, keep yourselves from four things:

First, Beware of false TEACHERS. The devil has his ministers as well as Christ, "Beware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves!" Matthew 7:15. Yes, they are ferocious wolves, they can never have enough! They are false shepherds who look only for their own gain! "They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain!" Isaiah 56:11.

Oh! false teachers do not feed the flock—but fleece the flock! They do not convert—but pervert! They do not purify—but poison! They do not edify for salvation—but destroy for damnation! Instead of curing souls—they kill souls!

Just so long as they pilfer the people's money, they care not though the devil has their souls! They are neither rightly called, nor rightly qualified, nor rightly ordained, "These wicked people, who refuse to listen to my words, who follow the stubbornness of their hearts and go after other gods to serve and worship them!" Jeremiah 13:10. They are dogs and wolves combining together to massacre the flock of Christ. Oh! therefore keep yourselves from Babylon's merchants, who make merchandise of the souls of men, Revelation 18:13. Oh! the sins of teachers—are the teachers of sins!

Secondly, Beware of false DOCTRINE.

"There were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways!" 2 Peter 2:1-2. "Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings!" Hebrews 13:9.

I beseech you also in the Lord, my brethren, that you do not carnally comply with, nor superstitiously conform to the inventions of men; but "stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free!" Galatians 5:1.

Thirdly, Beware of false WORSHIP.

"If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb!" Revelation 14:9-10.

"You Samaritans worship what you do not know. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." John 4:22-24. As there are some in the world who worship a false god—so there be others who worship

the true God—with false worship! Those who worship the beast—worship the devil! Oh! Do not meddle with false worship, with vain worship, and superstitious worship! Worship God as he teaches us to worship him. Our work is to depend on Christ's work; our outward working is to depend on God's inward workings.

Fourthly, Beware of false OPINIONS.

Let your hearts be upright, your judgments sound, and your lives holy. Love the truth, and obey the truth, and hold fast the truth.

Now, beloved, let me beseech you for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, and for your souls' sake, keep yourselves from false teachers, from false doctrine, from false worship, from false opinions. If you will be tasting and sipping of Babylon's golden goblet—you must resolve to receive Babylon's plagues!

18. Be one with everyone—who is one with Christ.

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:3. "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father—loves his children, too." 1 John 5:1. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen." 1 John 4:20.

Oh! consider what a dishonor it is to the gospel, that those that profess themselves sons of the same God, members of the same Christ, temples of the same Spirit, heirs of the same glory—should be jarring one with another! It is strange and unnatural, that those who are saints in profession, should be devils in practice one to another; that God's diamonds, should cut one another! For wolves to devour the lambs is no wonder—but for lambs to devour one another, is astonishing, and monstrous!

Oh! Many professors, instead of loving one another—hate one another! Oh, how unlike are we to that God—whom we profess to be our God! He is full of love, full of goodness, and full of mercy and patience. Oh! but Christians cannot bear and forbear one with another. Oh! do not wicked men warm themselves at the sparks of our divisions, and say, "It is as we would have it!"

Oh! beloved, has not God made his wrath to smoke against us—for the divisions and heart-burnings that have been among us! Oh! that you would lay this to heart, and throw away discord and divisions, and heart-burnings, and labor for a oneness in love and affection, with everyone who is one with Christ. Oh, labor for a healing spirit.

You cannot love God—if you do not love the people of God, "If any man says he loves God, and hates his brother—he is a liar!" "Let brotherly love continue," Hebrews 13:1. "Those who feared the Lord, spoke often one to another," Malachi 3:16. Christ's doves flock together. There are many who cannot love a man—unless he is of their opinions. They cannot love a member of their church, though he is a member of Christ. Every man has a good opinion—of his own opinion! But, alas! beloved, it is not this opinion, nor that opinion; nor this way, nor that way, which will bring a man to heaven, without faith in Christ; and he that has faith in Christ, has a right to all the ordinances of Christ, and promises of Christ, and privileges of Christ. Therefore let me beseech you, to love every godly man—regardless of his minor differences from you. "All the believers were

one in heart and mind!" Acts 4:32.

19. Love Christ with a love stronger than life—because he loved us with a love stronger than death!

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save sinners," 1 Timothy 1:15.

Christ's love to us was stronger than death. He died for love! He laid down his life—to save our lives! He loves us—as the Father loves him, John 15:9, "As the Father has loved me—so have I loved you!" Oh, the Scripture has exceeding high expressions of his affection to us. Now, beloved, he died for us, and suffered for us, and set his heart upon us to love us and to delight in us; how ought we then to love him in return! "You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind," Matthew 27:37. "Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth!" Psalms 73:25. "Unto you who believe—He is precious!" 1 Peter 2:7.

Oh! let your hearts be full of love and affection to Christ! Love will breed courage, and cast out slavish fear before God, and carnal fear before men! God can keep us from the torments of men—but men cannot keep us from the torments of God! While we stand by God, God has promised to stand by us; therefore be not afraid of any authority that stands in opposition to the authority of Christ! None can promise better than Christ can; none can threaten us worse than Christ can. Can anyone threaten us with a worse thing—than eternal hell? Can any one promise us a better thing—than eternal heaven? Heaven will be the portion of those who love him; and hell will be the portion of those who hate him.

Oh! my dear brethren, let us love him with a love stronger than death! So did Paul and the rest of the apostles, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:35, "Love is stronger than death; many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it!" Song of Solomon 8:6-7.

20. Be every day as serious in your preparations for death—as if it were your last day.

"All the days of my appointed time will I wait—until my change comes," Job 14:14. "You fool! This night your soul shall be required of you!" Luke 12:20. "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away," James 4:14. "You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath. Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it." Psalms 39:5-6. As no saint knows when that final time and hour shall be—so no wicked man knows when it shall be. To live without the fear of death—is to die living. To labor not to die—is to labor in vain. Men are afraid to die in such and such sins—but not afraid to live in such and such sins. Oh! the hell of horrors and terrors—which attends those souls who have their greatest work to do, when they come to die! Therefore as you would be happy at death, and everlastingly blessed after death—prepare yourselves for death. Did Christ die for us—that we might live with him? And shall not we desire to die—and be with him? A believer's dying day—is his crowning day! "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. They will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them," Revelation 14:13.

Oh! I beseech you, my brethren, every day spend some time in preparation for, and meditation on: death, judgment, hell, heaven, eternity.

Eternity is a sum that can never be numbered, a line that can never be measured! Eternity is a condition of everlasting sorrow, or everlasting joy.

Oh! think on this, and prepare for this every day, before the night of death comes!

Oh! think on this, and prepare for this every day, before the night of death comes! And thus, my beloved, I have given you these twenty precious directions for your souls. I shall leave this book with you as a legacy of my dearest love. My desire in all this—is your happiness here, and your blessedness hereafter. My earnest and humble desire of you is, that you would mind this book and my former treatises; not only read them—but reform your lives by them.

Oh! do your duty, live in your duty, and love your duty—that you may be made fit to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. This is, and shall be, the earnest and constant prayer of one who esteems it a most glorious privilege—to be of the number of those who "follows the Lamb wherever he goes!"

## S. WATCH AND PRAY

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WATCH AND PRAY by William Dyer

"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." Mark 14:38 As Christ is the church's friend—so Satan is the church's enemy: hergreatestenemy, hercruellestenemy, herworstenemy, hercontinualenemy.

He makes war against all who keep the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, Revelation 12:17. The devil envies our happiness, and seeks our ruin:

1. By tempting of us, 1 Corinthians 7:5.
2. By persecuting of us, Revelation 2:10.
3. By accusing of us, Revelation 12:10.
4. By hindering of us, 1 Thessalonians 2:18.
5. By deceiving of us, 2 Corinthians 11:3.

"Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour!" 1 Peter 5:8.

Oh, beloved! the devil is: the great troubler of saints, the great deceiver of nations, the great devourer of souls, the great enemy of mankind! But now, here is the church's happiness—that Christ is her friend, (Song of Song of Solomon 5:16.) her greatest friend, her dearest friend, her most loving friend, her best friend, her constant friend, her sympathizing friend, her mighty friend. By his blood—she overcomes the devil; by his grace—she resists the devil; by his might—she treads him under her feet; by faith in his Word—she quenches all the fiery darts of the evil one.

Oh! though Satan hates us—Christ loves us; though Satan condemns us—Christ justifies us; though Satan accuses us—Christ clears us; though Satan tempts us—Christ strengthens us; though Satan seeks to destroy us—Christ preserves us; though Satan buffets us—Christ assists us:

1. By his Spirit.
2. By his promises.
3. By his graces.
4. By his presence.
5. By his Word.
6. By his intercession.

7. By his power.
8. By his ministers.
9. By his example.
10. By his prayers.

Oh! the Lord Jesus has a great love for us, and care of us; and therefore he counsels us in the words of my text to, "watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation." These are the words of our Lord Jesus unto his disciples; they having been slumbering and sleeping when Christ had commanded them to watch.

They contain, 1. A supposition of their entering into temptation, upon which Christ grounds a mandatory exhortation, showing them the way how to avoid it, in these words, "Watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation."

Hence we may raise these two points of doctrine:

Doctrine 1. That a child of God is attended with temptations.

Doctrine 2. That the only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is to watch and pray.

Doctrine 1. That a child of God is attended with temptations. Here, we may observe the method:

1. Of the tempter.
2. Of the temptation.
3. Of the manner of their working, with reasons why they have so much power.

1. We have four different TEMPTERS in Scripture:

1. GOD tempting man, that is, trying and proving man, as in Deuteronomy 8:2. Thus God tempted Abraham, Genesis 22:1 which is interpreted, Hebrews 11:17, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac." This tempting is not evil, nor for our hurt—but God tries us upon these accounts:

1st, For the trial of his people's fear of God, as with Abraham, Genesis 22:12. "For now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your only son from me."

2nd, God tempts for the trial of their faith; he proves them in something that is near and dear to them, perhaps deprives them of some special necessary mercy to see whether they can trust him, and continue to believe, in the lack of it, whether they can live by faith upon the God of mercies—when the mercies are gone, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Hebrews 10:38, Romans 1:17. And it is said of Abraham, "When he was tried, he offered up Isaac," Hebrews 11:17.

Again, 3rd, the Lord tempts for the proof of their obedience; and thus the Lord speaks to Abraham after that trial, "And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Why? "Because you have obeyed my voice." In all this, the Lord sees what is in our hearts, as he said to Israel of old, Deuteronomy 8:2.

2. We also find MAN tempting God. That is, provoking God to jealousy, Deuteronomy 6:10, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God." Exodus 17:2, "Why do you tempt the Lord?"

First of all, we tempt God—when we doubt of his power; as when we are in any strait or difficulty, we mistrust the power of God to deliver us, or bestow any mercy upon us which we stand in need of. As he did, who said, "That couldn't happen even if the Lord opened the windows of heaven!" When God had promised in time of a famine, that tomorrow there would be plenty, 2 Kings 7:2.

Secondly, We tempt God, when we doubt of his mercy, for God is the essence of mercy, and it is a part of his glorious name; therefore he cannot endure to lose so great a part of his honor—but is provoked by it.

Thirdly, When we call his faithfulness in question. What greater disparagement, or more disgraceful thing can there be to man, than to be wrongly accused for lying and breaking his word? Then how much greater provocation is it to the great God to be impeached for the breach of promise, and counted unfaithful, who cannot lie! Hebrews 6:18.

Lastly, When we murmur at the hand of God, at any of his judgments; this Israel did at Meribah, "And he called the place Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord saying—Is the Lord among us or not?" Exodus 17:7. And this does exceedingly inflame and excite the wrath of God! We cannot control our own lives—and yet we are angry at the providence of an all-wise God; we sin, and are not troubled that God corrects us for sin.

3. In the next place, our LUSTS are tempters. James 1:14. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own heart's lust, and enticed." Our lusts strive against us to be sinfully satisfied; and the flesh wars with the spirit; and the heart sometimes is alluring; and this comes to pass:

1. By presenting some sinful object. It is good not to nourish such conceptions—but strangle them in their first appearance, else sinful thoughts will grow upon us.

2. By presenting some desirableness in the object. Be quick sighted! Sin, however it seems desirable upon some pretext—but is indeed, upon good deliberation, not at all to be desired. Sometimes it comes clothed in such a glorious garb, as if it meant no harm—but you must be quick to flee to God by prayer against this temptation.

3. There is a persuasion to consent to the sin. But be not easily persuaded to offend your loving Father.

Oh! how will our lusts gain upon us if we do not resist! Strive with all your might; the greater your allurements to sin is—the greater the sin is! I appeal to saints' experience.

4. In the fourth and last place, we have the DEVIL tempting man. He is called the tempter, Matthew 4:1, Matthew 4:3, Mark 1:13. And indeed this is the grand tempter who makes use of our lusts, as a subservient organ, or instrument, for his temptations against the soul. And indeed, were it not for our lusts, it would be in vain for Satan to tempt! As we see in Christ, there was nothing for Satan to take hold of, Christ being without sinful lusts—but Satan must come by word of mouth to tempt him, Matthew 4:13. But here it may be inquired, How shall I know when Satan raises the temptation?

1. When it comes strongly and forcibly upon the soul, as it were with a double power, even overpowering the soul almost at the first encounter. There is double strength in the stroke.
2. When it is of long continuance, as that was which Paul besought the Lord thrice for, 2 Corinthians 12:8. Satan stirs up the heart afresh, and the lust of the heart. When the fire is ready to die and go out, he blows it up again, adds life and strength to the temptation, which else could not last long. The lusts are the combustible matter, and Satan inflames and sets them on fire.
3. The temptation, when though it may be weak at the first—yet at length, by degrees, it grows stronger and stronger. Satan begins to reason with and persuade the soul by plausible arguments.
4. We may perceive the working of the serpent, the devil, when the temptation is full of wiles and subtle delusions. Ephesians 6:11, 2 Timothy 1:17, Revelation 2:24. The more intricate and full of subtlety the temptation is, the more cause there is to suspect the workings of Satan. He is very busy for ensnaring the soul.
5. Lastly, the more it is direct opposition to God in his commands, we may be the more sure that it is of Satan's framing. For the heart and its lusts seek for satisfaction, and then are still, (if Satan joins not,) though God be not so directly opposite; but the devil strikes always at God in his temptations; or if not always—yet most frequently.

2. Thus much for the tempter; now for the TEMPTATION itself. There are different sorts of temptations; but we may reduce them all to three heads, which they do concern and strike at:

First of all, GOD. This being Satan's great aim, to oppose God, as two enemies always in direct opposition one to another; and thus he tempts either first as to the being of God, calling in question the very truth of the essence of the great God, causing the soul to doubt whether there is a God or not; like Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord?" etc. Exodus 5:1-23.

But, secondly, some temptations touch upon the NATURE of God, as to the nature of his being, the mystery of the three distinct persons, as to their offices and operations in the individual Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; and yet all but one God, blessed forever. Again, as to those inseparable divine attributes of God, his independency, purity, immutability, greatness, and eternity, his goodness, grace, mercy, love, patience, and justice. I say, sometimes in doubting of these things is our temptation; yes, and could Satan prevail, we would flatly deny his being, nature, attributes, and all. Look sternly on, and resist strongly such temptations as these, which immediately and presumptuously entrench upon God's sovereign and just prerogative.

And, if I mistake not, a great device of Satan's in stratagem is, to persuade the creature from all dependence upon a Creator, that so, being left to itself, and standing upon its own strength, he may more easily destroy it. For what is the creature, without the Creator's power?

Again, some temptations touch our spiritual being; such as an evil heart of unbelief, mistrusting the grace of God, despairing of the goodness of our condition. Satan would destroy the very foundation of spiritual existence, adoption, justification, and hopes of salvation; it is his great design to shake the very groundwork of this building, and to persuade that all is false. But this temptation is fruitless, when we build aright upon a right foundation, by faith, accompanied with repentance from dead works, upon Jesus Christ, as the sole author and meritorious cause of our

justification, and eternal glorification.

Lastly, Satan by his fiery darts strikes at our well being, to disturb our peace, by the omission of some duty, or commission of some sin; when he finds he cannot prevail to destroy our well-being, our joy and comfort. But know, though these temptations may trouble us—yet they shall never destroy us.

3. Now, for the MANNER of these temptations, how they work:

1. When we fall under needs, straits, changes of providence, or the like, then is a time for temptation to work; as when Christ had fasted, and was hungry—then comes the tempter, "If you be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," Matthew 4:3.

2. When we are first turning from sin to God, then we are sure to meet with a tempter; Satan will be busy.

3. When we are troubled, dejected, disconsolated, either as to the outward or inward estate, then beware of Satan's temptations; he will be furthering our disquietments.

4. When we are arrived to some good hopes through grace, to some confidence in the mercy of God the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, then also shall we find the battering assaults of Satan, to shake our confidence. But be sure always that the ground of your confidence is good, established upon the everlasting rock, Jesus Christ; for there are two great rocks which Satan strives to split a soul upon:

PRESUMPTION. Sometimes endeavoring to cause souls to flatter up themselves, and think grace is theirs, Christ is theirs, and all is theirs, when it is nothing so; but by this he might carry them blind to hell, hood-winking their souls so, that they never come to see thoroughly that they are in a bad condition—but think always their condition is good. The other rock is DESPAIR. Satan striving, if he cannot blind them as he does the other presumptuous souls—yet to make them go sorrowing all their days, thinking they shall never obtain saving mercy.

5. Satan suits his temptations to our dispositions; he has various objects for divers spirits: for the proud haughty soul, for the lustful heart, for the covetous worldling, for the prodigal son, for the rash giddy brain, for the sluggish drone. He has particular temptations for the melancholy person, and for the light jovial spirit; especially these two, either sinking the one in the terrible ways of black and dreadful thoughts, or tossing and lifting up the other with the wind of foolish fancy. Oh! what black apprehensions shall the one have of itself and God, and what light and slight thoughts the other of their present state and of eternity!

6. Lastly, Satan aims to lull the soul asleep in carnal security; and to this end presents great sins—as small sins; and little sins—as none at all. But sometimes he will add by temptations, as it were a magnifying glass to the soul, so that then every sin that looks with a ghastly countenance, is thought to be the sin against the Holy Spirit, an unpardonable sin.

Having thus shown how, and upon what occasion Satan works; I shall take occasion to inquire why they have so much power, as many times to prevail.

1. Because of the tempter's power, he is too strong for the soul.

2. Because of the tempter's policy, if he cannot prevail by open force, the soul being well and strongly grounded, then he invades with subtle devices and secret stratagems, so that the soul cannot escape by strength only; and therefore, lacking wisdom to discover his cunningly framed arguments, is baffled by him and overthrown.

3. The enticing nature of the tempter's baits; as, to instance in one case; Oh! how many poor sincere souls—yet guilty of too much curiosity, have been entangled by curious doctrines, which were no better than the devilish temptations of that hellish tempter! How many, (which yet is strange to think though there is reason to fear it,) nay, after their seeming comfortable, really comfortless, wandering, walkings in the ways of truth, have cause to set down their steps, marking for every step a sin, and for every sin letting fall a tear of blood!

4. Temptations often prevail by reason of the strength of corruption, which the tempter works upon. Were there no internal corruptions, there would be few or no external temptations; I am sure they would not prevail.

5. Lastly, the tempter's prevalence proceeds from the weakness and low estate of the inward man; sin is never at a higher flood—than when grace is at a low ebb. It is a hard matter to keep the soul from sinking at such a time. Nothing more easy than to thrust a man under water, when the depth of the water is more than the height of the man.

Objection: But now to make sure the doctrinal part, I shall lay down some reasons, why the people of God are thus attended with temptations, for it is a natural objection against this point, "Why will the Lord, who is so merciful to his people—allow them to be thus abused and buffeted by temptations?"

Answer: I answer in general on God's behalf, that he is never the less tender, as will appear in particular, thus:

1. Because one end seems to be this, that they might know themselves the more accurately, and see what they are naturally; were it not for temptation, we would not come to know our own corruption. We see by this what lust is most prevalent in us, according to Hebrews 12:1,

"The sin that does so easily beset us;" and what Satan makes most use of against us. We learn by this, our own weakness to resist, without divine assisting grace.

2. Again, it is for a saint's exercise; this tempted condition of God's artillery, is his school of arms wherein God brings up his children, trains them and instructs them how to clasp on their helmet of salvation, to put on the breast-plate of righteousness, to hold out the shield of faith, to brandish the sword of the Spirit; in a word, how to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, even our whole armor of righteousness.

3. That we might know our enemies, that we may be the more watchful over Satan, sin, and the world.

4. That we might long to be at home with our Father, that we might be weaned from the milk, and drawn away from the breasts of this present world.

5. Lastly, the Lord does it to bear down our pride, and keep us humble; we would else be too much lifted up through our continual spiritual prosperity; and thus it was with Paul, 2 Corinthians 12:7-8. This doctrine may afford us this useful application by way of:

1. Information.
2. Reprehension.
3. Examination.
4. Consolation.
5. Exhortation.

First, INFORMATION. It may inform us:

1. Of the devil's enmity, who is so much the saint's foe, as at he will not let him be quiet. This old serpent that first deceived Adam, and deprived him of paradise; yes, and ever since he has been, and still is, very busy to dispossess the saints, if possible, of their spiritual paradise.
2. We may learn hence the remaining seeds of corruption that are in the best of saints; without which, the devil would always tempt in vain.
3. We may perceive what is the saint's state here below; it has indeed many fair pleasant prospects to the Christian's eye, (I mean the eye of faith) but the way is a tempted, troublesome, dangerous way, Acts 14:22.
4. It may teach us the wisdom of God, and his great care of the saints, who makes use of Satan's enmity and our corruptions to do us good withal.

Secondly, REPREHENSION.

1. And thus it reproves those who think it an easy matter to be a Christian.
2. It reproves such who censure poor tempted afflicted ones.
  1. Under their temptations, though not overcome.
  2. When fallen, and oh! how rash, uncharitable, and unchristian-like are they!
- 3 It is an occasion of rebuke to those who think it strange that either themselves or others should be tempted.

Thirdly, EXAMINATION. This in these particulars:

1. To examine who is the tempter.
2. To examine the temptation.
3. To examine the frame our hearts are under; whether we respond lightly and indifferently, or are grieved and troubled for them.

Fourthly, CONSOLATION. From these arguments:

Argument 1. A tempted condition is frequent among the saints; yes, and so useful, that I may confidently question whether he were ever truly a saint, who is not tempted. And for this assertion there is a cloud of witnesses in Scripture, one in 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Argument 2. God has promised assistance to tempted ones, 2 Corinthians 12:9. "My grace is sufficient for you," etc. God is as able to help—as you can be weak, when you are tempted.

Argument 3. Christ was tempted, that he might know how to support those who are tempted, Hebrews 2:9-18.

Argument 4. It is a blessing, or a blessed thing to endure temptations, James 1:12 and James 5:11.

Argument 5. The saints' temptations are needful for them, 1 Peter 1:6. You can not be holy without them.

Argument 6. The saints' temptations are but the trial of faith, 1 Peter 1:7. James 1:3-4. And should we be grieved that our faith is proved? The goldsmith uses the fire for the trying of his gold; neither is the gold diminished—but rather its worth more fully known when the dross is gone. This is the trial that tries the faith of every child of God.

Argument 7. God has promised that the burden shall not be too great for us to bear, 1 Corinthians 10:13. This is ground of comfort, to know we shall not be overmatched by the temptation.

Argument 8. A great comfort is, that God thinks upon us at such a time; we are sure of this both because of the temptations, and also the support we have under them.

Argument 9. Many times it goes before some signal providence; and we may take it as a great sign, that God is about to do some great thing for us, or we must be employed in some great work for him. Thus he did with Israel—he proved them forty years, before he allowed them to possess the land.

Argument 10. Be not disconsolate; strong and long enduring temptations, when meeting with resistance, are a strong argument of a strong faith, and especially of the growth and increase of faith. But to be brief:

Argument 11. Consider, the saints' condition here is not their best state; there is heaven to come yet, where there is no tempter.

Argument 12. We have not been so much, nor so often tempted, as we ourselves have tempted God.

Argument 13. The devil's temptations, though they be evils—yet are not the saints' evils, unless they are overcome by them.

Argument 14. It is a great sign of God's love, so of Satan's hatred, and so consequently a token that you are none of his—but God's, else he would never rage thus. The devil makes no such ado with wicked ones.

Argument 15. As our temptations now abound, so shall our joy, in time, much more abound.

Many arguments for consolation I might make use of, and much more enlargement upon these; all which, for brevity's sake, I here omit.

Fifthly, For EXHORTATION.

1. Beware how you tempt the devil to tempt you! Beware how you give occasion to temptation by indulging any sin or lust.
2. When you are tempted, be not cowardly—but courageous, do not flee—but resist, James 4:7.
3. Beware of pride, when delivered out of temptation; this may make us fall into a dangerous relapse.

Having finished this point, I proceed to show, in the next observation, how we may AVOID the evil if temptation—that is, to watch and pray. In the handling of this doctrine, we may consider these four things:

1. What it is to watch.
2. What it is to pray.
3. The proof of the point.
4. How watching and praying may conduce to our escape from the evil of temptation.

Concerning the duty of WATCHING, observe:

1st, What watching implies.

2ndly, How we watch.

First, WATCHING implies:

1. A continual waking, like the spouse, Song of Song of Solomon 5:2.
2. A diligent hearkening; thus the watchman, Isaiah 21:7.
3. A constant readiness; Peter exhorts, under a metaphorical expression, 1 Peter 1:13. "Gird up your loins," that is, be ready; it is taken from the Jews' long garments which they used to gird about them, that they might run with less interruption.

Secondly, How we watch. I shall but name the particulars:

1. Let the heart be continually fixed upon God. Oh! how will this cool our affections to the world, and kindle the fire of love to God!
2. Let the eye be much upon self; this will keep us poor in spirit, "And blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matthew 5:3.
3. Beware of drowsiness—we should take it off by prayer.
4. Be well resolved in spirit—mind that resolve of the prophet, 1 Kings 18:21.
5. Be sure all is well within; be sure your foundation is Christ; let there be no sin unrepented of, that will breed sorrow; harbor no enemy, no lust in your soul, Proverbs 5:20.

6. Trust not your own heart—but regulate it by the Word of God; for "the heart is deceitful," Jeremiah 17:9. And he is a fool that trusts in his heart, Proverbs 28:26.

7. Keep therefore a close eye to the heart, Proverbs 4:23.

8. Call your heart often to a strict account, Psalms 4:4. Examine diligently, What have I done? What do I now? What am I about to do?

9. And if there be anything out of order, tarry not—but repair it immediately. Lay sin upon Christ—and then mourn over it.

10. Let nothing be suggested, and presently entertained—but first brought to trial. See if it is the will of God, and if it is for his glory; if it is not for his glory—it is not his will.

11. Be sure to keep conscience clear; a little filth there, stops up all the channel. It is dangerous to know of one sin, and not to confess it; much more dangerous to know your sin, and wink at it.

12. For this end keep an open ear to conscience, let it speak.

13. Let the mouth be stopped to sin, and the hands tied up from wickedness. David prays that a watch may be set to the door of his lips; And certainly it is very needful.

14. Let the whole armor of God be on, Ephesians 6:10-18.

Thus much concerning watching.

Now concerning PRAYER. Consider:

1. What prayer is.

2. The several kinds of prayer.

3. The manner how we are to pray.

1. Prayer is the outward enlargement of the soul's inward breathings; it is a work of God's Spirit, and so flows out of the spirit and heart of a man, Zechariah 12:10, Romans 8:26-27, Jude 1:20, 1 Corinthians 14:19, Psalms 62:8, and Psalms 42:4.

Prayer is a talking of the heart and soul with God, and with such a heart as is prepared by God, Jeremiah 29:13, Psalms 27:1, Psalms 27:10.

2. And thus it is either mental in the heart only, Exodus 14:15, 1 Samuel 1:13. Or else vocal, uttered by the voice, Psalms 77:1.

Again, there is secret prayer, when we pray alone; thus Daniel did when he set open his windows, Daniel 6:10-11. Or, more public, when we pray with others in the family, congregation, etc. And here let some preparatives to prayer be added:

First, Pray that you may pray; lift up your eyes and your heart to God, when about to pray; thus did David, Psalms 141:1-2.

Secondly, Meditate:

1. Meditate on God's sufficiency.

2. Meditate especially God's promises, Psalms 1:1-6, Matthew 7:7. This will make you confident in prayer.
3. Meditate on your own neediness and vileness, that you may be fervent; so did Ezra, Ezra 9:6-7.
4. Meditate on the great Majesty of God, to beget humility, and lowliness of spirit, Ecclesiastes 5:2, Genesis 32:9-10.
5. Meditate on the relation you stand in to God, by Christ, as the Father.

Thirdly, Now, HOW are we to pray?

1. We must pray what we understand, and understand what we pray, 1 Corinthians 14:15.
2. We must pray in the Holy Spirit, be directed by Him, Jude 1:20, Romans 8:28.
3. We must pray in the name and mediation of Christ; that is, relying upon his merits, not our righteousness, John 14:13-14, and John 16:23.
4. We must pray with faith, believingly, that God will give us what is good for us, James 1:6-7.
5. We must pray with humility and acknowledgment of our own unworthiness, Psalms 10:17.
6. We must pray with a heart willing to be cleansed by the blood of Christ, from every pollution, Hebrews 10:12, Psalms 66:18.
7. We must pray with love to the saints, Matthew 6:14-15.
8. We must pray with zeal and fervency, James 5:16.
9. Do not give up praying—but wrestle with God for a blessing, with unwearied constancy, Luke 18:1-9, Matthew 15:8
10. Pray for heavenly things first and most; seek earthly things in the second place. Pray for heavenly things absolutely. Pray for earthly things conditionally, Matthew 6:33.
11. Pray for things agreeable to the will of God, 1 John 5:14.
12. Take heed you love not long prayers, and think to be heard because they are long, Matthew 6:7.

Now I come to the proof of this point—that the only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is to watch and pray. This is clearly stated in the text, so that it scarcely needs more confirmation; only take that of verse Paul when buffeted with temptation, "For this," says he, "I besought the Lord thrice," 2 Corinthians 12:8. There is great need of watching and prayer:

1. Before we fall into temptation.
2. When we are under temptation; how watching and prayer conduces to the anticipating the assaults of Satan, frustrating temptation.

First of all, For WATCHING.

1. It sets us in a readiness for an assault; when we are expecting, we shall not be assaulted unaware.
2. It adds resolution to stand out against Satan; we know surprise strikes us into a fear, when expectation and deliberation increases courage.
3. It is a countermeasure to all Satan's stratagems. It will deceive the deceiver, to find us watching with spiritual diligence, when he would have us sleeping in carnal security.
4. Watching secures us from much evil that might be added, in case we were drawn to the temptation.

Secondly, For PRAYER.

Prayer conduces to avoid the evil of temptation; because it fetches help from God, in whom is all our strength, for it is God's promise, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me!" It is a great comfort under temptation to have a God to go to, especially one who is able and willing to help. This may instruct us, then:

First, there is great need of watching. It is certainly a universal necessary duty for all saints, at whatever time, to watch; so says Christ our Savior, "I say unto you all—Watch!" Mark 13:37. The great end of this duty is the coming of the Lord Jesus, "Watch," says Christ, "for you know not at what hour your Lord does come," Matthew 24:42, Matthew 24:44.

There are three considerations which move us to watch:

1. Let us consider whom we offend and dishonor by our neglect in watching—no less than God. Is God no more worth to us than so? Let us seriously weigh, how great an offence, how great a dishonor to God unwatchfulness is, and this will engage us to watch.
2. Let us consider whom we gratify and advantage by our neglects—no less an enemy than Satan, the enemy of our souls. And shall we pleasure our grand adversary? Oh, no! then let us watch.
3. Whom we displease, it is ourselves. And will we that our souls should be losers? If not, let us be much, yes, always upon our watch.

But, Secondly, It may inform us of the necessity of praying at all times. "Pray without ceasing," 1 Thessalonians 5:17. So David would pray and cry aloud, "At evening, at morning, and at noon." And Daniel would pray thrice a day, Daniel 6:16. Prayer is the duty of all, and every saint, in all conditions. In spiritual things:

1stly, Pray for grace, that God would give and increase it either in yourself or others.

2ndly, Pray against sin, against the guilt of sin, against the power of sin.

3rdly, Pray against Satan's temptations:

1. Against the occasion of the temptation, that if it is possible, you may shun and escape the very appearance of it.
2. That the strength of corruption within, and the power of temptation without, may not be so prevalent, as to lead you captive to evil.

3. Pray that the entrance into temptation may be no disadvantage to your grace, and that the escape from it may be no impeachment to—but rather for the advancement of God's glory.

1. Pray for nothing, but what you stand in need of. Unnecessary things are not to be the subject of our petitions; and therefore our Savior bids us pray for our daily bread. And so that godly man Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," Proverbs 30:7 Proverbs 30:9.

2. Even in these things, pray with submission to the will of God.

3. If watching and prayer are the means to escape the evil of temptation; then the strength of a saint is not sufficient. No, we must go to God for deliverance.

4. If we do not watch and pray, all other means are insufficient at least, if not sin.

Thus much for information. Now for EXHORTATION.

1. Watch and pray continually—but especially at a time of temptation.

2. Be serious in watching and prayer; some do it between hot and cold, or by fits, or in much lightness of spirit. But, said the apostle, "Be sober, and watch unto prayer." Sobriety and seriousness befits those who call upon God.

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